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How this book will help you to achieve your best in Cambridge IGCSE® History

SOURCE 19



An American cartoon commenting on Stalin's take-over of eastern Europe. The bear represents the USSR.

A) It will help you to learn the content

Is your main worry when you prepare for an exam that you won't know enough to answer the questions? Many people feel that way and it is true that there is a lot to learn in Cambridge IGCSE History. This book covers the Option B 20th century route for the Cambridge IGCSE syllabus. You will need good knowledge of the main events and the detail. This book will help you acquire both.

The **author text** explains all the key content clearly and comprehensively. But it does not just drone on about one thing after another. It helps you understand and investigate issues and establish links and relationships between topics.

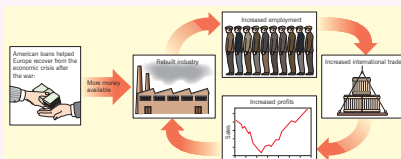
It's full of brilliant **sources**. History is at its best when you can see what real people said, did, wrote, sang, watched on film, laughed about, cried over, and got upset about. Sources can really help you to understand the story better and remember it because they help you to see the big concepts and ideas in terms of what they meant to individuals at the time.

Factfile

The League of Nations

- ▶ The League's home was in Geneva in Switzerland.
- ▶ Despite it being the brainchild of the US President, the USA was never a member of the League.

The **Factfiles** (key events) and **Profiles** (key people) are packed with hard facts and examples to use in your own work to support your arguments.



We use lots of **diagrams** and **timelines**. These help you to visualise, understand and remember topics. We also encourage you to draw your own diagrams – that is an even better way to learn.

Think!

Many of the Focus Tasks deal with quite big issues that you will find easier if you have thought things through beforehand. So the **Think!** feature is designed to prepare you for the Focus Tasks. Sometimes they are literally steps en route to a Focus Task as in Chapter 4; at other times they simply ask you to think about an issue that is particularly important for understanding the period better.

Revision Tip

There are **Revision Tips**. If the content seems overwhelming to you and you just don't know where to start this gives you an achievable target – just a couple of key points on each topic to identify and remember. Think of it as a 'First Aid' kit.

Keywords

Keywords. Every subject and topic has its own vocabulary. If you don't know what these words mean you won't be able to write about the subject. So for each chapter we have provided a keyword list. These are the kind of words or terms that could be used in sources or an exam question without any explanation so you need to be able to understand them and use them confidently in your writing. They are all defined in the **glossary** on page 000. But we also want you to create your own keyword list – in a notebook or on your phone, write down each word with your own definitions.

Chapter Summary

Finally there is a content **Summary** at the end of every chapter or Key Question. This condenses all the content into a few points, which should help you to get your bearings in even the most complicated content.

Focus Task

How did the Bolsheviks consolidate their rule?

It is January 1924. Lenin is dead. Your task is to look back at the measures he used to consolidate Bolshevik rule.

- 1 Draw a timeline from 1917 to 1924, and mark on it the events of that period mentioned in the text.
- 2 Mark on the timeline:
 - a) one moment at which you think Bolshevik rule was most threatened
 - b) one moment at which you think it was most secure.
- 3 Write an explanation of how the Bolsheviks made their rule more secure. Mention the following:
 - ◆ the power of the Red Army
 - ◆ treatment of opposition
 - ◆ War Communism
 - ◆ the New Economic Policy
 - ◆ the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk
 - ◆ the victory in the Civil War
 - ◆ the promise of a new society
 - ◆ propaganda.

B) It will help you to apply what you learn

The second big aim of this book is to help you to work with the content and think about it so that you are ready to apply what you learn. This is not an easy task. You will not suddenly develop this skill. You need to practise studying an issue, deciding what you think, and then selecting from all that you know the points that are really relevant to your argument.

The main way we help you with this is through the **Focus Tasks**

The title is a **Focus Point** or Key Question from the Cambridge IGCSE syllabus. Every Focus Point has its own Focus Task.

Often we ask you to create a comparative or a summary **chart or timeline** as in this example. The completed chart will also be perfect for revision purposes.

They help you to **apply your knowledge**. One of the most important skills in history is the ability to select, organise and deploy (use) knowledge to answer a particular question.

The structure of the task helps you to **focus on what is important** and ignore what is not. There are bullet points or charts to help you to **organise** your thinking.

Revision Tip

And remember, to help you further, most Focus Tasks have a linked **Revision Tip** that gives you a more basic target – just a couple of key points that you will be able to apply in your answers.

C) It helps you prepare for your examination

If you read all the text and tackled all the Focus Tasks in this book we are sure you would also find you were well prepared for the challenges of the exam, but you will probably also want something more exam-focused – you will want to see the kind of questions you will face in an exam and how you might go about answering them. So:

Exam focus

Exam Focus appears on page 168 (for the core content) and page 316 (for the depth studies). These pages take you step by step through the exam requirements for Paper 1 and Paper 2, and show you the kinds of questions you might be asked. We also analyse and comment on some sample answers that help you to see what a good answer might look like.

Exam Practice

Exam practice. At the end of every chapter there are some exam-style questions for you to practise. And in the Exam Focus sections there are plenty more examples of structured essays like in Paper 1 and questions on prescribed topics with sources and information like in Paper 2.

Source Analysis

Source Analysis. Sources are an integral part of history. Historians use them to write history. We have used them to add colour and human detail to the stories of Modern World History. In Paper 2 of Cambridge IGCSE History you will also have to use sources to examine an issue when you will need to evaluate sources. So dotted throughout this book are Source Analysis questions that help you to evaluate sources – for example, thinking about their message, their purpose or their usefulness for a particular line of enquiry.

Text acknowledgements

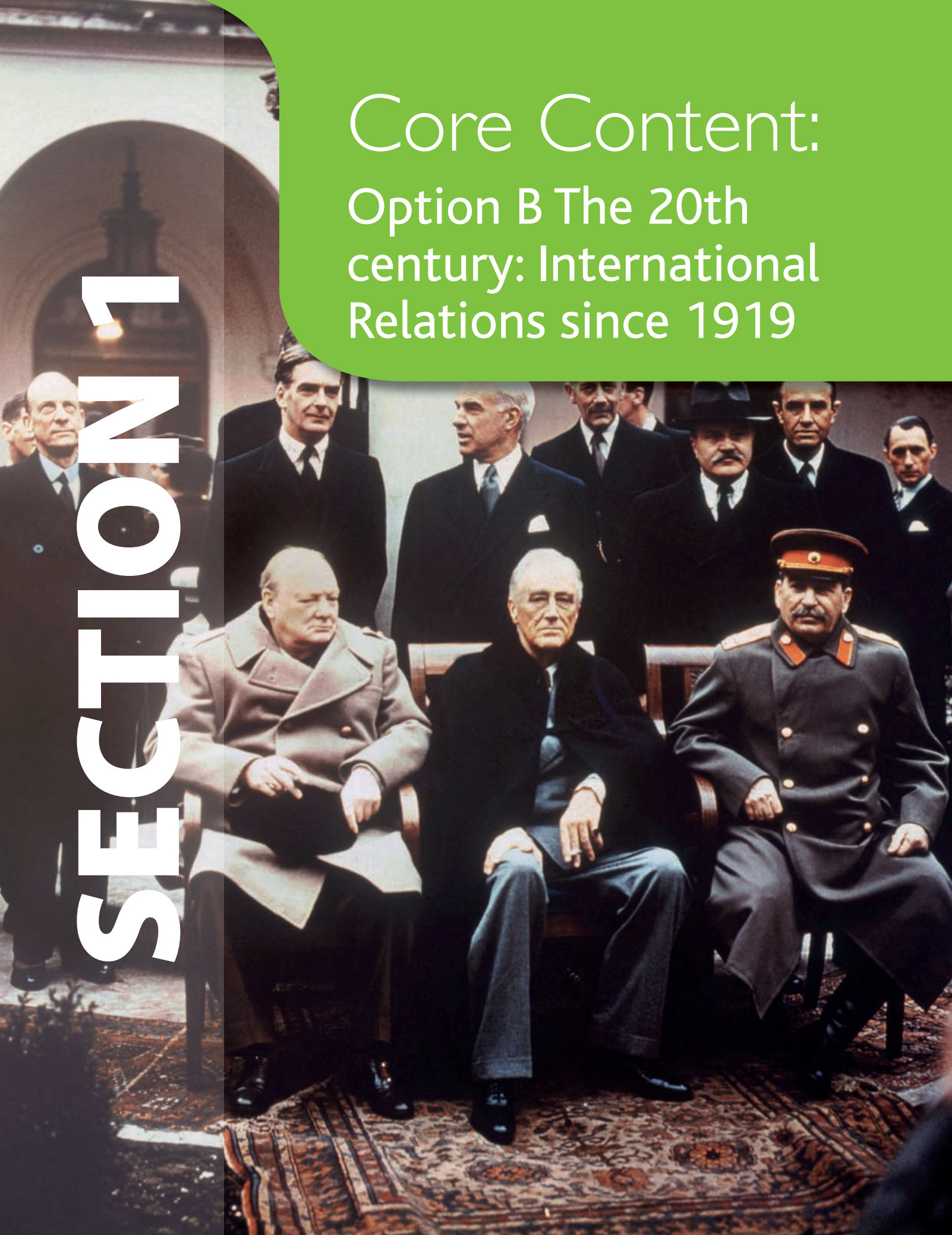
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Page 47, Source 12: the original caption was 'KEEPING HER GOING' *Doctors Eden and Delbos*. "I'm afraid her constitution isn't all it should be, but we mustn't give up hope yet."

SECTION 1

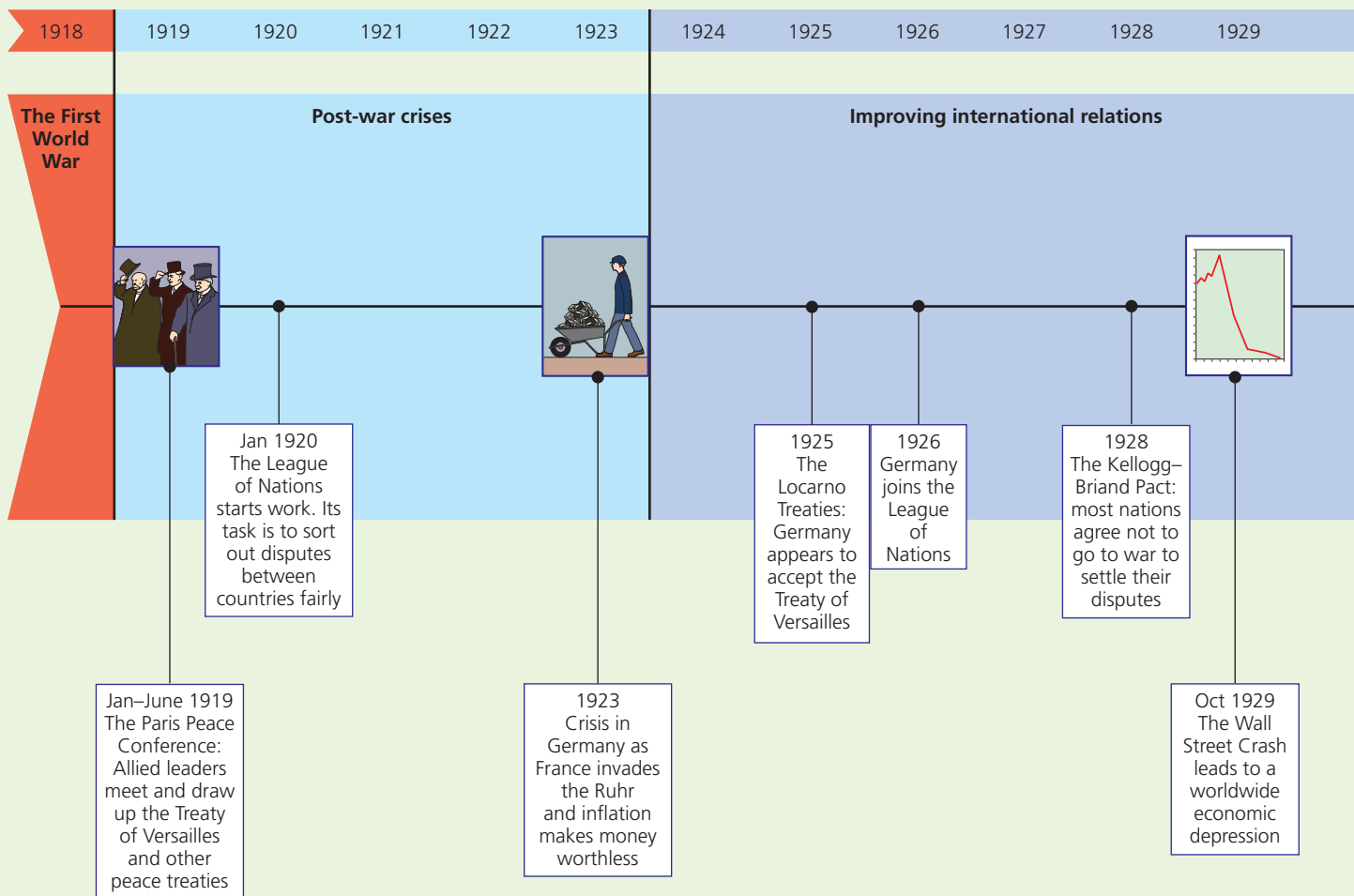
Core Content:
Option B The 20th
century: International
Relations since 1919





The Inter-War Years, 1919–39

PART 1



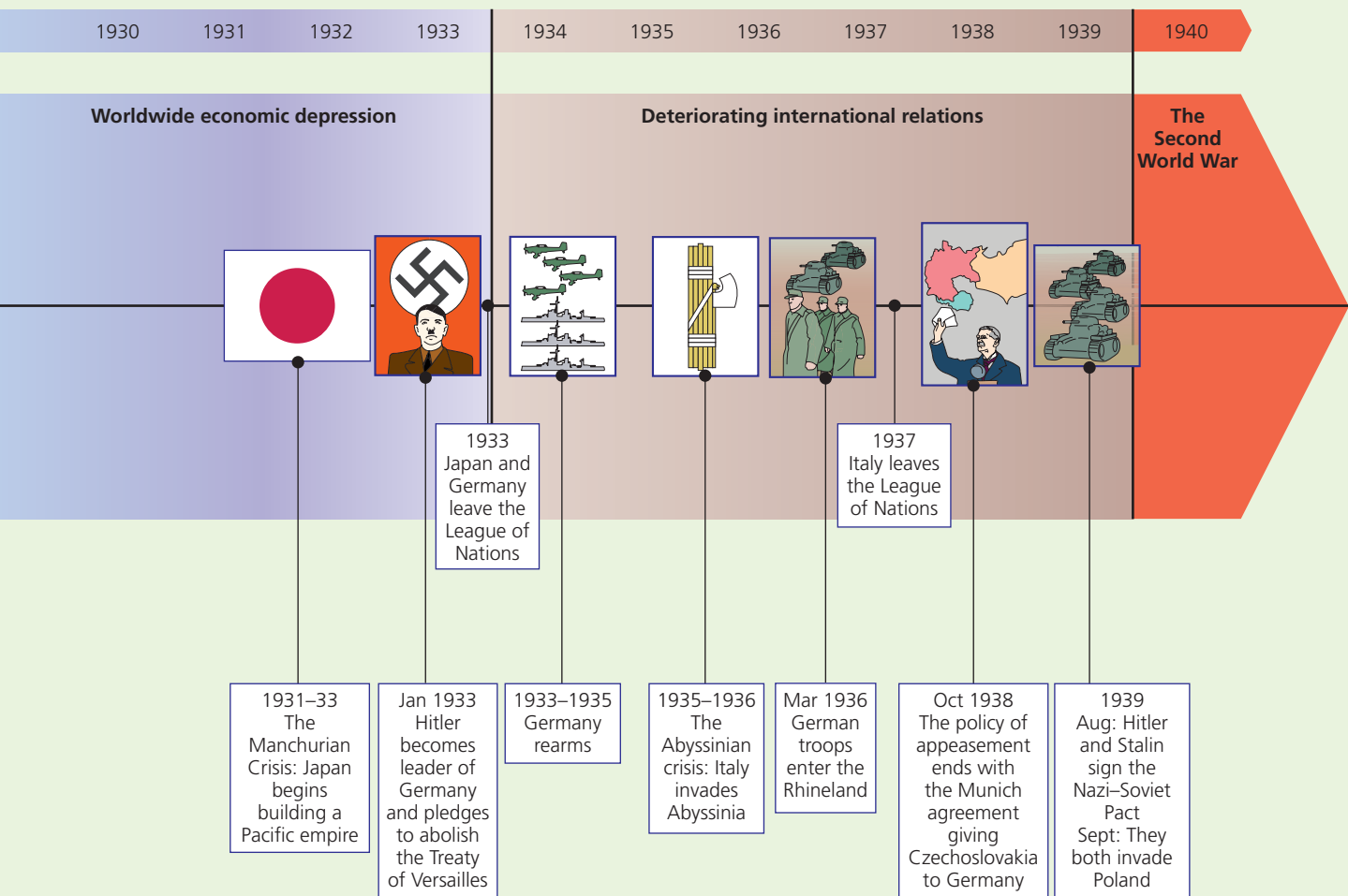
Focus

Chapters 1–3 of this book cover a turbulent period of European history. After the trauma of the First World War, citizens of European countries were hoping for peace, prosperity and calm. Instead they got revolutions, economic depression, international disputes, dictatorships, and in the end a Second World War. How did this happen?

In Part I:

- ◆ You will examine the peace treaties at the end of the First World War and consider whether they were fair (Chapter 1). Some would say that the peace treaties created problems for the future; others that they were the fairest they could have been given the very difficult situation after the First World War.
- ◆ The League of Nations was set up in 1920 to prevent war between countries. In Chapter 2 you will evaluate its successes (it did have many) and its failures (which tend to be remembered rather more than the successes) and reach your own view on how we should remember the League – as a success or a failure or something between.
- ◆ Finally in Chapter 3 you will examine the events of the 1930s which finally tipped Europe back into war. It is common to blame Hitler and his foreign policy for this slide to war but this chapter will help you to reach a balanced view that sees what other factors played a part.

The events in this chapters overlap in time. The timeline below gives you an overview of the main events you will be studying. It would be helpful if you made your own copy and added your own notes to it as you study.





THE RECKONING.

PAN-GERMAN. "MONSTROUS, I CALL IT. WHY, IT'S FULLY A QUARTER OF WHAT WE SHOULD HAVE MADE THEM PAY, IF WE'D WON."

1

Were the peace treaties of 1919–23 fair?

FOCUS POINTS

- What were the motives and aims of the Big Three at Versailles?
- Why did all the victors not get everything they wanted?
- What was the impact of the peace treaty on Germany up to 1923?
- Could the treaties be justified at the time?

However long or violent a war is, eventually the opposing sides must make peace. But because war is destructive and leaves a bitter legacy, the peacemaking after a long conflict can be the hardest job of all.

The people who had that role in 1919 had a particularly hard task. The First World War involved more countries, using more powerful weapons, causing greater casualties and physical destruction, than any war before it. The war had bankrupted some countries. It led to revolutions in others. There was bitterness and resentment.

In this post-war atmosphere almost everyone agreed that part of the job of the peacemakers was to avoid another war like it – but no one agreed how to do that.

Any treaty is a balancing act. The peacemakers have to keep the victors happy but ensure that the defeated country accepts the terms of the peace. Was it really possible to produce a treaty which all sides would have seen as fair? That's the key question you will have to think about in this chapter.

You are going to investigate what happened when these peacemakers got together to draw up the peace treaties.

You will focus on

- ◆ what the peacemakers were hoping to achieve
- ◆ how they worked
- ◆ what they decided
- ◆ why they decided it.

Then you will reach conclusions about the key question – how 'fair' were the treaties they came up with, which means thinking about:

- ◆ whether people at the time thought the treaties were fair, and why or why not
- ◆ whether historians (with the benefit of hindsight) think they were fair.

And remember...

the peace process was not just about Germany. Between 1919 and 1923 the peacemakers drew up four treaties (one for each of the defeated powers) although in this chapter you are going to focus most on the Treaty which dealt with Germany: the Treaty of Versailles.

◀ This British cartoon was published in 1919 shortly after the terms of the Treaty of Versailles had been announced. A German man is holding the treaty terms saying that Germany has to pay for the damage caused by the war.

- 1 Does he think the Treaty is fair? Why or why not?
- 2 Does the cartoonist think the Treaty is fair? Why or why not?
- 3 What is the message of this cartoon?

Profile

Woodrow Wilson (President of the USA)



Background

- ◆ Born 1856.
- ◆ Became a university professor.
- ◆ First entered politics in 1910.
- ◆ Became President in 1912 and was re-elected in 1916.
- ◆ From 1914 to 1917 he concentrated on keeping the USA out of the war.
- ◆ Once the USA had joined the war in 1917, he drew up the **Fourteen Points** as the basis for ending the war fairly, so that future wars could be avoided.

Character

- ◆ An idealist and a reformer.
- ◆ As President, he had campaigned against corruption in politics and business. However, he had a poor record with regard to the rights of African Americans.
- ◆ He was obstinate. Once he made his mind up on an issue he was almost impossible to shift.

High hopes for peace

Looking back it may seem that the peacemakers in 1919 had an impossible job. But that is not how people saw it at the time. There was great optimism. One of the main reasons for these high hopes was the American President Woodrow Wilson.

In 1918 Wilson made a speech outlining **Fourteen Points** (see Factfile), which were to be the guidelines for a just and lasting peace treaty to end conflict.

When he arrived in Europe for the Paris Peace Conference, Wilson was seen almost as a saintly figure. Newspaper reports described wounded soldiers in Italy trying to kiss the hem of his cloak and in France peasant families kneeling to pray as his train passed by.

Wilson's ideas

How did Wilson think the peacemakers could build a better and more peaceful world?

- **Don't be too harsh on Germany.** Wilson did believe Germany should be punished. But he also believed that if Germany was treated harshly, some day it would recover and want revenge. He was also concerned that extremist groups, especially communists, might exploit Germans' resentment and communists might even seize power in Germany as they had in Russia in 1917.
- **Strengthen democracy in defeated countries.** For Wilson the key to peace in Europe was to strengthen democracy in the defeated nations so that their people would not let their leaders cause another war.
- **Give self-determination to small countries that had once been part of the European empires.** He wanted the different peoples of eastern Europe (for example, Poles, Czechs and Slovaks) to rule themselves rather than be part of Austria–Hungary's empire.
- **International co-operation.** Wilson also believed that nations should co-operate to achieve world peace. This would be achieved through a 'League of Nations'. Wilson believed this was the most important of his Fourteen Points.

You can see from these principles that Wilson was an idealist. However he was not a politician who could be pushed around. For example, he refused to cancel the debts owed to the USA by Britain and its Allies so that he could put pressure on them to accept his ideas.

Focus Task

What were the motives and aims of the Big Three at Versailles?

Using the information and sources on pages 6–9, fill out a chart like the one below summarising the aims of the three leaders at the Paris Peace Conference. Leave the fifth column blank. You will need it for a later task.

| Leader | Country | Attitude towards Germany | Main aim(s) | |
|--------------|---------|--------------------------|-------------|--|
| Wilson | | | | |
| Lloyd George | | | | |
| Clemenceau | | | | |

Revision Tip

Your completed chart should be perfect for revision on this topic. The basic requirement is to be sure you can name:

- ◆ each of the Big Three
- ◆ one priority for each of them at the peace talks
- ◆ two issues that they disagreed about.



THE MELTING POT.

A cartoon published in 1919 in an Australian newspaper.

Source Analysis

- 1 Study the main features of Source 1. Who is making the soup? Who is helping him? What are they adding to the mix? What is already in there?
- 2 Would you say Source 2 is optimistic about the prospects for peace? Make sure you can explain your answer by referring to specific features of the cartoon.

Factfile

THE FOURTEEN POINTS (a summary)

- 1 No secret treaties.
- 2 Free access to the seas in peacetime or wartime.
- 3 Free trade between countries.
- 4 All countries to work towards disarmament.
- 5 Colonies to have a say in their own future.
- 6 German troops to leave Russia.
- 7 Independence for Belgium.
- 8 France to regain Alsace–Lorraine.
- 9 Frontier between Austria and Italy to be adjusted.
- 10 Self-determination for the peoples of eastern Europe (they should rule themselves and not be ruled by empires).
- 11 Serbia to have access to the sea.
- 12 Self-determination for the people in the Turkish empire.
- 13 Poland to become an independent state with access to the sea.
- 14 League of Nations to be set up.

Factfile

The Paris Peace Conference, 1919–20

- The Conference took place in the Palace of Versailles (a short distance from Paris).
- It lasted for twelve months.
- Thirty-two nations were supposed to be represented, but no one from the defeated countries was invited.
- Five treaties were drawn up at the Conference. The main one was the Treaty of Versailles, which dealt with Germany. The other treaties dealt with Germany's allies (see Factfile on page 19).
- All of the important decisions on the fate of Germany were taken by Clemenceau (Prime Minister of France), Lloyd George (Prime Minister of Britain) and Wilson (President of the USA) who together were known as 'The Big Three'.
- The Big Three were supported by a huge army of diplomats and expert advisers, but the Big Three often ignored their advice.

Profile

David Lloyd George
(Prime Minister of Britain)



Background

- Born 1863.
- First entered politics in 1890.
- He was a very able politician who became Prime Minister in 1916 and remained in power until 1922.

Character

A realist. As an experienced politician, he knew there would have to be compromise. Thus he occupied the middle ground between the views of Wilson and Clemenceau.

Did everyone share Wilson's viewpoint?

Not surprisingly, when Wilson talked about lasting peace and justice other leaders agreed with him. After all, who would want to stand up in public and say they were *against* a just and lasting peace?!

However, many were doubtful about Wilson's ideas for achieving it. For example 'self-determination': it would be very difficult to give the peoples of eastern Europe the opportunity to rule themselves because they were scattered across many countries. Some people were bound to end up being ruled by people from another group with different customs and a different language. Some historians have pointed out that while Wilson talked a great deal about eastern and central Europe, he did not actually know very much about the area.

There were other concerns as well. So let's look at the aims and views of the other leaders at the Paris Peace Conference: David Lloyd George (from Britain) and Georges Clemenceau (from France).

Did Lloyd George agree with Wilson?

In public Lloyd George praised Wilson and his ideas. However, in private he was less positive. He complained to one of his officials that Wilson came to Paris like a missionary to rescue the European savages with his little sermons and lectures.

He agreed with Wilson on many issues, particularly that Germany should be punished but not too harshly. He did not want Germany to seek revenge in the future and possibly start another war.

Like Wilson he was deeply concerned that a harsh treaty might lead to a communist revolution like the one in Russia in 1917. He also wanted Britain and Germany to begin trading with each other again. Before the war, Germany had been Britain's second largest trading partner. British people might not like it, but the fact was that trade with Germany meant jobs in Britain.

However, unlike Wilson, Lloyd George had the needs of the British empire in mind. He wanted Germany to lose its navy and its colonies because they threatened the British empire.

SOURCE 2

We want a peace which will be just, but not vindictive. We want a stern peace because the occasion demands it, but the severity must be designed, not for vengeance, but for justice. Above all, we want to protect the future against a repetition of the horrors of this war.

Lloyd George speaking to the House of Commons before the Peace Conference.

SOURCE 3

If I am elected, Germany is going to pay . . . I have personally no doubt we will get everything that you can squeeze out of a lemon, and a bit more. I propose that every bit of [German-owned] property, movable and immovable, in Allied and neutral countries, whether State property or private property, should be surrendered by the Germans.

Sir Eric Geddes, a government minister, speaking to a rally in the general election campaign, December 1918.

Source Analysis ▲

- 1 In what ways are Sources 2 and 3 different?
- 2 Are there any ways in which they are similar?

Profile

Georges Clemenceau (Prime Minister of France)



Background

- Born 1841 (he was aged 77 when the Paris Conference began).
- First entered French politics in 1871.
- Was Prime Minister of France from 1906 to 1909.
- From 1914 to 1917 he was very critical of the French war leaders. In November 1917 he was elected to lead France through the last year of the war.

Character

A hard, tough politician with a reputation for being uncompromising. He had seen his country invaded twice by the Germans, in 1870 and in 1914. He was determined not to allow such devastation ever again.

Pressures on Lloyd George

Lloyd George faced huge public pressures at home for a harsh treaty (see Source 2). People in Britain were not sympathetic to Germany in any way. They had suffered over 1 million casualties in the fighting as well as food shortages and other hardships at home. They had been fed anti-German propaganda for four years. They had also seen how Germany had treated Russia in 1918 when Russia surrendered. Under the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk Germany had stripped Russia of 25 per cent of its population and huge areas of Russia's best agricultural land.

Lloyd George had just won the 1918 election in Britain by promising to 'make Germany pay', even though he realised the dangers of this course of action. So Lloyd George had to balance these pressures at home with his desire not to leave Germany wanting revenge.

Think!

One of the ideas put forward at the Paris Conference was that Germany should lose some of its key industrial areas. How would you expect Lloyd George to react to a proposal like this? You could present your answer as a short speech by Lloyd George or in a paragraph of text.

Did Clemenceau agree with Wilson?

In public, Clemenceau of course agreed with Wilson's aim for a fair and lasting peace. However, he found Wilson very hard to work with. While he did not publicly criticise the Fourteen Points, Clemenceau once pointed out that even God had only needed Ten Commandments!

The major disagreement was over Germany. Clemenceau and other French leaders saw the Treaty as an opportunity to cripple Germany so that it could not attack France again.

Pressures on Clemenceau

France had suffered enormous damage to its land, industry, people – and self-confidence. Over two-thirds of the men who had served in the French army had been killed or injured. The war affected almost an entire generation.

By comparison, Germany seemed to many French people as powerful and threatening as ever. German land and industry had not been as badly damaged as France's. France's population (around 40 million) was in decline compared to Germany's (around 75 million).

The French people wanted a treaty that would punish Germany and weaken it as much as possible. The French President (Poincaré) even wanted Germany broken up into a collection of smaller states, but Clemenceau knew that the British and Americans would not agree to this.

Clemenceau was a realist and knew he would probably be forced to compromise on some issues. However, he had to show he was aware of public opinion in France.

Think!

Here are some extracts from the demands made by France before the Peace Conference started:

- a) German armed forces to be banned from the bank of the River Rhine (which bordered France).
- b) Germany to pay compensation for damage done by German forces in lands they occupied during the war.
- c) Germany's armed forces to be severely limited.

Which of these terms do you think made it into the final Treaty? Give each term a percentage chance and keep a note of your guesses. You will find out if you were right later in the chapter.

How did the peace-making process actually work?

In theory, the major issues like borders and reparations (compensation for war damage) were discussed in detail by all the delegates at the conference (see Source 4) – over 32 leaders with all their officials and advisers! As Source 5 shows, it quickly became impossible to consult everyone.

SOURCE 4



An official painting showing the delegates at the Paris Peace Conference at work.

Source Analysis ▲

Study Source 4 carefully and then discuss these questions.

- 1 Why was this picture published?
- 2 What impression was it trying to give of the conference and the delegates?
- 3 After studying Source 4 and the other information in this section, do you think the impression is accurate? Make sure you can explain your view.
- 4 If you were using this image to introduce a documentary on the Treaty of Versailles, what main points would you make in the commentary that the viewer would hear?

SOURCE 5

'Wilson the Just' quickly disappointed expectations. Everything about him served to disillusion those he dealt with. All too soon the President was qualifying the Fourteen Points with 'Four Principles' and modifying them with 'Five Particulars'. Finding that one principle conflicted with another, he made compromising declarations about both. The Big Three abandoned Wilson's principle of open covenants openly arrived at, consulting others only when they needed expert advice. They were occasionally to be seen crawling round their maps on the hearth rug. Sometimes they agreed and, according to one British official 'were so pleased with themselves for doing so that they quite forgot to tell anyone what the agreement was'. Sometimes they almost came to blows. Lloyd George made rapid, quick fire points but they were ineffective against Clemenceau's granite obstinacy. Even Wilson's self-important confidence crashed against the rock of Clemenceau ... Clemenceau was delighted when the American President fell ill. He suggested that Lloyd George should bribe Wilson's doctor to make the illness last.

Historian Piers Brendon writing in 2006.

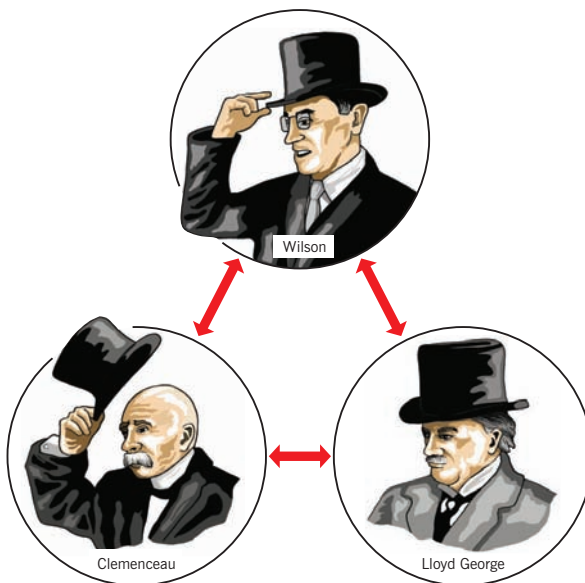
It soon became clear it would be impossible to agree terms that everyone would agree about.

- **Clemenceau clashed with Wilson over many issues.** The USA had not suffered nearly as badly as France in the war. Clemenceau resented Wilson's more generous attitude to Germany. They disagreed over what to do about Germany's Rhineland and coalfields in the Saar. In the end, Wilson had to give way on these issues. In return, Clemenceau and Lloyd George did give Wilson what he wanted in eastern Europe, despite their reservations about his idea of self-determination. However, this mainly affected the other four treaties, not the Treaty of Versailles.
- **Clemenceau also clashed with Lloyd George,** particularly over Lloyd George's desire not to treat Germany too harshly. For example, Clemenceau said that 'if the British are so anxious to appease Germany they should look overseas and make colonial, naval or commercial concessions'. Clemenceau felt that the British were quite happy to treat Germany fairly in Europe, where France rather than Britain was most under threat. However, they were less happy to allow Germany to keep its navy and colonies, which would be more of a threat to Britain.
- **Wilson and Lloyd George did not always agree either.** Lloyd George was particularly unhappy with point 2 of the Fourteen Points, allowing all nations access to the seas. Similarly, Wilson's views on people ruling themselves were somewhat threatening to the British government, for the British empire ruled millions of people all across the world from London.

Think!

Who said what about whom?

Here are some statements that were made by the Big Three at the Paris Peace Conference. Your task is to decide which leader made the statement and also who he was talking about. You will need to be able to explain your answer.



- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>a) He is too anxious to preserve his empire to want self-determination for colonies.</p> <p>b) His country has been ruling the waves for too long to accept the need for freedom of the seas.</p> <p>c) He wants to wreck a country which in a few years could be a valuable trading partner and a source of vital jobs.</p> <p>d) Freedom of the seas is all very well but who or what will protect my country's ships and trade?</p> <p>e) What does he know about colonies and how they should be ruled? He probably doesn't know where most of them are!</p> <p>f) How can I work with a man who thinks he is the first leader in 2000 years who knows anything about peace?</p> | <p>g) If he is so anxious to make concessions to the Germans then they should look overseas and make naval or colonial concessions.</p> <p>h) He is stuck in the past. If he gets his way Germany will be left bitter and vengeful and there will be another war in a few years.</p> <p>i) He is very happy to give concessions to Germany in areas which do not threaten his country.</p> <p>j) If you carry on annoying me I am going to punch you!</p> <p>k) There are new, better ways of making a peace agreement. He should accept that all states should disarm</p> <p>l) He must make concessions to the Germans, perhaps over the Rhineland or Alsace–Lorraine.</p> |
|---|--|

The terms of the Treaty of Versailles

None of the Big Three was happy with the eventual terms of the Treaty. After months of negotiation, each of them had to compromise on some of their aims, otherwise there would never have been a treaty.

The main terms can be divided into five areas.

1 War guilt

This clause was simple but was seen by the Germans as extremely harsh. Germany had to accept the blame for starting the war.

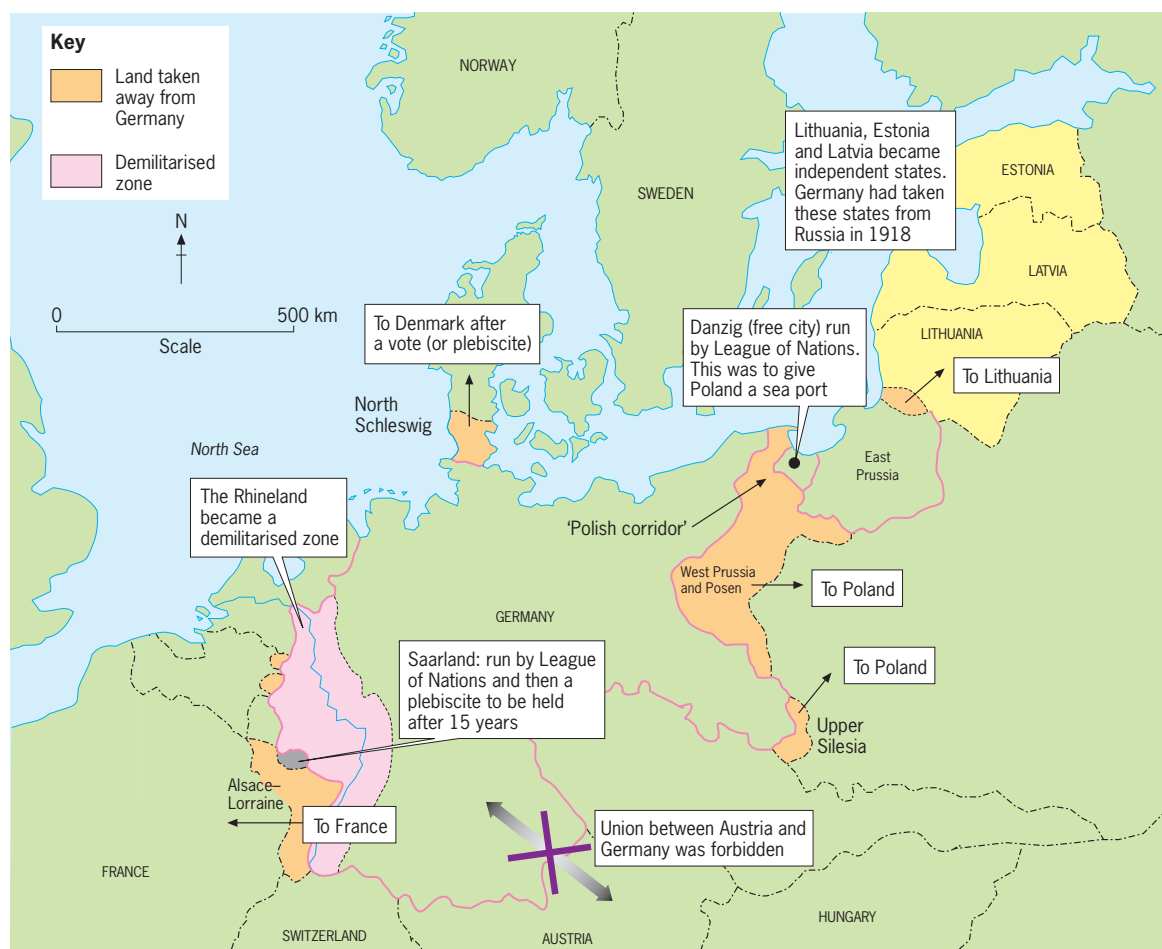
2 Reparations

The major powers agreed, without consulting Germany, that Germany had to pay reparations to the Allies for the damage caused by the war. The exact figure was not agreed until 1921 when it was set at £6,600 million – an enormous figure. If the terms of the payments had not later been changed under the Young Plan in 1929 (see page 236), Germany would not have finished paying this bill until 1984.

3 German territories and colonies

a) Germany's European borders were very extensive, and the section dealing with German territory in Europe was a complicated part of the Treaty. You can see the detail in Source 6. In addition to these changes, the Treaty also forbade Germany to join together (Anschluss) with its former ally Austria.

SOURCE 6



Map showing the impact of the Treaty of Versailles on the borders of Europe.

4 Germany's armed forces

b) Germany's overseas empire was taken away. It had been one of the causes of bad relations between Britain and Germany before the war. Former German colonies such as Cameroon became mandates controlled by the League of Nations, which effectively meant that France and Britain controlled them.

The size and power of the German army was a major concern, especially for France. The Treaty therefore restricted German armed forces to a level well below what they had been before the war.

- The army was limited to 100,000 men.
- Conscription was banned – soldiers had to be volunteers.
- Germany was not allowed armoured vehicles, submarines or aircraft.
- The navy could have only six battleships.
- The Rhineland became a demilitarised zone. This meant that no German troops were allowed into that area. The Rhineland was important because it was the border area between Germany and France (see Source 6).

5 League of Nations

- Previous methods of keeping peace had failed and so the League of Nations was set up as an international 'police force'. (You will study the League in detail in Chapter 2.)
- Germany was not invited to join the League until it had shown that it was a peace-loving country.

Focus Task A

Why did the victors not get everything they wanted?

- 1 Work in threes. Look back at the profiles of Clemenceau, Wilson and Lloyd George on pages 6, 8 and 9. Choose one each. Study the terms of the Treaty on these two pages. Think about:
 - ◆ which terms of the Treaty would please your chosen leader and why
 - ◆ which terms would displease him and why
 - ◆ how far he seemed to have achieved his aims.
 Report your findings to your partners.
- 2 Look back at the chart you compiled on page 6. There should be a blank fifth column. Put the heading 'How they felt about the Treaty' and fill it in for each leader with a one-sentence summary.
- 3 a) Choose one of the following phrases to finish off this sentence:
The victors did not all get what they wanted because . . .
 - ◆ Clemenceau bullied Wilson and Lloyd George into agreeing to a harsh treaty.
 - ◆ the leaders' aims were too different – they could not all have got what they wanted and someone was bound to be disappointed.
 - ◆ public opinion in their home countries affected the leaders' decisions.
 b) Write a paragraph to explain why you chose that phrase.
 c) Write two more paragraphs to explain whether there is evidence to support the other two.

Revision Tip

The more you know about the Treaty of Versailles, the more it will help you. Make sure you can remember one or two key points under each of these headings: Blame, Reparations, Arms, Territory.

Focus Task B

Was the Treaty of Versailles fair?

It is important to make up your own mind about this key question and be able to back up your view with evidence and arguments. So place yourself on this scale and write some sentences to explain your position. This is provisional. You will return to it again.

The Big Three wasted a golden opportunity to achieve a fair and lasting peace settlement.

The Big Three were in a no-win situation from the start.



How did Germans react to the Treaty?

The terms of the Treaty were announced on 7 May to a horrified German nation.

War guilt and reparations

Germany had to accept the blame for starting the war and therefore had to pay reparations.

- This 'war guilt' clause was particularly hated. Germans did not feel they had started the war. They felt at the very least that blame should be shared.
- They were bitter that Germany was expected to pay for all the damage caused by the war even though the German economy was severely weakened.

Disarmament

The German army was reduced to 100,000 men. It could have no air force, and only a tiny navy.

Germans felt these terms were very unfair. An army of 100,000 was very small for a country of Germany's size and the army was a symbol of German pride.

Also, despite Wilson's Fourteen Points calling for disarmament, none of the Allies were being asked or forced to disarm in the same way.

German territories

Germany certainly lost a lot of territory.

- 10 per cent of its land in Europe
- All of its overseas colonies
- 12.5 per cent of its population
- 16 per cent of its coalfields and almost half of its iron and steel industry.

This was a major blow to German pride, and to its economy. Both the Saar and Upper Silesia were important industrial areas.

Meanwhile, as Germany was losing colonies, the British and French were increasing their empires by taking control of German territories in Africa.

The Fourteen Points and the League of Nations

- To most Germans, the treatment of Germany was not in keeping with Wilson's Fourteen Points. For example, while self-determination was given to countries such as Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, German-speaking peoples were being hived off into new countries such as Czechoslovakia to be ruled by non-Germans. *Anschluss* (union) with Austria was forbidden.
- Germany felt further insulted by not being invited to join the League of Nations.

GERMAN REACTIONS

Non-representation

Germans were angry that their government was not represented at the peace talks and that they were being forced to accept a harsh treaty without any choice or even comment. Germans did not feel they had lost the war so they should not have been treated as a defeated country.

The government that took Germany to war in 1914 was overthrown in a revolution and the new democratic government in Germany was hoping for fair and equal treatment from the Allies. When the terms were announced the new German government refused to sign the Treaty and the German navy sank its own ships in protest. At one point, it looked as though war might break out again. But what could the German leader Friedrich Ebert do? Germany would quickly be defeated if it tried to fight. Reluctantly, Ebert agreed to accept the terms of the Treaty and it was signed on 28 June 1919.

SOURCE 7

THE TREATY IS ONLY A SCRAP OF PAPER! We will seek vengeance for the shame of 1919.

German newspaper Deutsche Zeitung,
June 1919.

SOURCE 8



Cartoon from the German magazine *Simplicissimus*, June 1919. The caption in the magazine read: 'The Allies are burying Germany with the peace terms'.

Source Analysis

Study Source 8. If you did not know this source was German would you be able to work this out? Explain how.

Focus Task

What was the impact of the peace treaty on Germany up to 1923?

Summarise the impact of the Treaty under each of these headings:

- a) Political
- b) Economic
- c) Morale

Revision Tip

There are two problems Germany faced in the period 1919–23:

- ◆ political violence, and
- ◆ hyperinflation.

Make sure you can explain how each one was linked to the Treaty of Versailles.

The impact of the Treaty on Germany

The Treaty of Versailles had a profound effect on Germany for the next ten years and more. The Treaty was universally resented. The historian Zara Steiner contends that hatred of the Versailles Treaty was almost the only issue which all Germans in this period agreed on.

Political violence

Right-wing opponents of Ebert's government could not bear the Treaty. In 1920 they attempted a revolution. This rising, called the Kapp Putsch, was defeated by a general strike by Berlin workers which paralysed essential services such as power and transport. It saved Ebert's government but it added to the chaos in Germany – and the bitterness of Germans towards the Treaty.

Although Kapp was defeated, political violence remained a constant threat. There were numerous political assassinations or attempted assassinations. In the summer of 1922 Germany's foreign minister Walther Rathenau was murdered by extremists. Then in November 1923 Adolf Hitler led an attempted rebellion in Munich, known as the Munich Putsch (see page 239). Hitler's rebellion was defeated but he was got off lightly when he was put on trial and it was clear many Germans shared his hatred of Versailles. Over the next ten years he exploited German resentment of the Treaty of Versailles to gain support for himself and his Nazi party.

Conflict in the Ruhr

Under the Treaty Germany agreed to pay \$6,600 million in reparations to the Allies. The first instalment of \$50 million was paid in 1921, but in 1922 nothing was paid. Ebert tried to negotiate concessions from the Allies, but the French ran out of patience. In 1923 French and Belgian soldiers entered the Ruhr region and simply took what was owed to them in the form of raw materials and goods. This was quite legal under the Treaty of Versailles.

The results of the occupation of the Ruhr were disastrous for Germany. The German government ordered the workers to go on strike so that they were not producing anything for the French to take. The French reacted harshly, killing over 100 workers and expelling over 100,000 protesters from the region. More importantly, the strike meant that Germany had no goods to trade, and no money to buy things with. This in turn led to hyperinflation (see below).

There is much debate about the developments in the Ruhr. Most Germans believed that the crisis arose because the reparations were too high and Germany was virtually bankrupted. Many commentators at the time (including the British and French leaders) claimed that Germany was quite able to afford reparations, it just did not want to pay! Some historians argue that Germany stopped paying reparations in order to create a crisis and force the international community to revise the terms of the Treaty. The debate goes on, but there is no doubt that most Germans at the time believed the Treaty was responsible for the crisis and that the reparations were far too high.

Hyperinflation

The government solved the problem of not having enough money by simply printing extra money, but this caused a new problem – hyperinflation. The money was virtually worthless so prices shot up. The price of goods could rise between joining the back of a queue in a shop and reaching the front (see page 234)! Wages began to be paid daily instead of weekly.

Some Germans gained from this disaster. The government and big industrialists were able to pay off their huge debts in worthless marks. But others, especially pensioners, were practically wiped out. A prosperous middle-class family would find that their savings, which might have bought a house in 1921, by 1923 would not even buy a loaf of bread.

Germany eventually recovered from this disaster, but it left a bitter memory. The bitterness was directed towards the Treaty of Versailles. It is no coincidence that when Germany faced economic problems again in 1929 many Germans believed Hitler's claims that the Treaty was to blame and they should support his plans to overturn it.

Summary

While the treaty did cause some genuine problems for Germany the important thing to realise is that many Germans blamed it for other problems which had little to do with it. This resentment was then in turn exploited by extreme groups in Germany to gain power and influence for themselves.

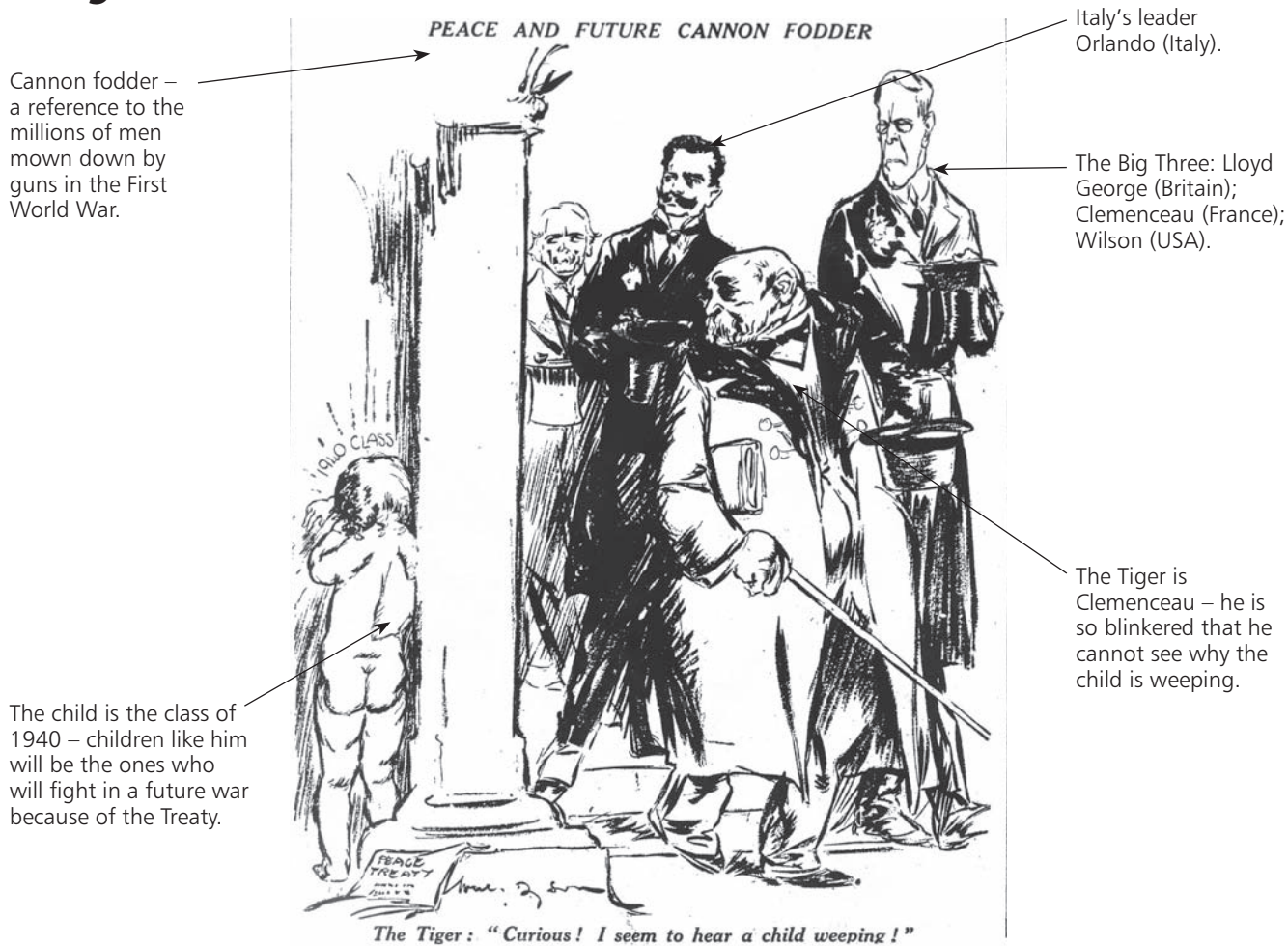
How was the Treaty seen at the time?

It was unfair!

None of the Big Three was happy with the Treaty (although for different reasons) and some of the diplomats who helped shape the Treaty were dissatisfied.

Some commentators at the time believed that the Treaty was unfair and unjust (see Source 9 for example).

SOURCE 9



A cartoon published in the socialist newspaper *The Daily Herald* in 1919.

SOURCE 10

The historian, with every justification, will come to the conclusion that we were very stupid men . . . We arrived determined that a Peace of justice and wisdom should be negotiated; we left the conference conscious that the treaties imposed upon our enemies were neither just nor wise.

Harold Nicolson, a British official who attended the talks.

Source 9 is probably the most famous cartoon produced about the Treaty of Versailles. The artist, Will Dyson, thought that the peacemakers were blind and selfish and as a result they produced a disastrous treaty that would cause another terrible war. It is a powerful cartoon. Because history proved it right (the cartoonist even gets the date of the Second World War almost right) this cartoon has been reproduced many times ever since, including in millions of school textbooks.

Another powerful critic of the Treaty was a British economist, John Maynard Keynes. He wrote a very critical book called *The Economic Consequences of The Peace* published in 1919. This book was widely read and accepted and has influenced the way people have looked at the Treaty.

It is easy to think that everyone felt this way about the Treaty – but they did not!

It was fair!

SOURCE 11

The Germans have given in ... They writhe at the obligation imposed on them to confess their guilt ... Some of the conditions, they affirm, are designed to deprive the German people of its honour ... They thought little of the honour of the nations whose territories they defiled with their barbarous and inhuman warfare for more than three awful years.

British newspaper *The Times*, 24 June 1919.

SOURCE 13

TERMS OF TREATY BETTER THAN GERMANY DESERVES WAR MAKERS MUST BE MADE TO SUFFER

Germany's chickens are coming home to roost, and she is making no end of a song about it. That was expected, but it will not help her much ... If Germany had her deserts, indeed, there would be no Germany left to bear any burden at all; she would be wiped off the map of Europe ... Stern justice would demand for Germany a punishment 10 times harder than any she will have to bear ...

The feeling in this country is not that Germany is being too hardly dealt by, but that she is being let off too lightly.

From the British newspaper *The People*, May 1919.

Source Analysis

- 1 Study Source 12. On your own copy, analyse Source 12 the way we have analysed Source 9 on page 16.
- 2 What does Source 13 reveal about British opinions on the Treaty?

At the time German complaints about the Treaty mostly fell on deaf ears. There were celebrations in Britain and France. If ordinary people in Britain had any reservations about the Treaty it was more likely to be that it was not harsh enough.

- Many people felt that the Germans were themselves operating a double standard. Their call for fairer treatment did not square with the harsh way they had treated Russia in the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in 1918. Versailles was a much less harsh treaty than Brest-Litovsk.
- There was also the fact that Germany's economic problems, although real, were partly self-inflicted. Other states had raised taxes to pay for the war. The Kaiser's government had not done this. It had simply allowed debts to mount up because it had planned to pay Germany's war debts by extracting reparations from the defeated states.

SOURCE 12



A British cartoon published in 1919.

How has the Treaty been seen with hindsight?

Looking back at the Treaty from the present day we know that it helped to create the cruel Nazi regime in Germany and helped cause the Second World War. We call this hindsight – when you look back at a historical event and judge it knowing its consequences. You would expect hindsight to affect historians' attitudes to the Treaty and it has – but maybe not exactly as you might expect.

Some historians side with critics of the Treaty and its makers. Others point out that the majority of people outside Germany thought that the Treaty was fair and that a more generous treaty would have been totally unacceptable to public opinion in Britain and France. They highlight that the peacemakers had a very difficult job balancing public opinion in their own countries with visions of a fairer future. Some say that the Treaty may have been the best that could be achieved in the circumstances.

SOURCE 14

The Treaty of Versailles has been repeatedly pilloried, most famously in John Maynard Keynes' pernicious but brilliant The Economic Consequences of the Peace, published at the end of 1919 and still the argument underpinning too many current textbooks ... The Treaty of Versailles was not excessively harsh. Germany was not destroyed. Nor was it reduced to a second rank power or permanently prevented from returning to great power status ... With the disintegration of Austria-Hungary and the collapse of Tsarist Russia it left Germany in a stronger strategic position than before the war ... The Versailles Treaty was, nonetheless, a flawed treaty. It failed to solve the problem of both punishing and conciliating a country that remained a great power despite the four years of fighting and a military defeat. It could hardly have been otherwise, given the very different aims of the peacemakers, not to speak of the multiplicity of problems that they faced, many of which lay beyond their competence or control.

Historian Zara Steiner writing in 2004.

SOURCE 15

The peacemakers of 1919 made mistakes, of course. By their offhand treatment of the non-European world they stirred up resentments for which the West is still paying today. They took pains over the borders in Europe, even if they did not draw them to everyone's satisfaction, but in Africa they carried on the old practice of handing out territory to suit the imperialist powers. In the Middle East they threw together peoples, in Iraq most notably, who still have not managed to cohere into a civil society. If they could have done better, they certainly could have done much worse. They tried, even cynical old Clemenceau, to build a better order. They could not foresee the future and they certainly could not control it. That was up to their successors. When war came in 1939, it was a result of twenty years of decisions taken or not taken, not of arrangements made in 1919.

Historian Margaret MacMillan writing in *Peacemakers*, 2001.

Focus Task

Look back at your work in Focus Task B on page 13. Have you changed your views after reading the information and sources on these three pages?

Factfile

The other peace settlements

Treaty of St Germain 1919

- Dealt with Austria.
- Austria's army was limited to 30,000 men and it was forbidden to unite with Germany.
- The Austro-Hungarian empire was broken up, creating a patchwork of new states in central and eastern Europe including Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.
- Many of these new states contained large minority groups such as the large number of Germans in the Sudetenland area of Czechoslovakia.
- Austria suffered severe economic problems as a result of the Treaty.

Treaty of Neuilly 1919

- Dealt with Bulgaria.
- Bulgaria lost land to Greece, Romania and Yugoslavia.
- Army was limited to 20,000 and it had to pay £10 million in reparations.
- Bulgaria was probably treated less harshly than Germany's other allies overall.

Treaty of Trianon 1920

- Dealt with Hungary.
- Hungary lost territory to Romania, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.
- Hungary was due to pay reparations but its economy was so weak it never did.

Treaty of Sevres 1920

- Dealt with Turkey.
- Turkey lost lands to Bulgaria, Italy and Greece (see Source 16) and also lost much of its empire along with Tunisia and Morocco.
- Armed forces limited to 50,000 men, navy strictly limited and no air force at all.

The other peace settlements

The Treaty of Versailles dealt with Germany, but Germany had allies in the First World War (Austria–Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey) and there were four other treaties which dealt with them.

The Versailles Treaty usually gets the most attention but these other treaties were important, too. They set out what Europe and the Middle East would look like for the next few decades and in many ways these treaties still have a powerful impact on the world today. Looking at the other treaties may also help you to decide whether you think the Treaty of Versailles was fair. To help with this, we are going to look in more detail at just one other treaty, the Treaty of Sevres.

The Treaty of Sevres 1920

This Treaty was signed in August 1920. As you can see from Source 16, Turkey lost a substantial amount of territory and its original empire was broken up. Most historians agree it was a harsh treaty. As well as losing the territories shown in Source 16 parts of Turkey were defined as zones of influence controlled by the British, French or Italians. Armenia and Kurdistan became independent regions. Turkey's tax system, finances and budget were to be controlled by the Allies. Turkey had long been a great and proud empire and Turks were angered and humiliated by the terms.

What were the Allies trying to achieve?

SOURCE 16



Treaty of Sevres (1920)

Remaining Turkish territory

Possible Kurdish territory

Territory ceded to:

Armenia

Greece

France (France also took Tunisia and Morocco in Western North Africa)

Britain

Zones of influence

France

Britain

Italy

International control, demilitarised

What the Allies said *in public*:

- All of the Big Three agreed that Turkey's time as a great power had to end.
- Turkey had been unstable for some time. Many of its people (including Greeks, Armenians and Arab peoples) wanted independence so the Treaty should try to establish stable new states in Eastern Europe and the Middle East.
- They agreed that Turkey would be punished for supporting Germany in the war.
- President Wilson was keen for Armenia to become an independent state and that Armenians should rule themselves.

What was going on *behind the scenes*:

- Italy essentially wanted Turkish territory as a reward for supporting the Allies in the First World War.
- France and Britain wanted to strengthen or extend their empires and especially their commercial interests. France, Britain and Italy actually signed a secret Tripartite Agreement in August 1920 in which they effectively protected their commercial interests. Britain was particularly interested in the oilfields of Iraq and already had a large involvement in the oil industry of neighbouring Iran.
- Britain had made promises to Arab peoples in return for their help in the war but was effectively unable or unwilling to honour these promises.

Did the Treaty bring peace and stability?

The simple answer is no!

Originally the Turkish government intended to accept the Treaty even though almost all Turks were outraged by its terms. However, Turkish nationalists under Mustafa Kemal Pasha set up a new Grand Assembly. They stopped the government signing the treaty and began to reverse the Treaty terms by force. The nationalists were unable to restore the Turkish empire's territories but they drove the Greeks out of Smyrna and forced the French to negotiate withdrawing from Turkish territory. They reached terms with the British over access to the Straits.

Wilson was unable to get support at home for his policies on Armenia. Armenia was forced to abandon its hope of becoming an independent state and opted to become part of the Soviet Union rather than be forced to become part of Turkey. There were many alleged atrocities in the fighting, such as the burning of Smyrna. However, the most controversial was the forced movement and mass killing of Armenians, which today is regarded as genocide by Armenians and most historians although Turkey rejects this claim bitterly.

Treaty of Lausanne 1923

Eventually the changes that the Turks had brought about were recognised in the Treaty of Lausanne. Smyrna, Anatolia and parts of Thrace became Turkish lands. Turkey's borders were fixed more or less as they are today.

Revision Tip

It will help you answer questions about the period if you can name at least one of the treaties; who it affected; plus one way it was similar and one way it was different from the Treaty of Versailles.

Focus Task

Were the peace treaties fair?

The key question for this topic is 'Were the peace treaties fair?' If you compare the Treaty of Versailles with another treaty it should help you reach a judgement.

- 1 The table below lists various features of the Treaty of Sevres. Work in pairs or small groups and discuss the features and fill out the centre columns of this table to judge whether you think this feature was fair. Use a score of 1–5 where 1 is not at all fair; 5 is very fair.
- 2 Now think about the Treaty of Versailles. See if you can agree on whether Turkey was treated in a similar way to Germany. Make a table with three headings: 'Feature of Sevres'; 'Fair? (Give reasons)'; and 'Similar or different to treatment of Germany? (Give examples)'. Consider the following features of Sevres:

| | |
|---|--|
| ◆ Allies wanted to punish Turkey | ◆ Control of Turkey's finances |
| ◆ Allies wanted to achieve peace and stability | ◆ Loss of territories |
| ◆ Allies had differing aims and also looked after their own interests | ◆ Loss of empire |
| ◆ Treaty terms were imposed on Turkish government | ◆ Foreign forces controlling areas of Turkey |
| ◆ Strict controls on Turkish military | ◆ Resentment of Turkish people |
| | ◆ Violent resistance against terms |
| | ◆ Renegotiated. |
- 3 Now reach your judgement: do you think that the Treaty of Sevres was more or less fair than the Treaty of Versailles? Make sure you can give reasons.

Keywords

Make sure you know what these terms mean and be able to define them confidently.

Essential

- ◆ Anschluss
- ◆ Big Three
- ◆ demilitarised zone
- ◆ democracy
- ◆ disarmament
- ◆ Fourteen Points
- ◆ hyperinflation
- ◆ idealist/realist
- ◆ Kapp Putsch
- ◆ League of Nations
- ◆ mandates
- ◆ Paris Peace Conference
- ◆ reparations
- ◆ Rhineland
- ◆ Ruhr
- ◆ Saar
- ◆ self-determination
- ◆ Treaty of Brest-Litovsk
- ◆ Treaty of Versailles
- ◆ war guilt
- ◆ Young Plan

Useful

- ◆ co-operation
- ◆ conscription
- ◆ free trade
- ◆ general strike
- ◆ hindsight
- ◆ public opinion
- ◆ right-wing
- ◆ secret treaties
- ◆ territories

Chapter Summary

The peace treaties after the First World War

- 1** The Paris Peace Conference was set up to sort out what would happen to the defeated countries after the First World War.
- 2** The Conference was dominated by 'The Big Three': Wilson, Clemenceau and Lloyd George representing the USA, France and Britain (the countries that won the war).
- 3** The Big Three did not agree on many things. In particular they disagreed on how to treat Germany, the League of Nations and Wilson's Fourteen Points.
- 4** There were a number of Treaties – one for each of the defeated countries. The Treaty of Versailles was the treaty that dealt with Germany.
- 5** The main terms of the Treaty of Versailles were that Germany accepted blame for starting the war; had to pay reparations; lost land, industry, population and colonies; and was forced to disarm.
- 6** People in Germany were appalled by the Treaty but Germany had no choice but to sign it.
- 7** Germany had many post-war problems such as attempted revolutions and hyperinflation, which they blamed on the Treaty. But the Treaty was not the sole reason for these problems.
- 8** The Treaty also set up a League of Nations whose role was to enforce the Treaty of Versailles and to help prevent another war.
- 9** Opinion on the Treaty of Versailles varied at the time: some people thought it was too lenient on Germany, others that it was too harsh and would lead to Germany wanting revenge.
- 10** The other treaties dealt with Germany's allies and were built on similar principles to the Treaty of Versailles.

Exam Practice

See pages 168–175 and pages 316–319 for advice on the different types of questions you might face.

- 1** (a) What were the main terms of the Treaty of Versailles? **[4]**
 (b) What impact did the Treaty of Versailles have on Germany up to 1923? **[6]**
 (c) 'The Treaty of Versailles was fair on Germany.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer. **[10]**
- 2** Study Source 12 on page 17. What is the message of the cartoonist? Explain your answer by using details of the source and your own knowledge. **[7]**
- 3** Study Source 13 on page 17. Does this source prove that the Versailles settlement was fair to Germany? Explain your answer by using details of the source and your own knowledge. **[7]**



2

To what extent was the League of Nations a success?

FOCUS POINTS

- How successful was the League in the 1920s?
- How far did weaknesses in the League's organisation make failure inevitable?
- How far did the Depression make the work of the League more difficult?
- How successful was the League in the 1930s?

You saw in Chapter 1 that setting up a League Nations was one of Woodrow Wilson's key ideas for preventing another war. He saw the League as an organisation that would solve international disputes. He hoped that if the Great Powers had to talk to each other they would no longer need or even want to make secret alliances as they did before the First World War. He thought the League would protect smaller nations from aggression – if they had concerns then the League would be a place where their case would be heard by the world.

Without spoiling the story Wilson's original plan for the League never happened! This chapter will explain why. However, a scaled-down version of the League was created. How well did it do?

On the one hand people argue that the League achieved a lot.

- ◆ Its humanitarian agencies helped the sick, the poor and the homeless.
- ◆ Its financial agencies helped to stabilise several economies after the war.
- ◆ The League handled 66 major international disputes between the wars and was successful in half of them.

However, the League was unsuccessful in the larger international disputes involving the major powers. The League failed to stop the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931 and Italy's invasion of Abyssinia in 1935, which had disastrous consequences for international relations in Europe.

So your key question in this chapter is to judge **to what extent** the League succeeded. This is not a question with a 'Yes' or 'No' answer. To tackle a 'to what extent' question you need to:

- ◆ weigh the League's successes against its failures
- ◆ compare the aims of the League with what it actually achieved
- ◆ assess whether the failures were the fault of the League or other factors and particularly:
 - how far the League's **organisation** weakened it
 - how far the League was let down by its own **members** and the other Great Powers
 - how far the League's work was hampered by the worldwide economic **Depression** that made the 1930s a dark and dangerous time.

This chapter takes you step by step through those questions so you can reach your own view on this key question: '**To what extent** was the League of Nations a success?'

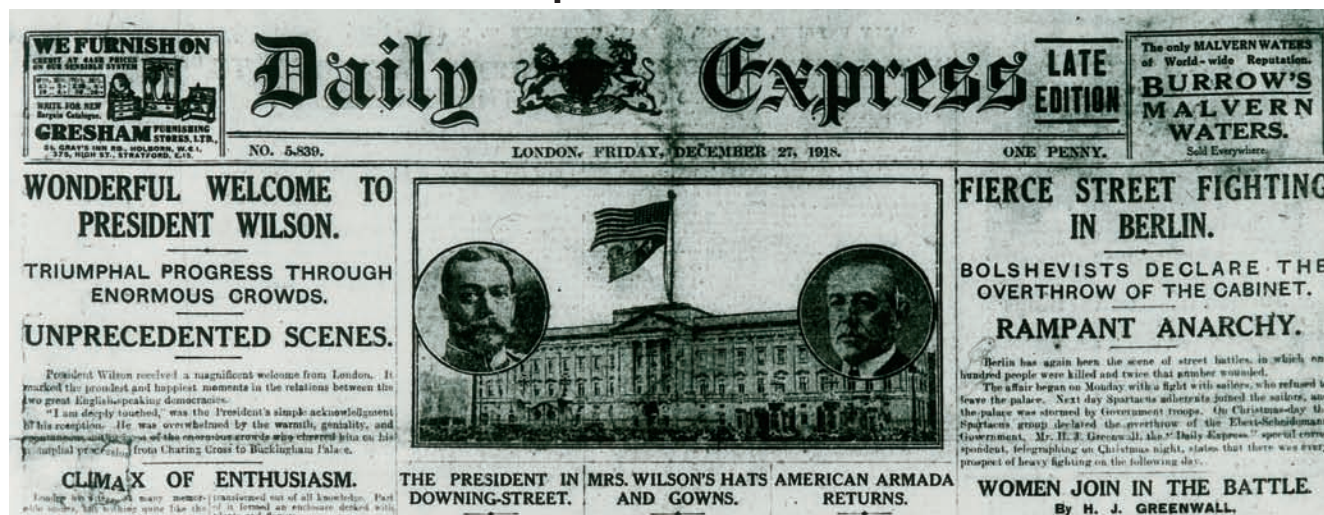
◀ This picture was used as the menu card for a League of Nations banquet in the 1930s. It shows Briand (one of the most influential figures in the League) as Moses leading the statesmen of the world towards the 'Promised Land'. The sunrise is labelled 'The United States of Europe'. Discuss:

- 1 What impression does this picture give you of the League?
- 2 Does this picture surprise you? Why or why not?

2.1 How successful was the League in the 1920s?

The birth of the League

SOURCE 1



The front page of the *Daily Express*, 27 December 1918. Following the Allied victory in the First World War, President Woodrow Wilson was given a rapturous reception by ordinary people wherever he went in Europe.

SOURCE 2

Merely to win the war was not enough. It must be won in such a way as to ensure the future peace of the world.

President Woodrow Wilson, 1918.

Think!

Which of the three kinds of League proposed by the Allies do you think would be the best at keeping peace?

- ◆ a world parliament
- ◆ a simple organisation for emergencies only
- ◆ strong with its own army.

SOURCE 3

[If the European powers] had dared to discuss their problems for a single fortnight in 1914 the First World War would never have happened. If they had been forced to discuss them for a whole year, war would have been inconceivable.

President Wilson speaking in 1918.

After the First World War everyone wanted to avoid repeating the mass slaughter of the war that had just ended. They also agreed that a League of Nations – an organisation that could solve international problems without resorting to war – would help achieve this. However, there was disagreement about what kind of organisation it should be.

- President Wilson wanted the League of Nations to be like a **world parliament** where representatives of all nations could meet together regularly to decide on any matters that affected them all.
- Many British leaders thought the best League would be a **simple organisation** that would just get together in emergencies. An organisation like this already existed. It was called the Conference of Ambassadors.
- France proposed a **strong League with its own army**.

It was President Wilson who won. He insisted that discussions about a League should be a major part of the peace treaties and in 1919 he took personal charge of drawing up plans for the League. By February he had drafted a very ambitious plan.

All the major nations would join the League. They would disarm. If they had a dispute with another country, they would take it to the League. They promised to accept the decision made by the League. They also promised to protect one another if they were invaded. If any member did break the Covenant (see page 28) and go to war, other members promised to stop trading with it and to send troops if necessary to force it to stop fighting. Wilson's hope was that citizens of all countries would be so much against another conflict that this would prevent their leaders from going to war.

The plan was prepared in a great hurry and critics suggested there was some woolly thinking. Some people were angered by Wilson's arrogant style. He acted as if only he knew the solutions to Europe's problems. Others were worried by his idealism. Under threat of war, would the public really behave in the way he suggested? Would countries really do what the League said? Wilson glossed over what the League would do if they didn't.

Even so, most people in Europe were prepared to give Wilson's plans a try. They hoped that no country would dare invade another if they knew that the USA and other powerful nations of the world would stop trading with them or send their armies to stop them. In 1919 hopes were high that the League, with the United States in the driving seat, could be a powerful peacemaker.

Think!

Source 4 may not sound the most riveting of speeches but maybe that explains why Wilson sometimes got people's backs up and failed to convince people of his point of view. If you were a modern spin doctor asked to spice up this speech what would you add or take away? (You can read the full speech on the internet at the Spartacus Educational website.)

SOURCE 4

For the first time in history the counsels of mankind are to be drawn together and concerted for the purpose of defending the rights and improving the conditions of working people – men, women, and children – all over the world. Such a thing as that was never dreamed of before, and what you are asked to discuss in discussing the League of Nations is the matter of seeing that this thing is not interfered with. There is no other way to do it than by a universal league of nations, and what is proposed is a universal league of nations.

Extract from a speech by President Woodrow Wilson to an American audience in 1919.

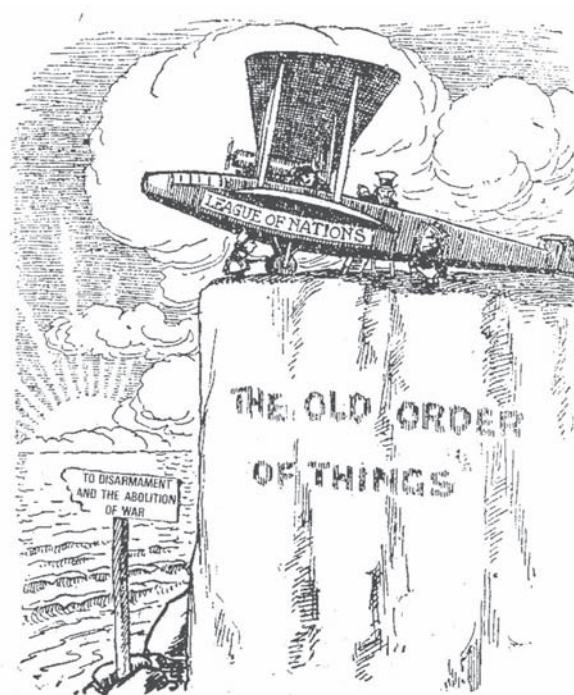
SOURCE 5A



OVERWEIGHTED.

PRESIDENT WILSON. "HERE'S YOUR OLIVE BRANCH. NOW GET BUSY."
DOVE OF PEACE. "OF COURSE I WANT TO PLEASE EVERYBODY; BUT ISN'T THIS A BIT THICK?"

SOURCE 5B



READY TO START.

Two British cartoons from 1919/1920.

Source Analysis ▲

Work in pairs. One of you work with Source 5A and the other work with Source 5B.

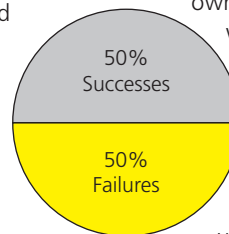
- 1 What is the message of your cartoon? Make sure that you explain what details in the cartoon help to get this message across.
- 2 Is your cartoon optimistic or pessimistic about the League of Nations? Give reasons.
- 3 Compare your ideas with your partner's, then write a paragraph comparing the two cartoons.

Focus Task

How successful was the League of Nations in the 1920s?

Your prediction

You may already have formed an opinion on the League of Nations – but if you haven't, even better! Make your prediction as to how successful you think the League will be *in the 1920s*. For example, how successful do you think it will be in settling the problems left over from the First World War?



To record your prediction, make your own copy of this diagram, but with one difference. Redraw the segments to show how successful *you* think it is going to be. Draw your own diagram large and put it somewhere you can refer to it again as you will be asked to check back a number of times to reconsider your prediction.

Think!

Study Source 6. Write a ten-word slogan summarising each reason for opposing the USA's membership of the League.

A body blow to the League

Back in the USA, however, Woodrow Wilson had problems. Before the USA could even join the League, let alone take a leading role, he needed the approval of his Congress (the American 'Parliament'). And in the USA the idea of a League was not at all popular, as you can see from Source 6.

SOURCE 6



The league was supposed to enforce the Treaty of Versailles yet some Americans, particularly the millions who had German ancestors, hated the Treaty itself.



If the League imposed sanctions (e.g. stopping trade with a country that was behaving aggressively) it might be American trade and business that suffered most!



Some feared that joining the League meant sending US soldiers to settle every little conflict around the world. No one wanted that after casualties of the First World War.



Some feared that the League would be dominated by Britain or France – and would be called to help defend their empires! Many in the US were anti-empires.

Reasons for opposition to the League in the USA.

Source Analysis ►

- 1 What is the message of the cartoon in Source 7?
- 2 Explain how the bridge in the cartoon might have been seen by
 - a) supporters
 - b) opponents of the League.

SOURCE 7



An American cartoon reprinted in the British newspaper the *Star*, June 1919.

Together, the critics of Wilson's plans (see Source 6) put up powerful opposition to the League. They were joined by Wilson's many other political opponents. Wilson's Democratic Party had run the USA for eight troubled years. Its opponents saw the League as an ideal opportunity to defeat

him. Wilson toured the USA to put his arguments to the people, but when Congress voted in 1919 he was defeated.

In 1920 Wilson became seriously ill after a stroke. Despite that, he continued to press for the USA to join the League. He took the proposal back to Congress again in March 1920, but they defeated it by 49 votes to 35.

SOURCE 8



A British cartoon from 1920. The figure in the white top hat represents the USA.

Source Analysis ▲

Source 8 is one of the most famous cartoons about the League of Nations. On your own copy of the cartoon add annotations to explain the key features. Then write your own summary of the message of the cartoonist.

Still the Democrats did not give up. They were convinced that if the USA did not get involved in international affairs, another world war might follow. In the 1920 election Wilson could not run for President – he was too ill – but his successor made membership of the League a major part of the Democrat campaign. The Republican candidate, Warren Harding, on the other hand, campaigned for America to be isolationist (i.e. not to get involved in international alliance but follow its own policies and self-interest). His slogan was to ‘return to normalcy’, by which he meant life as it was before the war, with the USA isolating itself from European affairs. The Republicans won a landslide victory.

So when the League opened for business in January 1920 the American chair was empty. The USA never joined. This was a personal rebuff for Wilson and the Democrats, but it was also a body blow to the League.

Think!

Look back to your prediction from the Focus Task on page 25. Do you want to change your prediction in light of the fact that the USA has not joined the league?

Revision Tip

Be sure you can remember:

- ◆ at least two reasons why some Americans were opposed to the USA joining the League (see Source 6)
- ◆ what isolationism means and how it affected the USA's decision.

Factfile

The League of Nations

- The League's home was in Geneva in Switzerland.
- Despite it being the brainchild of the US President, the USA was never a member of the League.
- The most influential part of the League was the Council – a small group representing the most powerful members. But it was a vast organisation with lots of different parts to fulfil different functions (see chart on pages 30–31).
- The League did not have its own army. But it could call on the armies of its members if necessary.
- One of the jobs of the League was to uphold and enforce the Treaty of Versailles. This included running some of the territories (mandates) that had belonged to the defeated countries.
- Forty-two countries joined the League at the start. By the 1930s it had 59 members.

The five giants represent the five continents of the Earth. The giants are standing firm together.



At the giants' feet, leaders of all the nations are working, reading and talking together. The League's members come from all five continents. The League believed that strength came from unity.

The aims of the League

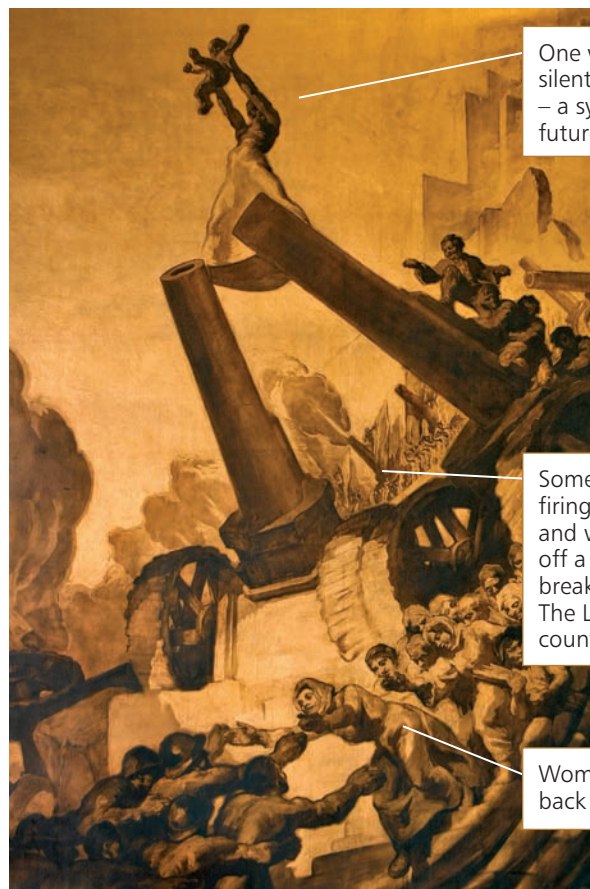
A Covenant set out the aims of the League of Nations. These were:

- to discourage aggression from any nation
- to encourage countries to co-operate, especially in business and trade
- to encourage nations to disarm
- to improve the living and working conditions of people in all parts of the world.

Article 10

The Covenant set out 26 Articles or rules, which all members of the League agreed to follow. Probably the most important Article was Article 10. 'The members of the League undertake to preserve against external aggression the territory and existing independence of all members of the League. In case of threat of danger the Council [of the League] shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled.' Article 10 really meant **collective security**. By acting together (collectively), the members of the League could prevent war by defending the lands and interests of all nations, large or small.

SOURCE 9



One woman stands astride two silent guns holding her baby – a symbol of hope for the future.

Some of the guns are still firing but, one by one, men and women are pushing them off a precipice where they will break up and be unusable. The League tried to persuade countries to disarm.

Women welcome their men back from war.

Wall paintings by the famous Spanish artist José Maria Sert that decorate the Assembly Chamber in the League's Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. They were designed to show the aims and values of the League.

Revision Tip

Make sure you can remember the four aims of the League. The initial letters may help you as they spell out AC/DC.

Think!

The League had four main aims:

- ◆ Discourage aggression
- ◆ Encourage co-operation
- ◆ Encourage disarmament
- ◆ Improve living conditions.

As you work through the chapter note down examples that you think could be used as

- ◆ Evidence of success
 - ◆ Evidence of failure in each of the aims.
- You could record your evidence in a table.

Membership of the League

In the absence of the USA, Britain and France were the most powerful countries in the League. Italy and Japan were also permanent members of the Council, but throughout the 1920s and 1930s it was Britain and France who usually guided policy. Any action by the League needed their support.

However, both countries were poorly placed to take on this role. Both had been weakened by the First World War. Neither country was quite the major power it had once been. Neither of them had the resources to fill the gap left by the USA. Indeed, some British politicians said that if they had foreseen the American decision, they would not have voted to join the League either. They felt that the Americans were the only nation with the resources or influence to make the League work. In particular, they felt that trade sanctions would only work if the Americans applied them.

For the leaders of Britain and France the League posed a real problem. They were the ones who had to make it work, yet even at the start they doubted how effective it could be.

SOURCE 10

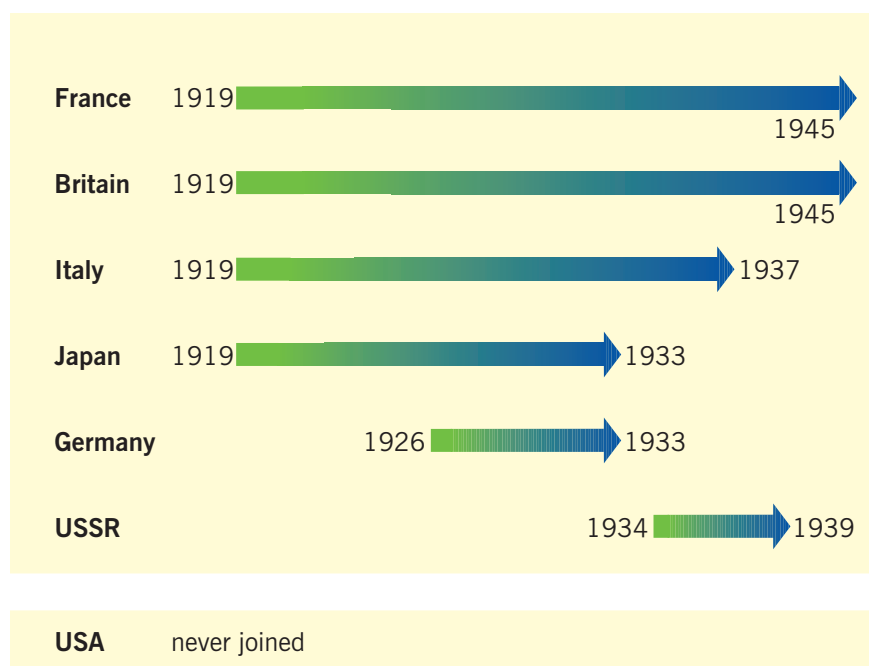
The League of Nations is not set up to deal with a world in chaos, or with any part of the world which is in chaos. The League of Nations may give assistance but it is not, and cannot be, a complete instrument for bringing order out of chaos.

Arthur Balfour, chief British representative at the League of Nations, speaking in 1920.

Both countries had other priorities.

- British politicians, for example, were more interested in rebuilding British trade and looking after the British empire than in being an international police force.
- France's main concern was still Germany. It was worried that without an army of its own the League was too weak to protect France from its powerful neighbour. It did not think Britain was likely to send an army to help it. This made France quite prepared to bypass the League if necessary in order to strengthen its position against Germany.

SOURCE 11



Membership of the League of Nations. This chart shows only the most powerful nations. More than 50 other countries were also members.

Think!

- 1 List the strengths and weaknesses of Britain and France as leaders of the League of Nations.
- 2 France proposed that the League should have an army of its own. Why do you think most people opposed this?
- 3 Think back to Wilson's ideas for the League. What problems would be caused by the fact that:
 - a) the USA
 - b) Germany
 were not members of the League?

Think!

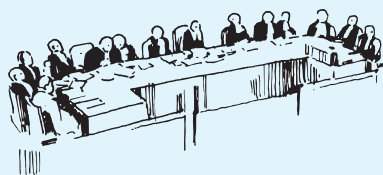
- 1 Study the diagram. Which part of the League would deal with the following problems:
 - a) an outbreak of a new infectious disease
 - b) a border dispute between two countries
 - c) accidents caused by dangerous machinery in factories
 - d) complaints from people in Palestine that the British were not running the mandated territory properly?

Organisation of the League

The Covenant laid out the League's structure and the rules for each of the bodies within it – see the diagram below.

The Assembly

- The Assembly was the League's Parliament. Every country in the League sent a representative to the Assembly.
- The Assembly could recommend action to the Council and could vote on:
 - admitting new members to the League
 - appointing temporary members of the Council
 - the budget of the League
 - other ideas put forward by the Council.
- The Assembly only met **once a year**.
- Decisions made by the Assembly had to be **unanimous** – they had to be agreed by all members of the Assembly.

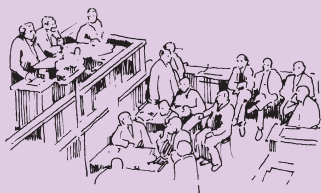


The Council

- The Council was a smaller group than the Assembly, which met more often, usually about five times a year or more often in case of emergency. It included:
 - permanent members. In 1920 these were Britain, France, Italy and Japan.
 - temporary members. They were elected by the Assembly for three-year periods. The number of temporary members varied between four and nine at different times in the League's history.
- Each of the permanent members of the Council had a **veto**. This meant that one permanent member could stop the Council acting even if all other members agreed.
- The main idea behind the Council was that if any disputes arose between members, the members brought the problem to the Council and it was sorted out through discussion before matters got out of hand. However, if this did not work, the Council could use a range of powers:
 - **Moral condemnation:** they could decide which country was 'the aggressor', i.e. which country was to blame for the trouble. They could condemn the aggressor's action and tell it to stop what it was doing.
 - **Economic and financial sanctions:** members of the League could refuse to trade with the aggressor.
 - **Military force:** the armed forces of member countries could be used against an aggressor.

The Permanent Court of International Justice

- This was meant to play a key role in the League's work of settling disputes between countries peacefully.
- The Court was based at the Hague in the Netherlands and was made up of judges from the member countries.
- If it was asked, the Court would give a decision on a border dispute between two countries.
- It also gave legal advice to the Assembly or Council.
- However, the Court had no way of making sure that countries followed its rulings.



The Secretariat

- The Secretariat was a sort of civil service.
- It kept records of League meetings and prepared reports for the different agencies of the League.
- The Secretariat had specialist sections covering areas such as health, disarmament and economic matters.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO)

- The ILO brought together employers, governments and workers' representatives once a year.
- Its aim was to improve the conditions of working people throughout the world.
- It collected statistics and information about working conditions and it tried to persuade member countries to adopt its suggestions.



The League of Nations Commissions

As well as dealing with disputes between its members, the League also attempted to tackle other major problems. This was done through agencies, commissions or committees. The table below sets out the aims of some of these agencies and the scale of some of the problems facing them.

The Mandates Commissions

The First World War had led to many former colonies of Germany and her allies ending up as League of Nations mandates ruled by Britain and France on behalf of the League. The Mandates Commission was made up of teams of expert advisers whose job was to report to the League on how people in the mandates were being treated. The aim of the Commission was to make sure that Britain or France acted in the interests of the people of that territory, not its own interests. The Commission also took charge of the welfare of minority groups within other states, particularly the new territories created by the Peace Treaties of 1919–23.



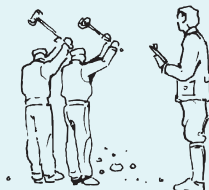
The Refugees Committee

At the end of the First World War there were hundreds of thousands of refugees who had fled from the areas of conflict. Some were trying to get back to their homes; others had no homes to go to. The most pressing problems were in former Russian territories: the Balkans, Greece, Armenia and Turkey. In 1927 the League reported that there were 750 000 refugees from former Russian territories and 168 000 Armenians. The League appointed the famous explorer Fridtjof Nansen to oversee the efforts to return refugees to their homes or help refugees to settle and find work in new countries. It was a mammoth task.



The Slavery Commission

This Commission worked to abolish slavery around the world. It was a particular issue in East Africa but slavery was also a major concern in many other parts of the world. And there were also many workers who were not technically slaves but were treated like slaves.



The Health Committee

The Health Committee attempted to deal with the problem of dangerous diseases and to educate people about health and sanitation. The First World War had brought about rapid developments in medicine and ideas about public health and disease prevention. The Health Committee worked with charities and many other independent agencies to collect statistics about health issues, to spread the new ideas and to develop programmes to fight disease.



Focus Task

Were there weaknesses in the League's organisation?

Here is a conversation which might have taken place between two diplomats in 1920.

Peace at last! The League of Nations will keep large and small nations secure.



I'm not sure. It might look impressive but I think there are weaknesses in the League.

- 1 Work in pairs. Choose one statement each and write out the reasons each diplomat might give for his opinion. In your answer make sure you refer to:
 - ◆ the membership of the League
 - ◆ what the main bodies within the League can do
 - ◆ how each body will make decisions
 - ◆ how the League will enforce its decisions.
- 2 Go back to your diagram from page 25 and see if you want to change your predictions about how successful the League will be.

Revision Tip

This is quite a complex chart. Your main aim is to be sure you know the difference between the League's Council and its Assembly.

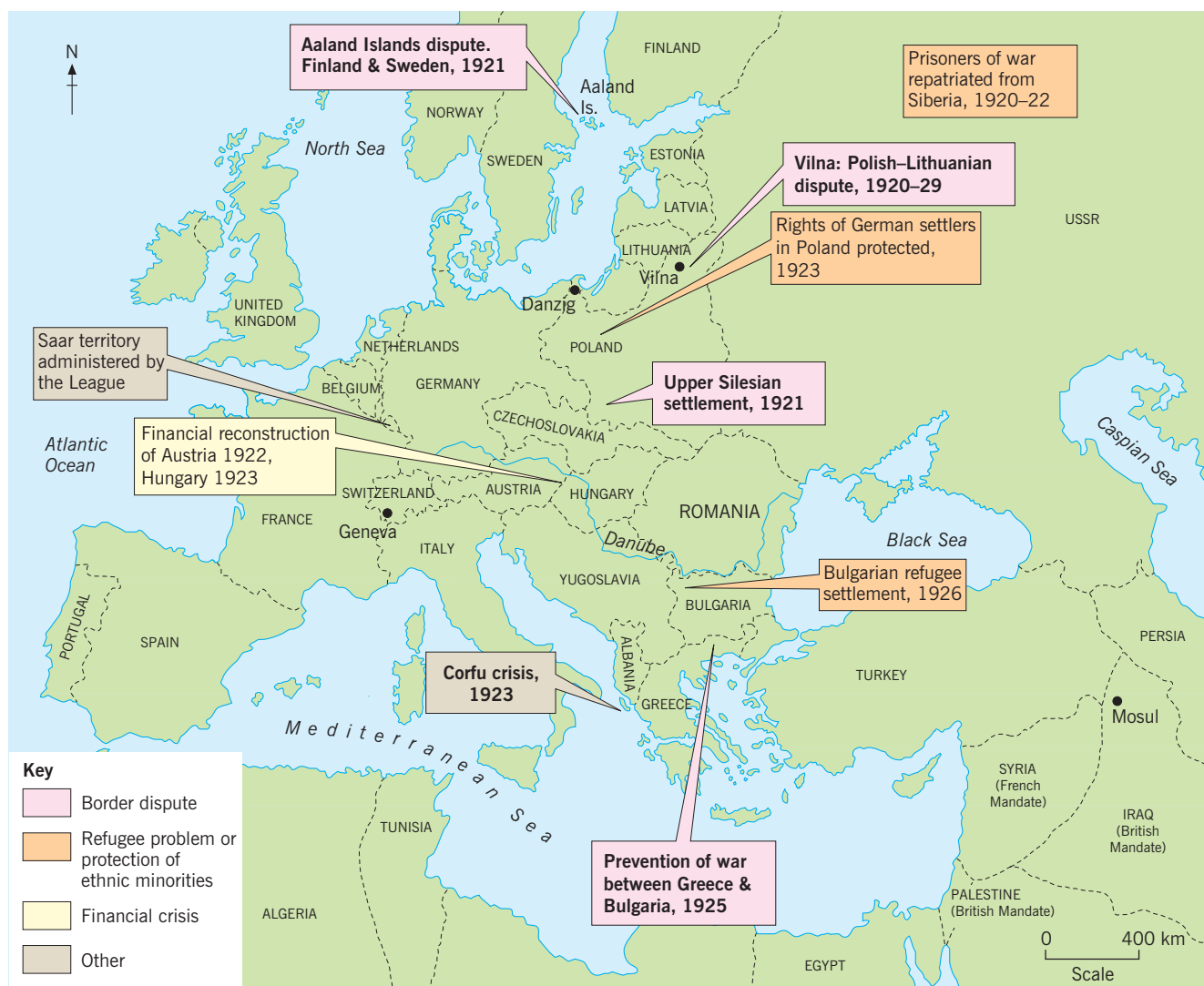
Think!

Five of the problems shown in Source 12 are described on pages 33–4. They are highlighted in bold text on the map on this page. As you read about each one, score the League's success on a scale of –5 (a total failure) to +5 (a great success).

The League and border disputes in the 1920s

The treaties signed at the Paris Peace Conference had created new states and changed the borders of others. Inevitably this led to disputes and was the job of the League to sort out border disputes. From the start there was so much to do that some disputes were handled by the Conference of Ambassadors. Strictly this was not a body of the League of Nations. But it was made up of leading politicians from the main members of the League – Britain, France and Italy – so it was very closely linked to the League. As you can see from Source 12 the 1920s was a busy time.

SOURCE 12



Problems dealt with by the League of Nations or the Conference of Ambassadors in the 1920s. The problems in bold text are described on pages 33–4.

This map actually shows only a few of the disputes which involved the League in this period. We have highlighted some of the more important ones. For example:

- In 1920 Poland effectively took control of the Lithuanian capital Vilna. Lithuania appealed to the League and the League protested to Poland but the Poles did not pull out. France and Britain were not prepared to act.
- In 1921 a dispute broke out between Germany and Poland over the Upper Silesia region. In the end, the League oversaw a peaceful

plebiscite (vote) and divided the region between Germany and Poland. Both countries accepted the decision.

- Also in 1921, the League ruled on a dispute between Finland and Sweden over the Aaland Islands. Both sides were threatening to go to war but in the end Sweden accepted the League's ruling that the islands should belong to Finland.

We are now going to look at two other disputes in more detail.

SOURCE 13

The League had been designed to deal with just such a dangerous problem as this. It had acted promptly and fairly and it had condemned the violence of the Italians. But it had lost the initiative. The result was that a great power had once again got away with using force against a small power.

Historians Gibbons and Morican referring to the Corfu crisis in *The League of Nations and the UNO*, 1970.

SOURCE 14

The settlement of the dispute between Italy and Greece, though not strictly a League victory, upheld the principles on which it was based.

From J and G Stokes, *Europe and the Modern World*, 1973.

Source Analysis ▲

- 1 Sources 13 and 14 are referring to the same event. How do their interpretations differ?
- 2 Could they both be right? Explain your answer.
- 3 'The main problem in the Corfu crisis was not the League's organisation but the attitude of its own members.' Explain whether you agree.

Corfu, 1923

One of the boundaries that had to be sorted out after the war was the border between Greece and Albania. The Conference of Ambassadors was given this job and it appointed an Italian general called Tellini to supervise it. On 27 August, while they were surveying the Greek side of the frontier area, Tellini and his team were ambushed and killed. The Italian leader Mussolini was furious and blamed the Greek government for the murder. On 29 August he demanded that it pay compensation to Italy and execute the murderers. The Greeks, however, had no idea who the murderers were. On 31 August Mussolini bombarded and then occupied the Greek island of Corfu. Fifteen people were killed. Greece appealed to the League for help. The situation was serious. It seemed very like the events of 1914 that had triggered the First World War. Fortunately, the Council was already in session, so the League acted swiftly. Articles 12 and 15 of the League of Nations were designed for exactly this situation. Under these articles, when League members were in dispute and there was a danger of war, members could take their dispute to the Council and get a judgement. By 7 September it had prepared its judgement. It condemned Mussolini's actions. It also suggested that Greece pay compensation but that the money be held by the League. This money would then be paid to Italy if, and when, Tellini's killers were found.

However, Mussolini refused to let the matter rest. He insisted that this dispute had to be settled by the Council of Ambassadors because the Council of the League was not competent to deal with the issue. Mussolini would probably have failed if the British and French had stood together. Records from the meetings of the British government show that the British did not accept the Italian case and that the British were prepared to intervene to force Mussolini out of Corfu. However, the French completely disagreed and backed the Italians, probably because their forces were tied up in the Ruhr at this time (see pages 00–00) and could not tackle a dispute with Italy as well. The British could have acted alone, possibly by imposing sanctions or sending naval forces to Corfu. Article 16 of the League Covenant said that actions could be taken if one side committed an act of war. But the British were not prepared to act without the French and argued that Mussolini's actions did not constitute an act of war.

In the end Mussolini got his way and the Council of ambassadors made the final ruling on the dispute. A Commission was set up consisting of British, French, Italian and Japanese representatives. The Italian Commissioner was the only one to blame the Greeks in the dispute. Despite this the Council's ruling was changed and the Greeks had to apologise and pay compensation directly to Italy. On 27 September, Mussolini withdrew from Corfu boasting of his triumph.

There was much anger in the League over the Council's actions and League lawyers challenged the legality of the decision. However, the ruling was never changed. As historian Zara Steiner says: 'the dispute showed that the weakest of the great powers could get its way when Britain and France agreed to sacrifice justice for co-operation'.

The Geneva Protocol

The Corfu incident demonstrated how the League of Nations could be undermined by its own members. Britain and France drew up the Geneva Protocol in 1924, which said that if two members were in dispute they would have to ask the League to sort out the disagreement and they would have to accept the Council's decision. They hoped this would strengthen the League. But before the plan could be put into effect there was a general election in Britain. The new Conservative government refused to sign the Protocol, worried that Britain would be forced to agree to something that was not in its own interests. So the Protocol, which had been meant to strengthen the League, in fact weakened it.

SOURCE 15

Make only slight resistance. Protect the refugees. Prevent the spread of panic. Do not expose the troops to unnecessary losses in view of the fact that the incident has been laid before the Council of the League of Nations, which is expected to stop the invasion.

A telegram from the Bulgarian Ministry of War in Sofia to its army commanders, 22 October 1925.

Source Analysis

- 1 Read Source 15. Why do you think Bulgaria was so optimistic about the League?
- 2 Look at Source 16. What impression of the League does this cartoon give you?

Focus Task

Did the weaknesses in the League's organisation make failure inevitable?

Can you find evidence to support or challenge each of the following criticisms of the League's organisation:

- ◆ that it would be slow to act
- ◆ that members would act in their own interests, not the League's
- ◆ that without the USA it would be powerless?

Use a table like this to record your answers:

| Criticism | Evidence for | Evidence against |
|-----------|--------------|------------------|
| | | |
| | | |

Focus first on the Bulgarian and Corfu crises. These will be most useful for your exam. Then look for evidence from the other crises.

Keep your table safe. You will add to it in a later task on page 37.

Once you have completed your table look at the balance of evidence. Does this suggest to you that the League could have succeeded, or not?

Bulgaria, 1925

Two years after Corfu, the League was tested yet again. In October 1925, Greek troops invaded Bulgaria after an incident on the border in which some Greek soldiers were killed. Bulgaria appealed for help. It also sent instructions to its army (see Source 15).

The secretary-general of the League acted quickly and decisively, calling a meeting of the League Council in Paris. The League demanded both sides stand their forces down and Greek forces withdraw from Bulgaria. Britain and France solidly backed the League's judgement (and it is worth remembering they were negotiating the Locarno Treaties at the same time – see the Factfile on page 36). The League sent observers to assess the situation and judged in favour of the Bulgarians. Greece had to pay £45,000 in compensation and was threatened with sanctions if it did not follow the ruling.

The Greeks obeyed, although they did complain that there seemed to be one rule for the large states (such as Italy) and another for the smaller ones (such as themselves). Nevertheless the incident was seen as a major success for the League and many observers seemed to forget the shame of the Corfu incident as optimism about the effectiveness of the League soared. Few pointed out that it was not so much the effectiveness of the machinery of League in this dispute but the fact that the great powers were united on their decision.

SOURCE 16



A cartoon about the Bulgarian crisis in *Punch*, 11 November 1925. The characters are based on Tweedledee and Tweedledum, from the children's book *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, who were always squabbling.



Two League of Nations' projects.

Think!

- 1 Study Sources 17A and 17B. What aspects of the League's work do you think they show?
- 2 Why do you think the founders of the League wanted it to tackle social problems?
- 3 The work of the League's commissions affected hundreds of millions of people, yet historians write very little about this side of its work. Why do you think this is?

Revision Tip

Border disputes

Make sure you can:

- ◆ describe one success in the 1920s and explain why it was a success
- ◆ describe one failure in the 1920s and explain why it was a failure and as a bonus:
- ◆ describe and explain one **partial** success or failure.

The commissions

Make sure you can remember two specific examples of work done by the League's commissions or committees. Choose the ones that you think affected the most people.

How did the League of Nations work for a better world?

The League of Nations had set itself a wider task than simply waiting for disputes to arise and hoping to solve them. Through its commissions or committees (see page 31), the League aimed to fight poverty, disease and injustice all over the world.

- **Refugees** The League did tremendous work in getting refugees and former prisoners of war back to their homelands. Head of the Refugees Committee Fridtjof Nansen introduced a document which became known as the 'Nansen Passport'. This made it much easier for genuine refugees to travel across borders to return home or resettle in new lands. It is estimated that in the first few years after the war, about 400,000 prisoners were returned to their homes by the League's agencies. When war led to a refugee crisis hit Turkey in 1922, hundreds of thousands of people had to be housed in refugee camps. The League acted quickly to stamp out cholera, smallpox and dysentery in the camps. However, the Refugee Committee was constantly short of funds and Nansen spent much of his time trying to raise donations. Its work became more difficult in the 1930s as the international situation became more tense and the authority of the League declined.
- **Working conditions** The International Labour Organisation was successful in banning poisonous white lead from paint and in limiting the hours that small children were allowed to work. It also campaigned strongly for employers to improve working conditions generally. It introduced a resolution for a maximum 48-hour week, and an eight-hour day, but only a minority of members adopted it because they thought it would raise industrial costs. Like the Refugees Commission, the ILO was also hampered by lack of funds and also because it could not do much more than 'name and shame' countries or organisations that broke its regulations or generally mistreated workers. Nevertheless it was influential and it was a step forward in the sense that many abuses were not even known about before the ILO exposed them.
- **Health** The Health Committee produced some important achievements. As well as collecting statistical information and spreading good practice it sponsored research into infectious diseases with institutes in Singapore, London and Denmark. These institutes were important in helping to develop vaccines and other medicines to fight deadly diseases such as leprosy and malaria. It started the global campaign to exterminate mosquitoes, which greatly reduced cases of malaria and yellow fever in later decades. Even the USSR, which was otherwise opposed to the League, took Health Committee advice on preventing plague in Siberia. The Health Committee is generally regarded as one of the most successful of the League's organisations and its work was continued by the United Nations Organisation after 1945 in the form of the World Health Organisation.
- **Transport** The League made recommendations on marking shipping lanes and produced an international highway code for road users.
- **Social problems** The League blacklisted four large German, Dutch, French and Swiss companies which were involved in the illegal drug trade. It brought about the freeing of 200,000 slaves in British-owned Sierra Leone. It organised raids against slave owners and traders in Burma. It challenged the use of forced labour to build the Tanganyika railway in Africa, where the death rate among the African workers was a staggering 50 per cent. League pressure brought this down to four per cent, which it said was 'a much more acceptable figure'.

Even in the areas where it could not remove social injustice the League kept careful records of what was going on and provided information on problems such as drug trafficking, prostitution and slavery.

Factfile

International agreements of the 1920s

- **1921 Washington Conference:** USA, Britain, France and Japan agreed to limit the size of their navies.
- **1922 Rapallo Treaty:** The USSR and Germany re-established diplomatic relations.
- **1924 The Dawes Plan:** to avert a terrible economic crisis in Germany, the USA lent money to Germany to help it to pay its reparations bill (see this page).
- **1925 Locarno treaties:** Germany accepted its western borders as set out in the Treaty of Versailles. This was greeted with great enthusiasm, especially in France. It paved the way for Germany to join the League of Nations.
- **1928 Kellogg–Briand Pact:** 65 nations agreed not to use force to settle disputes. This is also known as the Pact of Paris.
- **1929 Young Plan:** reduced Germany's reparations payments.

Source Analysis ►

- 1 What is Source 18 commenting on?
- 2 Is the cartoonist praising or criticising someone or something in Source 18? Explain your answer.

SOURCE 19

There was a tendency for nations to conduct much of their diplomacy outside the League of Nations and to put their trust in paper treaties. After the USA assisted Europe financially there seemed to be more goodwill which statesmen tried to capture in pacts and treaties. Many of them, however, were of little value. They represented no more than the hopes of decent men.

Written by historian
Jack Watson in 1984.

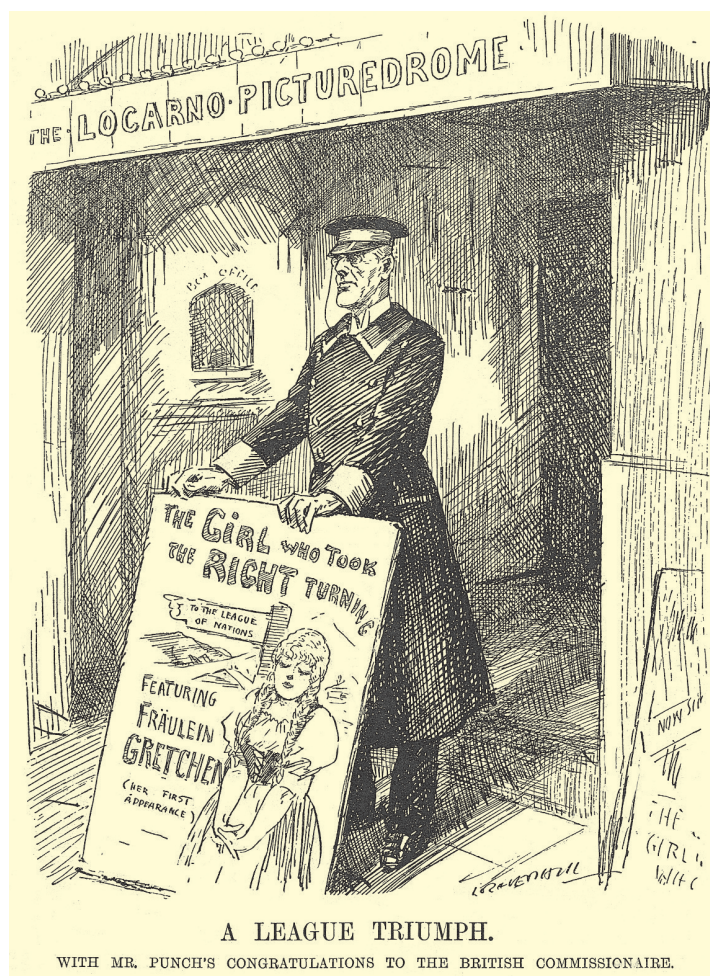
Disarmament

In the 1920s, the League largely failed in bringing about disarmament. At the Washington Conference in 1921 the USA, Japan, Britain and France agreed to limit the size of their navies, but that was as far as disarmament ever got.

The failure of disarmament was particularly damaging to the League's reputation in Germany. Germany had disarmed. It had been forced to. But no other countries had disarmed to the same extent. They were not prepared to give up their own armies and they were certainly not prepared to be the first to disarm.

Even so, in the late 1920s, the League's failure over disarmament did not seem too serious because of a series of international agreements that seemed to promise a more peaceful world (see Factfile).

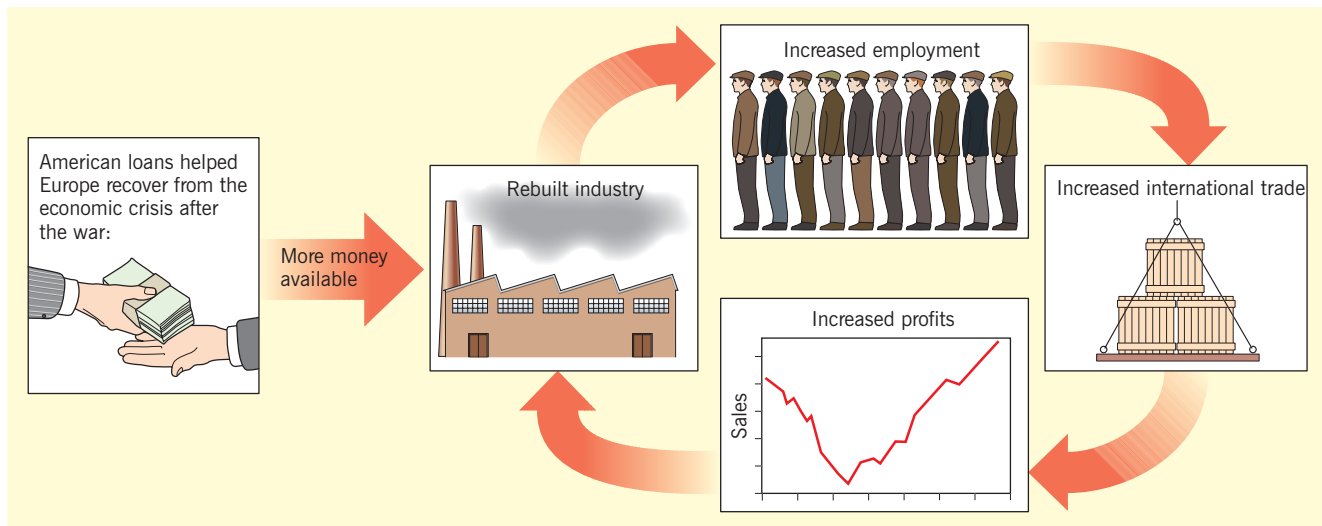
SOURCE 18



A Punch cartoon from 1925. The woman on the billboard represents Germany.

Economic recovery

Another reason for optimism in 1928 was that, after the difficult days of the early 1920s, the economies of the European countries were once again recovering. The Dawes Plan of 1924 had helped to sort out Germany's economic chaos and had also helped to get the economies of Britain and France moving again (see Source 20). The recovery of trading relationships between these countries helped to reduce tension. That is why one of the aims of the League had been to encourage trading links between the countries. When countries were trading with one another, they were much less likely to go to war with each other.



How the Dawes Plan helped economic recovery in Europe.

How far did the League succeed in the 1920s?

Although Wilson's version of the League never happened, the League still achieved a lot in the 1920s. It helped many sick, poor and homeless people. It stabilised several economies after the war. Perhaps most important of all, the League became one of the ways in which the world sorted out international disputes (even if it was not the only way). Historian Zara Steiner has said that 'the League was very effective in handling the "small change" of international diplomacy'. The implication, of course, is that the League could not deal with 'big' issues but it was not tested in this way in the 1920s.

Some historians believe that the biggest achievement of the League was the way it helped develop an 'internationalist mindset' among leaders – in other words it encouraged them to think in terms of collaborating rather than competing. One way in which the League did this was simply by existing! Great and small powers felt that it was worth sending their ministers to League meetings throughout the 1920s and 1930s, so they would often talk when they might not have done so otherwise. Even when the Great Powers acted on their own (for example, over Corfu) it was often after their ministers had discussed their plans at League meetings!

Focus task

How successful was the League in the 1920s?

It is now time to draw some conclusions to this key question.

Stage 1: Recap your work so far

- 1 Look back at your table from page 34. What evidence have you found of success or failure in each objective?
- 2 Look back to your predictions for the League for the 1920s (page 25). Has the League performed better or worse than you predicted? Redraw your prediction to show the balance of success and failure in the 1920s.

- discourage aggression

- encourage co-operation

- encourage disarmament

- improve living conditions

Stage 2: Evaluate the successes and failures

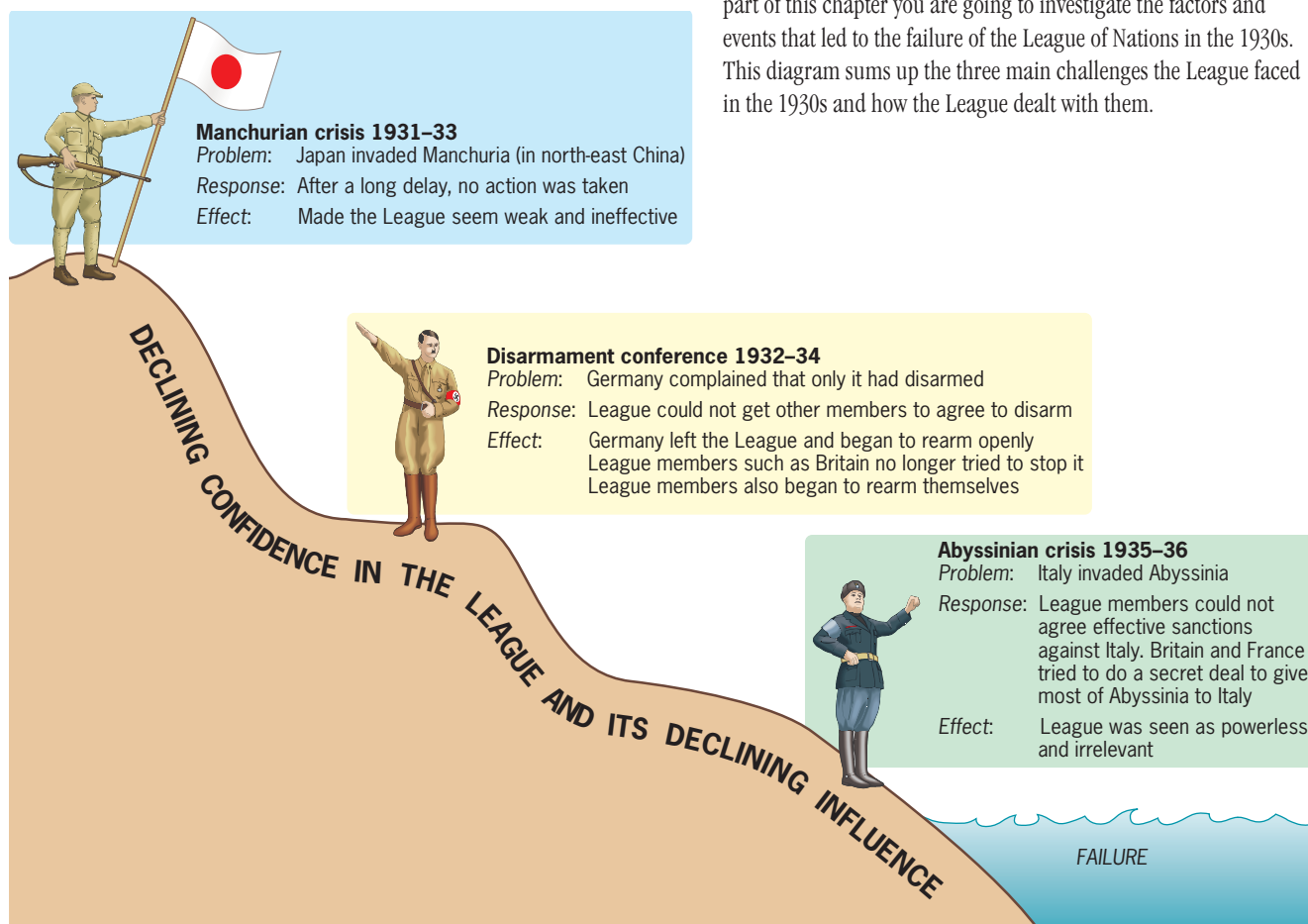
- 3 Create four file cards like this – one for each of the League's objectives.
- 4 Put the objective you think was achieved to the greatest extent at the top, and that which was achieved to the least extent at the bottom.
- 5 Write a paragraph to explain your order and support it with evidence from this chapter.
- 6 Suggest one change the League could make to be more effective in each of its objectives. Explain how the change would help.

Stage 3: Reach a judgement

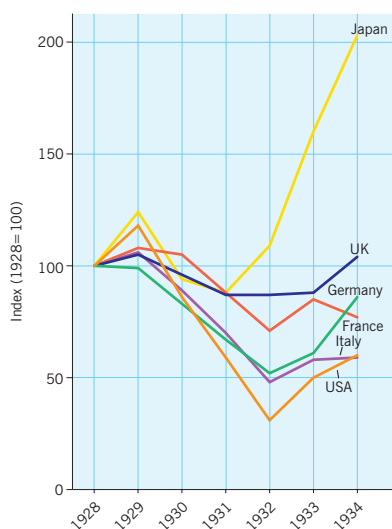
- 7 Which of the following statements do you most agree with?
 - ◆ 'The League of Nations was a great force for peace in the 1920s.'
 - ◆ 'Events of the 1920s showed just how weak the League really was.'
 - ◆ 'The League's successes in the 1920s were small-scale, its failures had a higher profile.'
- Explain why you have chosen your statement, and why you rejected the others.

2.2 How successful was the League of Nations?

Historians do not agree about how successful the League of Nations was in the 1920s. However, in contrast, they almost all agree that in the 1930s the League of Nations was a failure. In the second part of this chapter you are going to investigate the factors and events that led to the failure of the League of Nations in the 1930s. This diagram sums up the three main challenges the League faced in the 1930s and how the League dealt with them.



SOURCE 1



The rise and fall in industrial production in selected countries, 1928–34.

It makes quite depressing reading!

However, historians do not all agree on how far these failures were the fault of the League and how far other factors that the League could not control were more important. The biggest of these was the economic depression so let's start with that.

The economic depression

In the late 1920s there had been a boom in world trade. The USA was the richest nation in the world. American business was the engine driving the world economy. Everyone traded with the USA. Most countries also borrowed money from American banks. As a result of this trade, most countries were getting richer. You saw on page 37 how this economic recovery helped to reduce international tension. However, one of the League's leading figures predicted that political disaster might follow if countries did not co-operate economically. He turned out to be right.

In 1929 economic disaster did strike. In the USA the Wall Street Crash started a long depression that quickly caused economic problems throughout the world (see page 41). It damaged the trade and industry of all countries (see Source 1). It affected relations between countries and it also led to important political changes within countries (see diagram on page 39). Much of the goodwill and the optimism of the late 1920s evaporated.

Revision Tip

- ◆ The key idea to grasp here is that the Depression created economic problems which led to political problems later on.
- ◆ The two most important examples are Germany and Japan so make sure you can describe how the Depression affected them.

In the 1930s, as a result of the Depression much of the goodwill and the optimism of the late 1920s evaporated.

- As US loans dried up, businesses in many countries went bust, leading to unemployment.
- Some countries tried to protect their own industries by bringing in tariffs to stop imports. But this just meant their trading partners did the same thing and trade got even worse, leading to more businesses going bust and more unemployment.
- Many countries (including Germany, Japan, Italy and Britain) started to rearm (build up their armed forces) as a way of trying to get industries working and giving jobs to the unemployed.
- As their neighbours rearmed, many states began to fear that their neighbours might have other plans for their new armies so they built up their own forces.

The internationalist spirit of the 1920s was replaced by a more nationalist 'beggar my neighbour' approach in the Depression.

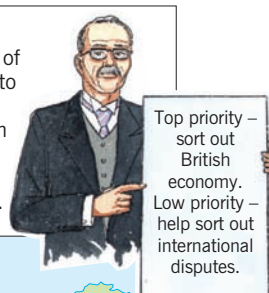
The USA

One way that the League of Nations could stop one country invading another was to use economic sanctions. But the Depression made the USA unwilling to help in this because economic sanctions would make its own economy even worse.



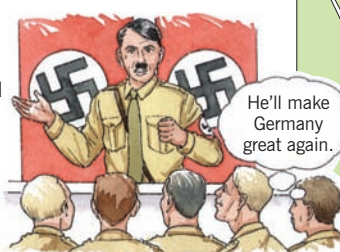
Britain

Britain was one of the leaders of the League of Nations. But, like the USA, it was unwilling to help sort out international disputes while its economy was bad. For example, when Japan invaded Manchuria it did nothing – it did not support economic sanctions against Japan and did not send troops to protect Manchuria.



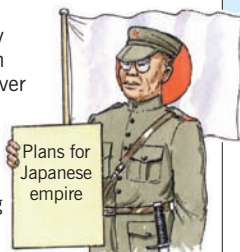
Germany

The Depression hit Germany badly. There was unemployment, poverty and chaos. Germany's weak leaders seemed unable to do anything. As a result, Germans elected Adolf Hitler to lead them. He was not good news for international peace. He openly planned to invade Germany's neighbours and to win back land that Germany had lost in the Great War.



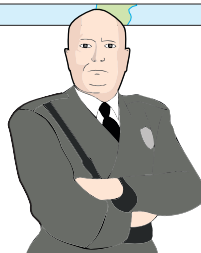
Japan

The Depression threatened to bankrupt Japan. Its main export was silk to the USA, but the USA was buying less silk. So Japan had less money to buy food and raw materials. Its leaders were all army general. They decided to build an empire by taking over weaker countries that had the raw materials Japan needed. They started by invading Manchuria (part of China) in 1931.



Italy

In Italy economic problems encouraged Mussolini to try and build an overseas empire to distract people's attention from the difficulties the government faced.



Focus task

How did the Depression make the work of the League harder?

Study these statements:

- 'I have not worked since last year.'
 - 'I will support anyone who can get the country back to work.'
 - 'If we had our own empire we would have the resources we need. Economic depressions would not damage us so much.'
 - 'Reparations have caused this mess.'
 - 'The bank has closed. We've lost everything!'
- 'We need tough leaders who will not be pushed around by the League of Nations or the USA.'
 - 'We should ban all foreign goods. That will protect the jobs of our workers.'
- suggest which country (or countries) they could have been made in during the Depression – USA, Britain, France, Germany, Japan or Italy
 - suggest why these views would worry the League of Nations.

Revision Tip

Make sure you can explain:

- ◆ what the League decided should happen in Manchuria
- ◆ why it was unable to force Japan to obey.

How did the Manchurian crisis weaken the League?

The first major test for the League came when the Japanese invaded Manchuria in 1931.

SOURCE 2



The railways and natural resources of Manchuria.

Background

Since 1900 Japan's economy and population had been growing rapidly. By the 1920s Japan was a major power with a powerful military, strong industries and a growing empire (see Source 2). But the Depression hit Japan badly as China and the USA put up tariffs (trade barriers) against Japanese goods. Army leaders in Japan were in no doubt about the solution to Japan's problems – Japan would not face these problems if it had an empire to provide resources and markets for Japanese goods.

Invasion 1, 1931

In 1931 an incident in Manchuria gave them an ideal opportunity. The Japanese army controlled the South Manchurian Railway (see Source 2). When Chinese troops allegedly attacked the railway the Japanese armed forces used this as an excuse to invade and set up a government in Manchuoko (Manchuria), which they controlled. Japan's civilian government protested but the military were now in charge.

China appeals

China appealed to the League. The Japanese argued that China was in such a state of anarchy that they had to invade in self-defence to keep peace in the area. For the League of Nations this was a serious test. Japan was a leading member of the League. It needed careful handling. What should the League do?

SOURCE 3

I was sad to find everyone [at the League] so dejected. The Assembly was a dead thing. The Council was without confidence in itself. Beneš [the Czechoslovak leader], who is not given to hysterics, said [about the people at the League] 'They are too frightened. I tell them we are not going to have war now; we have five years before us, perhaps six. We must make the most of them.'

The British elder statesman Sir Austen Chamberlain visited the League of Nations late in 1932 in the middle of the Manchurian crisis. This is an adapted extract from his letters.

The League investigates

There was now a long and frustrating delay. The League's officials sailed round the world to assess the situation in Manchuria for themselves. This was well before the days of instant communication by satellite. There was not even reliable air travel. It was September 1932 – a full year after the invasion – before they presented their report. It was detailed and balanced, but the judgement was very clear. Japan had acted unlawfully. Manchuria should be returned to the Chinese.

Invasion 2, 1933

However, in February 1933, instead of withdrawing from Manchuria the Japanese announced that they intended to invade more of China. They still argued that this was necessary in self-defence. On 24 February 1933 the report from the League's officials was approved by 42 votes to 1 in the Assembly. Only Japan voted against. Smarting at the insult, Japan resigned from the League on 27 March 1933. The next week it invaded Jehol (see Source 2).

The League responds

The League was powerless. It discussed economic sanctions, but without the USA, Japan's main trading partner, they would be meaningless. Besides, Britain seemed more interested in keeping up a good relationship with Japan than in agreeing to sanctions. The League also discussed banning arms sales to Japan, but the member countries could not even agree about that. They were worried that Japan would retaliate and the war would escalate.

There was no prospect at all of Britain and France risking their navies or armies in a war with Japan. Only the USA and the USSR would have had the resources to remove the Japanese from Manchuria by force and they were not even members of the League.

Consequences

All sorts of excuses were offered for the failure of the League. Japan was so far away. Japan was a special case. Japan did have a point when it said that China was itself in the grip of anarchy. However, the significance of the Manchurian crisis was obvious. As many of its critics had predicted, the League was powerless if a strong nation decided to pursue an aggressive policy and invade its neighbours. Japan had committed blatant aggression and got away with it. Back in Europe, both Hitler and Mussolini looked on with interest. Within three years they would both follow Japan's example.

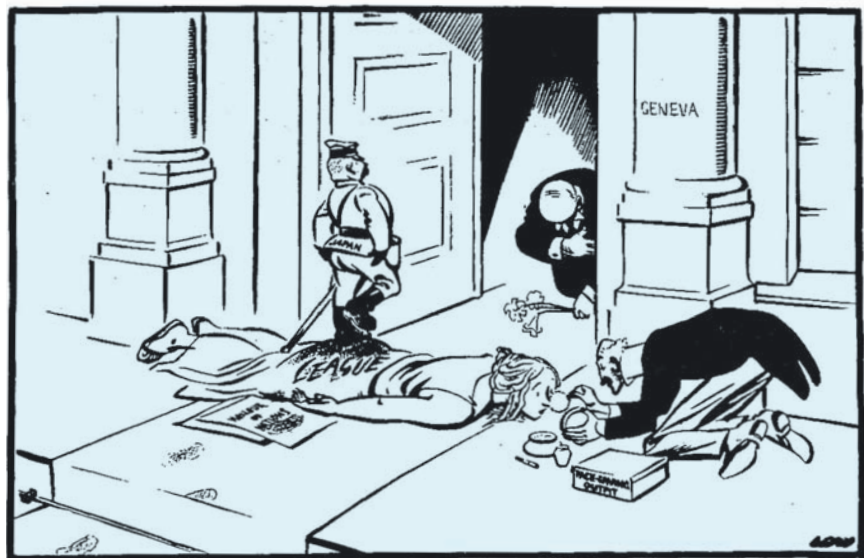
SOURCE 4

Source Analysis

- Source 4 is a comment on this Manchurian crisis. On your own copy of this cartoon add annotations to explain:
 - the key features
 - the message
 - what the cartoonist thinks of the League.
- Read Source 3. Does Beneš share the same view of the League as the cartoonist in Source 4?

Think!

- Why did it take so long for the League to make a decision over Manchuria?
- Did the League fail in this incident because of the way it worked or because of the attitude of its members?



A cartoon by David Low, 1933. Low was one of the most famous cartoonists of the 1930s. He regularly criticised both the actions of dictators around the world and the ineffectiveness of the League of Nations.

SOURCE 5

To make myself perfectly clear, I would ask: is there anyone within or without Germany who honestly considers the present German regime to be peaceful in its instincts . . . Germany is inhibited from disturbing the peace of Europe solely by its consciousness of its present military inferiority.

Professor William Rappard speaking to the League in 1932.

Why did disarmament fail in the 1930s?

The next big failure of the League of Nations was over disarmament. As you saw on page 00, the League had not had any success in this area in the 1920s either, but at that stage, when the international climate was better, it had not seemed to matter as much. In the 1930s, however, there was increased pressure for the League to do something about disarmament. The Germans had long been angry about the fact that they had been forced to disarm after the First World War while other nations had not done the same. Many countries were actually spending more on their armaments than they had been before the First World War.

Disarmament Conference

In the wake of the Manchurian crisis, the members of the League realised the urgency of the problem. In February 1932 the long-promised Disarmament Conference finally got under way. By July 1932 it had produced resolutions to prohibit bombing of civilian populations, limit the size of artillery, limit the tonnage of tanks, and prohibit chemical warfare. But there was very little in the resolutions to show how these limits would be achieved. For example, the bombing of civilians was to be prohibited, but all attempts to agree to abolish planes capable of bombing were defeated. Even the proposal to ban the manufacture of chemical weapons was defeated.

German disarmament

It was not a promising start. However, there was a bigger problem facing the Conference – what to do about Germany. The Germans had been in the League for six years. Most people now accepted that they should be treated more equally than under the Treaty of Versailles. The big question was whether everyone else should disarm to the level that Germany had been forced to, or whether the Germans should be allowed to rearm to a level closer to that of the other powers. The experience of the 1920s showed that the first option was a non-starter. But there was great reluctance in the League to allow the second option.

This is how events relating to Germany moved over the next 18 months.

July 1932: Germany tabled proposals for all countries to disarm down to its level. When the Conference failed to agree the principle of ‘equality’, the Germans walked out.

September 1932: The British sent the Germans a note that went some way to agreeing equality, but the superior tone of the note angered the Germans still further.

December 1932: An agreement was finally reached to treat Germany equally.

January 1933: Germany announced it was coming back to the Conference.

February 1933: Hitler became Chancellor of Germany at the end of January. He immediately started to rearm Germany, although secretly.

May 1933: Hitler promised not to rearm Germany if ‘in five years all other nations destroyed their arms’.

June 1933: Britain produced an ambitious disarmament plan, but it failed to achieve support at the Conference.

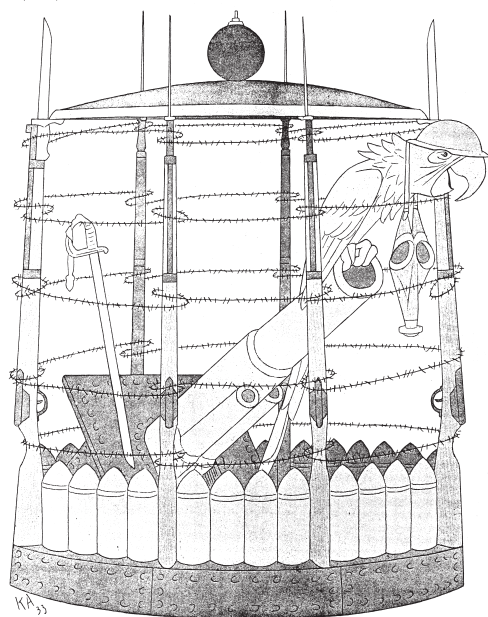
October 1933: Hitler withdrew from the Disarmament Conference, and soon after took Germany out of the League altogether.

Source Analysis ▼

- 1 What is the message of Source 6?
- 2 Why might this cartoon have been published in Germany in July 1933?

SOURCE 6

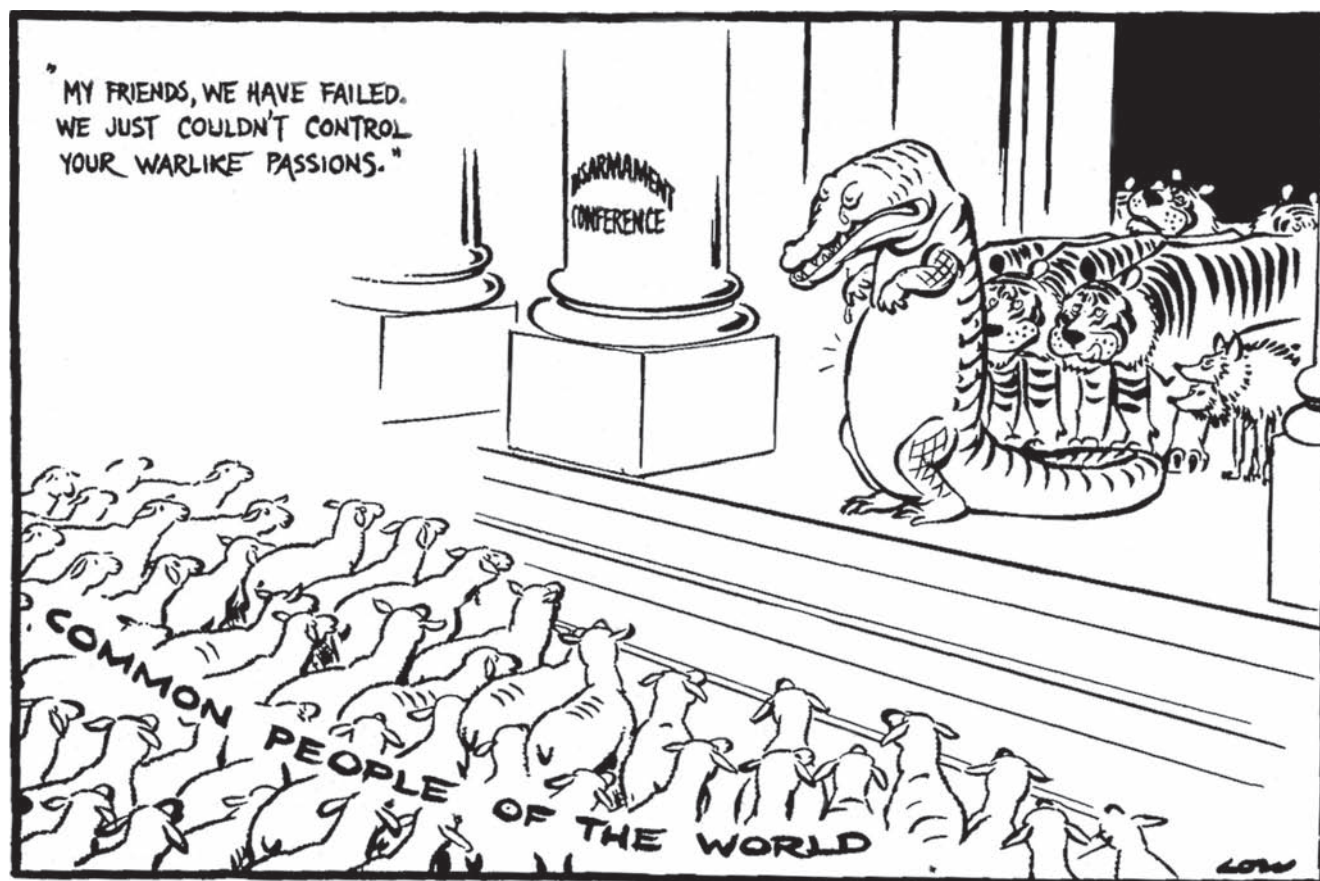
Mariannes Papagei
Le perroquet de Marianne | Madame La France's Parrot | Il pappagallo di Marianna



A German cartoon from July 1933. The parrot represents France. It is calling for more security.

By this stage, all the powers knew that Hitler was secretly rearming Germany already. They also began to rebuild their own armaments. Against that background the Disarmament Conference struggled on for another year but in an atmosphere of increasing futility. It finally ended in 1934.

SOURCE 7



David Low's cartoon commenting on the failure of the Disarmament Conference in 1934.

Source Analysis

Look at Source 7. Explain what the cartoonist is saying about:

- a) ordinary people
- b) political leaders.

Think!

- 1 In what ways were each of the following to blame for the failure of the Disarmament Conference:
 - a) Germany
 - b) Britain
 - c) the League itself?
- 2 Do you think the disarmament failure did less or more damage to the League's reputation than the Manchurian crisis? Give reasons.

Reasons for failure

The Conference failed for a number of reasons. Some say it was all doomed from the start. No one was very serious about disarmament anyway. But there were other factors at work.

It did not help that Britain and France were divided on this issue. By 1933 many British people felt that the Treaty of Versailles was unfair. In fact, to the dismay of the French, the British signed an agreement with Germany in 1935 that allowed Germany to build up its navy as long as it stayed under 35 per cent of the size of the British navy. Britain did not consult either its allies or the League about this, although it was in violation of the Treaty of Versailles.

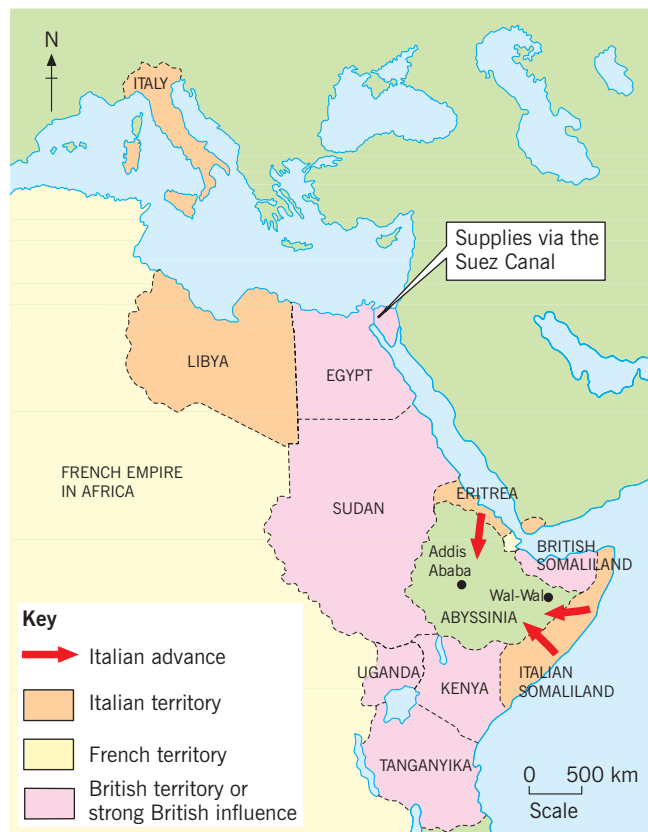
It seemed that each country was looking after itself and ignoring the League.

Revision Tip

Although disarmament was a key aim of the League it never really had much success on this in either the 1920s or the 1930s. The key thing to remember is why this was more serious in the 1930s than in the 1920s. In the 1930s it was serious because Germany used the failure as an excuse for its rapid and risky rearmament programme.

How did Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia damage the League?

SOURCE 8



British, French and Italian possessions in eastern Africa.

The fatal blow to the League came when the Italian dictator Mussolini invaded Abyssinia in 1935. There were both similarities with and differences from the Japanese invasion of Manchuria.

- **Like Japan**, Italy was a leading member of the League. Like Japan, Italy wanted to expand its empire by invading another country.
- However, **unlike Manchuria**, this dispute was on the League's doorstep. Italy was a European power. It even had a border with France. Abyssinia bordered on the Anglo-Egyptian territory of Sudan and the British colonies of Uganda, Kenya and British Somaliland. Unlike events in Manchuria, the League could not claim that this problem was in an inaccessible part of the world.

Some argued that Manchuria had been a special case. Would the League do any better in this Abyssinian crisis?

Background

The origins of this crisis lay back in the previous century. In 1896 Italian troops had tried to invade Abyssinia but had been defeated by a poorly equipped army of tribesmen. Mussolini wanted revenge for this humiliating defeat. He also had his eye on the fertile lands and mineral wealth of Abyssinia. However, most importantly, he wanted glory and conquest. His style of leadership needed military victories and he had often talked of restoring the glory of the Roman Empire.

In December 1934 there was a dispute between Italian and Abyssinian soldiers at the Wal-Wal oasis – 80 km inside Abyssinia. Mussolini took this as his cue and claimed this was actually Italian territory. He demanded an apology and began preparing the Italian army for an invasion of Abyssinia. The Abyssinian emperor Haile Selassie appealed to the League for help.

Think!

To help you analyse these events draw a timeline, from December 1934 to May 1936, down the middle of a piece of paper and use the text to mark the key events on it. On one side put the actions of Mussolini or Hitler, on the other the actions of Britain, France and the League.

Phase 1: the League plays for time

From January 1935 to October 1935, Mussolini was supposedly negotiating with the League to settle the dispute. However, at the same time he was shipping his vast army to Africa and whipping up war fever among the Italian people.

To start with, the British and the French failed to take the situation seriously. They played for time. They were desperate to keep good relations with Mussolini, who seemed to be their strongest ally against Hitler. They signed an agreement with him early in 1935 known as the Stresa Pact which was a formal statement against German rearmament and a commitment to stand united against Germany. At the meeting to discuss this, they did not even raise the question of Abyssinia. Some historians suggest that Mussolini believed that Britain and France had promised to turn a blind eye to his exploits in Abyssinia in return for his joining them in the Stresa Pact.

However, as the year wore on, there was a public outcry against Italy's behaviour. A ballot was taken by the League of Nations Union in Britain in 1934–35. It showed that a majority of British people supported the use of military force to defend Abyssinia if necessary. Facing an autumn election at home, British politicians now began to 'get tough'. At an assembly of the League, the British Foreign Minister, Hoare, made a grand speech about the value of collective security, to the delight of the League's members and all the smaller nations. There was much talking and negotiating. However, the League never actually did anything to discourage Mussolini.

On 4 September, after eight months' deliberation, a committee reported to the League that neither side could be held responsible for the Wal-Wal incident. The League put forward a plan that would give Mussolini some of Abyssinia. Mussolini rejected it.

Phase 2: sanctions or not?

In October 1935 Mussolini's army was ready. He launched a full-scale invasion of Abyssinia. Despite brave resistance, the Abyssinians were no match for the modern Italian army equipped with tanks, aeroplanes and poison gas.

This was a clear-cut case of a large, powerful state attacking a smaller one. The League was designed for just such disputes and, unlike in the Manchurian crisis, it was ideally placed to act.

There was no doubting the seriousness of the issue either. The Covenant (see Factfile, page 28) made it clear that sanctions must be introduced against the aggressor. A committee was immediately set up to agree what sanctions to impose.

Sanctions would only work if they were imposed quickly and decisively. Each week a decision was delayed would allow Mussolini to build up his stockpile of raw materials. The League banned arms sales to Italy; banned loans to Italy; banned imports from Italy. It also banned the export to Italy of rubber, tin and metals. However, the League delayed a decision for two months over whether to ban oil exports to Italy. It feared the Americans would not support the sanctions. It also feared that its members' economic interests would be further damaged. In Britain, the Cabinet was informed that 30,000 British coal miners were about to lose their jobs because of the ban on coal exports to Italy.

More important still, the Suez Canal, which was owned by Britain and France, was not closed to Mussolini's supply ships. The canal was the Italians' main supply route to Abyssinia and closing it could have ended the Abyssinian campaign very quickly. Both Britain and France were afraid that closing the canal could have resulted in war with Italy. This failure was fatal for Abyssinia.

SOURCE 9



THE AWFUL WARNING.

FRANCE AND ENGLAND
(together?).

“WE DON'T WANT YOU TO FIGHT,
BUT, BY JINGO, IF YOU DO,
WE SHALL PROBABLY ISSUE A JOINT MEMORANDUM
SUGGESTING A MILD DISAPPROVAL OF YOU.”

A cartoon from *Punch*, 1935, commenting on the Abyssinian crisis. *Punch* was usually very patriotic towards Britain. It seldom criticised British politicians over foreign policy.

Source Analysis ►

- 1 Study Source 9. At what point in the crisis do you think this might have been published? Use the details in the source and the text to help you decide.
- 2 Here are three possible reasons why this cartoon was drawn:
 - ◆ To tell people in Britain what British and French policy was
 - ◆ To criticise British and French policy
 - ◆ To change British and French policy.
 Which do you think is the best explanation?

Think!

- How did:
 - the USA
 - Britain
 undermine the League's attempts to impose sanctions on Italy?
- Explain in your own words:
 - why the Hoare–Laval deal caused such outrage
 - how it affected attitudes to the League
 - how the USA undermined the League.
- Look at Source 10. What event is the cartoonist referring to in 'the matter has been settled elsewhere'?

The Hoare–Laval Pact

Equally damaging to the League was the secret dealing between the British and the French that was going on behind the scenes. In December 1935, while sanctions discussions were still taking place, the British and French Foreign Ministers, Hoare and Laval, were hatching a plan. This aimed to give Mussolini two-thirds of Abyssinia in return for his calling off his invasion! Laval even proposed to put the plan to Mussolini before they showed it to either the League of Nations or Haile Selassie. Laval told the British that if they did not agree to the plan, then the French would no longer support sanctions against Italy.

However, details of the plan were leaked to the French press. It proved quite disastrous for the League. Haile Selassie demanded an immediate League debate about it. In both Britain and France it was seen as a blatant act of treachery against the League. Hoare and Laval were both sacked. But the real damage was to the sanctions discussions. They lost all momentum. The question about whether to ban oil sales was further delayed. In February 1936 the committee concluded that if they did stop oil sales to Italy, the Italians' supplies would be exhausted in two months, even if the Americans kept on selling oil to them. But by then it was all too late. Mussolini had already taken over large parts of Abyssinia. And the Americans were even more disgusted with the ditherings of the French and the British than they had been before and so blocked a move to support the League's sanctions. American oil producers actually stepped up their exports to Italy.

The outcomes

On 7 March 1936 the fatal blow was delivered. Hitler, timing his move to perfection, marched his troops into the Rhineland, an act prohibited by the Treaty of Versailles (see page 12). If there had been any hope of getting the French to support sanctions against Italy, it was now dead.

The French were desperate to gain the support of Italy and were now prepared to pay the price of giving Abyssinia to Mussolini.

Italy continued to defy the League's orders and by May 1936 had taken the capital of Abyssinia, Addis Ababa. On 2 May, Haile Selassie was forced into exile. On 9 May, Mussolini formally annexed the entire country.

Implications for the League

The League watched helplessly. Collective security had been shown up as an empty promise. The League of Nations had failed. If the British and French had hoped that their handling of the Abyssinian crisis would help strengthen their position against Hitler, they were soon proved very wrong. In November 1936 Mussolini and Hitler signed an agreement of their own called the Rome–Berlin Axis.

SOURCE 11

Could the League survive the failure of sanctions to rescue Abyssinia? Could it ever impose sanctions again? Probably there had never been such a clear-cut case for sanctions. If the League had failed in this case there could probably be no confidence that it could succeed again in the future.

Anthony Eden, British Foreign Minister, expressing his feelings about the crisis to the British Cabinet in May 1936.

SOURCE 10



A German cartoon from the front cover of the pro-Nazi magazine *Simplicissimus*, 1936. The warrior is delivering a message to the League of Nations (the 'Völkerbund'): 'I am sorry to disturb your sleep but I just wanted to tell you that you should no longer bother yourselves about this Abyssinian business. The matter has been settled elsewhere.'

Source Analysis

Compare Sources 10 and 11. How far do they agree about the implications of the Abyssinian crisis?



A cartoon from *Punch*, 1938. The doctors represent Britain and France.

Think!

Write a caption for the cartoon in Source 12, showing people's feelings about the League after the Abyssinian crisis. The real caption is on page 323.

Focus Task

How far did weaknesses in the League's organisation make failure inevitable?

- 1 When the League was set up its critics said there were weaknesses in its organisation that would make it ineffective. On page 34 you drew up a table to analyse the effect of these weaknesses in the 1920s. Now do a similar analysis for the 1930s.
What evidence is there in the Manchurian crisis, the disarmament talks and the Abyssinian crisis of the following criticisms of the League:
 - ◆ that it would be slow to act
 - ◆ that members would act in their own interests
 - ◆ that without the USA it would be powerless?
- 2 'The way the League was set up meant it was bound to fail.' Explain how far you agree with this statement. Support your answer with evidence from the tables you have compiled for this Focus Task and the one on page 34.

A disaster for the League and for the world

Historians often disagree about how to interpret important events. However, one of the most striking things about the events of 1935 and 1936 is that most historians seem to agree about the Abyssinian crisis: it was a disaster for the League of Nations and had serious consequences for world peace.

SOURCE 13

The implications of the conquest of Abyssinia were not confined to East Africa. Although victory cemented Mussolini's personal prestige at home, Italy gained little or nothing from it in material terms. The damage done, meanwhile, to the prestige of Britain, France and the League of Nations was irreversible. The only winner in the whole sorry episode was Adolf Hitler.

Written by historian TA Morris in 1995.

SOURCE 14

After seeing what happened first in Manchuria and then in Abyssinia, most people drew the conclusion that it was no longer much use placing their hopes in the League . . .

Written by historian James Joll in 1976.

SOURCE 15

The real death of the League was in 1935. One day it was a powerful body imposing sanctions, the next day it was an empty sham, everyone scuttling from it as quickly as possible. Hitler watched.

Written by historian AJP Taylor in 1966.

SOURCE 16

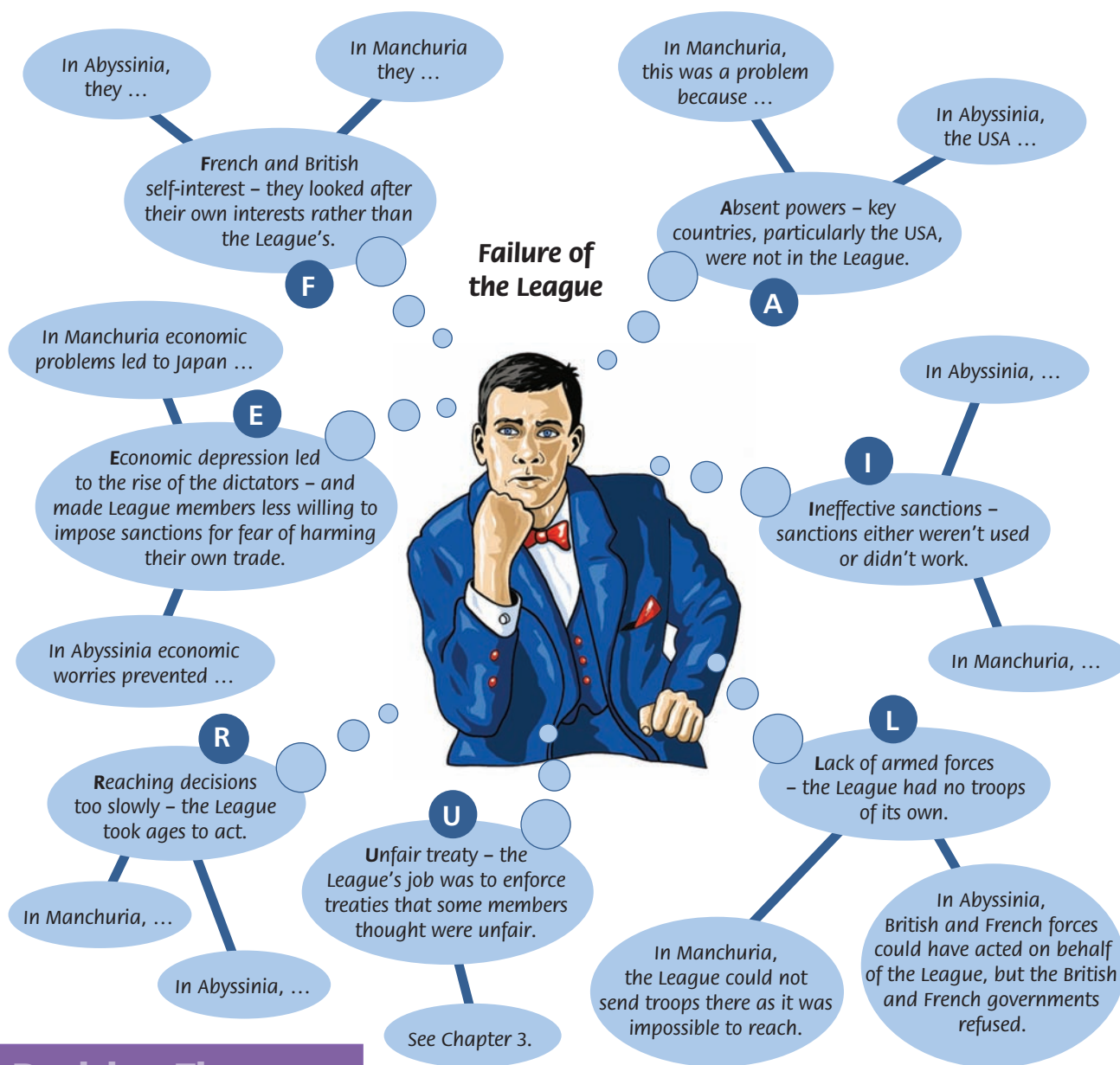
Yes, we know that World War began in Manchuria fifteen years ago. We know that four years later we could easily have stopped Mussolini if we had taken the sanctions against Mussolini that were obviously required, if we had closed the Suez Canal to the aggressor and stopped his oil.

British statesman Philip Noel Baker speaking at the very last session of the League in April 1946.

Focus task A

Why did the League of Nations fail in the 1930s?

Here is a diagram summarising reasons for the failure of the League of Nations in the 1930s. Complete your own copy of the diagram to explain how each weakness affected the League's actions in Manchuria and Abyssinia. We have filled in some points for you. There is one weakness that you will not be able to write about – you will find out about it in Chapter 3.



Revision Tip

The memory aid FAILURE should help you remember these key points for an exam.

Focus Task B

To what extent was the League of Nations a success?

The last few pages have been all about failure. But remember there were successes too. Look back over the whole chapter.

- 1 The League and its aims: give the League a score out of 5 on how far it achieved its aims. Make sure you can support your score with examples.
- 2 Other factors which led to success: give these a score out of 5 to show their importance – remember the examples.
- 3 Other factors which led to failure: Repeat step 2.
- 4 Weigh successes against failures: how does the League score out of 100?
- 5 Write a short paragraph explaining your mark out of 100.

Keywords

Make sure you know what these terms mean and are able to define them confidently.

Essential

- ◆ Abyssinian crisis
- ◆ Disarmament
- ◆ Economic depression
- ◆ Isolationism
- ◆ Manchurian crisis
- ◆ Trade sanctions
- ◆ Wall Street Crash
- ◆ Article 10
- ◆ Assembly
- ◆ Collective security
- ◆ Commissions
- ◆ Conference of Ambassadors
- ◆ Council
- ◆ Covenant
- ◆ Military force
- ◆ Moral condemnation
- ◆ Secretariat
- ◆ Unanimous

Useful

- ◆ Normalcy
- ◆ Tariffs

Chapter Summary

The League of Nations

- 1** The League of Nations was set up to solve problems between countries before they led to war.
- 2** Its methods were mainly diplomacy (talking), trade sanctions, or if necessary using the armies of their members.
- 3** It was the big idea of President Wilson but his own country the USA never joined but returned to its isolationist policy.
- 4** The leading members were Britain and France but they had their own interests and bypassed the League when it suited them.
- 5** The League's structure made it slow to take decisions, which made it less effective in settling international disputes, but it did have some successes in the 1920s.
- 6** The League's agencies (committees and commissions) were set up to solve social problems such as post-war refugee crises, health problems and slavery/forced labour. It had many successes throughout the 1920s and 1930s.
- 7** The League was supposed to encourage disarmament but failed to get any countries to disarm.
- 8** In the 1930s the League's work was made much harder by the economic depression, which made countries less willing to co-operate and helped turn previously democratic countries such as Germany into dictatorships.
- 9** In 1931–32 the League condemned the Japanese invasion of Manchuria and China but was helpless to do anything to stop it.
- 10** In 1936–37 the League tried to prevent Italy invading Abyssinia but it could not agree what to do and never even enforced trade sanctions.
- 11** From 1936 the League was seen as irrelevant to international affairs although its agencies continued its humanitarian work.

Exam Practice

See pages 168–175 and pages 316–319 for advice on the different types of questions you might face.

- 1 (a)** Describe the main powers available to the League to sort out international disputes. **[4]**
- (b)** Explain why the League of Nations did not impose sanctions against Italy during the Abyssinian crisis. **[6]**
- (c)** 'The League of Nations had failed before the Abyssinian crisis even started.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer. **[10]**
- 2** Study Source 17 on page 35. How useful are these two photographs for finding out about the League of Nations? Explain your answer by using details of the source and your own knowledge. **[7]**

CELEBRATE
in the best
of spirits
SEAGERS
GIN
100% PURE 100% PERFECT

DAILY SKETCH

No. 9,177 SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1938 ONE PENNY

PEACE
SOUVENIR
ISSUE

WIRELESS: P. 19

PREMIER SAYS 'PEACE FOR OUR TIME'—P. 3

Give Thanks In Church To-morrow

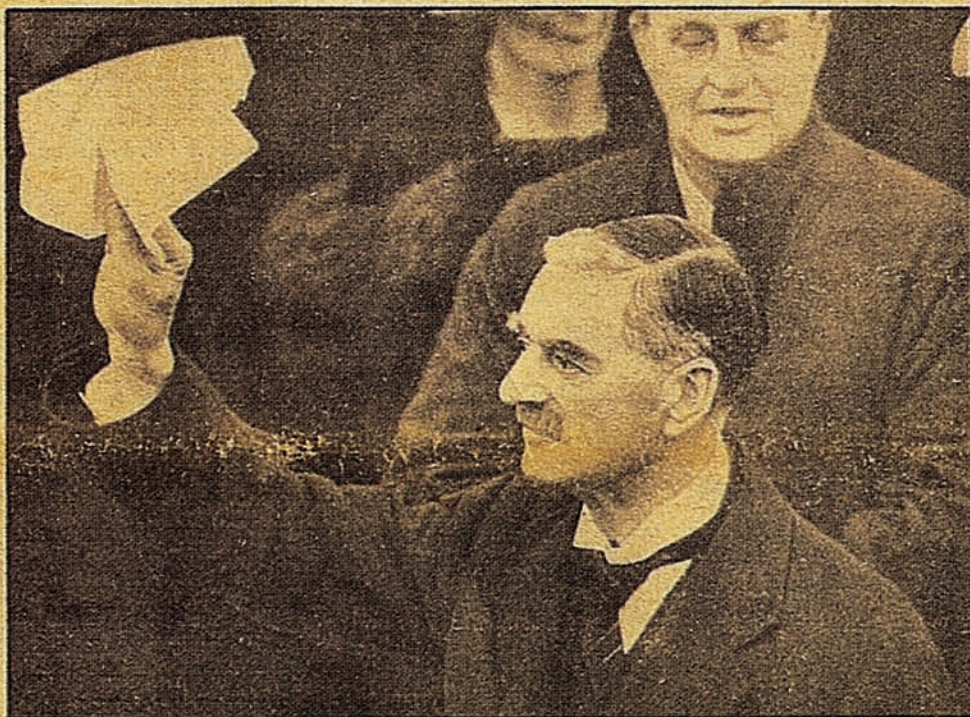
TO-MORROW is Peace Sunday.

Hardly more than a few hours ago it seemed as if it would have been the first Sunday of the most senseless and savage war in history.

The "Daily Sketch" suggests that the Nation should attend church to-morrow and give thanks.

THE fathers and mothers who might have lost their sons, the young people who would have paid the cost of war with their lives, the children who have been spared the horror of modern warfare—let them all attend Divine Service and kneel in humility and thankfulness.

To-morrow should not be allowed to pass without a sincere and reverent recognition of its significance.



MR. CHAMBERLAIN shows the paper that represents his great triumph for European peace to the thousands who gave him such a thunderous

welcome at Heston yesterday. It is the historic Anglo-German Pact signed by himself and the Fuehrer, Herr Hitler.

'Determined To Ensure Peace'

WHEN Mr. Chamberlain arrived at Heston last night he said:

"This morning I had another talk with the German Chancellor, Herr Hitler. Here is a paper which bears his name as well as mine. I would like to read it to you:

"We, the German Fuehrer and Chancellor and the British Prime Minister, have had a further meeting to-day and are agreed in recognising that the question of Anglo-German relations is of the first importance for the two countries and for Europe.

"We regard the agreement signed last night and the Anglo-German Naval Agreement as symbolic of the desire of our two peoples never to war with one another again.

"We are resolved that the method of consultation shall be the method adopted to deal with any other questions that may concern our two countries and we are determined to continue our efforts to remove possible sources of difference and thus to contribute to the assurance of peace in Europe."

3

Why had international peace collapsed by 1939?

FOCUS POINTS

- What were the long-term consequences of the peace treaties of 1919–23?
- What were the consequences of the failures of the League in the 1930s?
- How far was Hitler's foreign policy to blame for the outbreak of war in 1939?
- Was the policy of appeasement justified?
- How important was the Nazi–Soviet Pact?
- Why did Britain and France declare war on Germany in September 1939?

The image on the opposite page represents the most famous moment of Appeasement – the policy followed by Britain and France towards Hitler through the 1930s. The British Prime Minister has returned from a meeting with Hitler having agreed to give him parts of Czechoslovakia, in return for which Hitler promised peace.

If you know the story already then you will know that this agreement proved totally empty – 'not worth the paper it was written on' as they say! Hitler did not keep his word, and probably never meant to.

But just forget hindsight for a moment and try to join with the people of Britain welcoming back a leader who seemed to be doing his best to preserve a crumbling peace.

You can see from the newspaper there is a genuine desire to believe in the possibility of peace. Chamberlain had not given up on the possibility of peace; nor had the British people. They did not think that war was inevitable – even in 1938. They did all they could to avoid it.

In this chapter your task is to work out why, despite all the efforts of international leaders, and all the horrors of war, international peace finally collapsed in 1939.

Here are some of the factors you will consider. They are all relevant and they are all connected. Your task will be to examine each one, then see the connections and weigh the importance of these different factors.

1. Treaties after the First World War particularly the Treaty of Versailles

2. The failures of the League of Nations

3. The worldwide economic depression

4. The policy of Appeasement

5. The Nazi-Soviet pact

6. Hitler's actions and particularly his foreign policy

◀ Opposite is the front page of the *Daily Sketch*, 1 October 1938. Read it carefully and select one or two phrases which suggest or prove that:

- ♦ the British people thought Chamberlain was a hero
- ♦ the newspaper approves of Chamberlain
- ♦ people in Britain genuinely feared a war was imminent in 1938
- ♦ Hitler was respected
- ♦ Hitler could be trusted
- ♦ this agreement would bring lasting peace.

Hitler's war

Between 1918 and 1933 Adolf Hitler rose from being an obscure and demoralised member of the defeated German army to become the all-powerful Führer, dictator of Germany, with almost unlimited power and an overwhelming ambition to make Germany great once again. His is an astonishing story which you can read about in detail in Chapter 9. Here you will be concentrating on just one intriguing and controversial question: how far was Hitler responsible for the outbreak of the Second World War.

Hitler's plans

Hitler was never secretive about his plans for Germany. As early as 1924 he had laid out in his book *Mein Kampf* what he would do if the Nazis ever achieved power in Germany.

Abolish the Treaty of Versailles!

Like many Germans, Hitler believed that the Treaty of Versailles was unjust.

He hated the Treaty and called the German leaders who had signed it 'The November Criminals'. The Treaty was a constant reminder to Germans of their defeat in the First World War and their humiliation by the Allies. Hitler promised that if he became leader of Germany he would reverse it (see Source 1).

By the time he came to power in Germany, some of the terms had already been changed. For example, Germany had stopped making reparations payments altogether. However, most points were still in place. The table on page 53 shows the terms of the Treaty that most angered Hitler.

Expand German territory!

The Treaty of Versailles had taken away territory from Germany. Hitler wanted to get that territory back. He wanted Germany to unite with Austria. He wanted German minorities in other countries such as Czechoslovakia to rejoin Germany. But he also wanted to carve out an empire in eastern Europe to give extra *Lebensraum* or 'living space' for Germans (see Source 2).

Defeat Communism!

A German empire carved out of the Soviet Union would also help Hitler in one of his other objectives – the defeat of Communism or Bolshevism. Hitler was anti-Communist. He believed that Bolsheviks had helped to bring about the defeat of Germany in the First World War. He also believed that the Bolsheviks wanted to take over Germany (see Source 3).

SOURCE 1

We demand equality of rights for the German people in its dealings with other nations, and abolition of the Peace Treaties of Versailles and St Germain.

From Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, 1923–24.

SOURCE 2

We turn our eyes towards the lands of the east . . . When we speak of new territory in Europe today, we must principally think of Russia and the border states subject to her. Destiny itself seems to wish to point out the way for us here.

Colonisation of the eastern frontiers is of extreme importance. It will be the duty of Germany's foreign policy to provide large spaces for the nourishment and settlement of the growing population of Germany.

From Hitler's *Mein Kampf*.

Think!

It is 1933. Write a briefing paper for the British government on Hitler's plans for Germany. Use Sources 1–3 to help you.

Conclude with your own assessment on whether the government should be worried about Hitler and his plans.

In your conclusion, remember these facts about the British government:

- ◆ Britain is a leading member of the League of Nations and is supposed to uphold the Treaty of Versailles, by force if necessary.
- ◆ The British government does not trust the Communists and thinks that a strong Germany could help to stop the Communist threat.

SOURCE 3

We must not forget that the Bolsheviks are blood-stained. That they overran a great state [Russia], and in a fury of massacre wiped out millions of their most intelligent fellow-countrymen and now for ten years have been conducting the most tyrannous regime of all time. We must not forget that many of them belong to a race which combines a rare mixture of bestial cruelty and vast skill in lies, and considers itself specially called now to gather the whole world under its bloody oppression.

The menace which Russia suffered under is one which perpetually hangs over Germany. Germany is the next great objective of Bolshevism. All our strength is needed to raise up our nation once more and rescue it from the embrace of the international python . . . The first essential is the expulsion of the Marxist poison from the body of our nation.

From Hitler's *Mein Kampf*.

Hitler's actions

This timeline shows how, between 1933 and 1939, Hitler turned his plans into actions.

| DATE | ACTION |
|------|---|
| 1933 | Took Germany out of the League of Nations; began rearming Germany |
| 1934 | Tried to take over Austria but was prevented by Mussolini |
| 1935 | Held massive rearmament rally in Germany |
| 1936 | Reintroduced conscription in Germany; sent German troops into the Rhineland; made an anti-Communist alliance with Japan |
| 1937 | Tried out Germany's new weapons in the Spanish Civil War; made an anti-Communist alliance with Italy |
| 1938 | Took over Austria; took over the Sudetenland area of Czechoslovakia |
| 1939 | Invaded the rest of Czechoslovakia; invaded Poland; war |

War

SOURCE 4

Any account of the origins and course of the Second World War must give Hitler the leading part. Without him a major war in the early 1940s between all the world's great powers was unthinkable.

British historian Professor Richard Overy, writing in 1996.

Other factors

When you see events leading up to the war laid out this way, it makes it seem as if Hitler planned it all step by step. In fact, this view of events was widely accepted by historians until the 1960s. In the 1960s, however, the British historian AJP Taylor came up with a new interpretation. His view was that Hitler was a gambler rather than a planner. Hitler simply took the logical next step to see what he could get away with. He was bold. He kept his nerve. As other countries gave in to him and allowed him to get away with each gamble, so he became bolder and risked more. In Taylor's interpretation it is Britain, the Allies and the League of Nations who are to blame for letting Hitler get away with it – by not standing up to him. In this interpretation it is other factors that are as much to blame as Hitler himself:

- the worldwide economic depression
- the weaknesses of the post-war treaties
- the actions of the leading powers – Britain, France, the USA and the USSR.

As you examine Hitler's actions in more detail, you will see that both interpretations are possible. You can make up your own mind which you agree with.

Revision Tip

The details in this chart will be very useful for your exam. So add pictures and highlights to help you learn the information.

Think!

Hitler and the Treaty of Versailles

- 1 Draw up a table like this one to show some of the terms of the Treaty of Versailles that affected Germany.
- 2 As you work through this chapter, fill out the other columns of this 'Versailles chart'.

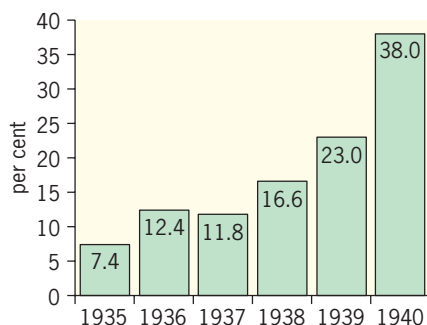
| Terms of the Treaty of Versailles | What Hitler did and when | The reasons he gave for his action | The response from Britain and France |
|--|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Germany's armed forces to be severely limited | | | |
| The Rhineland to be a demilitarised zone | | | |
| Germany forbidden to unite with Austria | | | |
| The Sudetenland taken into the new state of Czechoslovakia | | | |
| The Polish Corridor given to Poland | | | |

SOURCE 5

I am convinced that Hitler does not want war . . . what the Germans are after is a strong army which will enable them to deal with Russia.

British politician Lord Lothian,
January 1935.

SOURCE 6



The proportion of German spending that went into armaments, 1935–40.

Source Analysis

How far do Sources 6 and 7 prove Source 5 to be wrong?

Think!

- Fill out the first row of your 'Versailles chart' on page 53 to summarise what Hitler did about rearmament.
- What factors allowed Hitler to get away with rearming Germany? Look for:
 - the impact of the Despression
 - the Treaty of Versailles
 - the League of Nations
 - the actions of Britain and France.

Rearmament

Hitler came to power in Germany in 1933. One of his first steps was to increase Germany's armed forces. Thousands of unemployed workers were drafted into the army. This helped him to reduce unemployment, which was one of the biggest problems he faced in Germany. But it also helped him to deliver on his promise to make Germany strong again and to challenge the terms of the Treaty of Versailles.

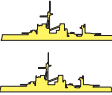


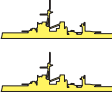
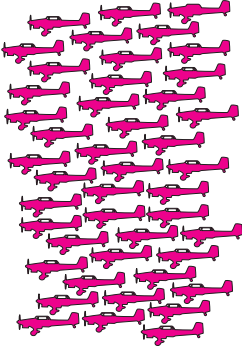
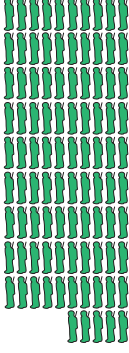
Hitler knew that German people supported rearmament. But he also knew it would cause alarm in other countries. He handled it cleverly. Rearmament began in secret at first. He made a great public display of his desire not to rearm Germany – that he was only doing it because other countries refused to disarm (see page 42). He then followed Japan's example and withdrew from the League of Nations.

In 1935 Hitler openly staged a massive military rally celebrating the German armed forces. In 1936 he even reintroduced conscription to the army. He was breaking the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, but he guessed correctly that he would get away with rearmament. Many other countries were using rearmament as a way to fight unemployment. The collapse of the League of Nations Disarmament Conference in 1934 (see pages 42–43) had shown that other nations were not prepared to disarm.

Rearmament was a very popular move in Germany. It boosted Nazi support. Hitler also knew that Britain had some sympathy with Germany on this issue. Britain believed that the limits put on Germany's armed forces by the Treaty of Versailles were too tight. The permitted forces were not enough to defend Germany from attack. Britain also thought that a strong Germany would be a good buffer against Communism.

Britain had already helped to dismantle the Treaty by signing a naval agreement with Hitler in 1935, allowing Germany to increase its navy to up to 35 per cent of the size of the British navy. The French were angry with Britain about this, but there was little they could do. Through the rest of the 1930s Hitler ploughed more and more spending into armaments (see Sources 6 and 7).

SOURCE 7

| | Warships | Aircraft | Soldiers |
|------|--|--|---|
| 1932 |  (30) |  (36) |  (100,000) |
| 1939 |  (95) |  (8,250) |  (950,000) |

German armed forces in 1932 and 1939.

The Saar plebiscite

The Saar region of Germany had been run by the League of Nations since 1919 (see page 32).

In 1935 the League of Nations held the promised plebiscite for people to vote on whether their region should return to German rule. Hitler was initially wary as many of his opponents had fled to the Saar. The League, however, was determined that the vote should take place and Hitler bowed to this pressure. So it seemed that the League was being firm and decisive with Hitler. The vote was an overwhelming success for Hitler. His propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels mounted a massive campaign to persuade the people of the Saar to vote for the Reich. Around 90 per cent of the population voted to return to German rule. This was entirely legal and within the terms of the Treaty. It was also a real morale booster for Hitler. After the vote Hitler declared that he had 'no further territorial demands to make of France'.

SOURCE 8

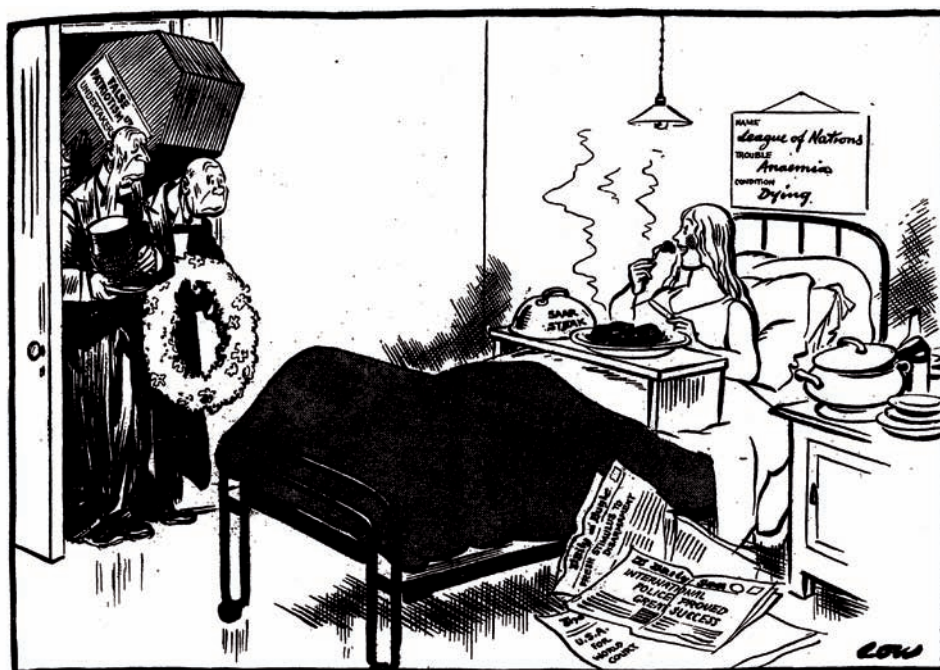


Following the plebiscite in 1935, people and police express their joy at returning to the German Reich by giving the Nazi salute.

Source Analysis

- 1 Explain in your own words what is happening in Source 8. For example, who are the people on horseback? Why are people saluting?
- 2 Do you trust Source 8 to be an accurate portrayal of the feelings of the people of the Saar in January 1935?
- 3 What is the message of the cartoon in Source 9? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge.

SOURCE 9



A British cartoon published in January 1935, soon after the Saar plebiscite. The figure in bed is the League of Nations.

SOURCE 10



The Rhineland.

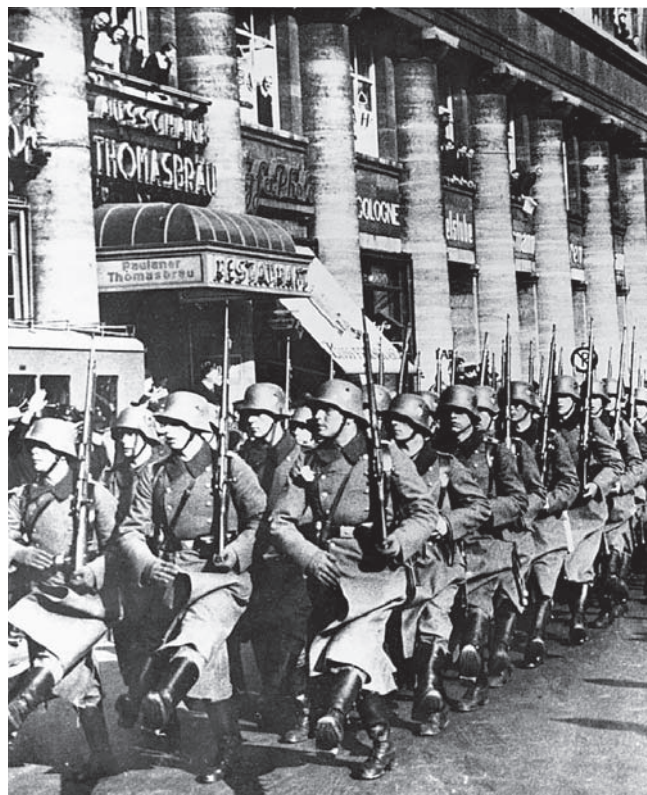
Remilitarisation of the Rhineland

In March 1936, Hitler took his first really big risk by moving troops into the Rhineland area of Germany. The Rhineland was the large area either side of the River Rhine that formed Germany's western border with France and Belgium.

The demilitarisation of the Rhineland was one of the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. It was designed to protect France from invasion from Germany. It had also been accepted by Germany in the Locarno Treaties of 1925. Hitler was taking a huge gamble. If he had been forced to withdraw, he would have faced humiliation and would have lost the support of the German army (many of the generals were unsure about him, anyway). Hitler knew the risks, but he had chosen the time and place well.

- **France** had just signed a treaty with the USSR to protect each other against attack from Germany (see Source 11). Hitler used the agreement to claim that Germany was under threat. He argued that in the face of such a threat he should be allowed to place troops on his own frontier.
- Hitler knew that many people in **Britain** felt that he had a right to station his troops in the Rhineland and he was fairly confident that Britain would not intervene. His gamble was over France. Would France let him get away with it?

SOURCE 12



German troops marching through the city of Cologne in March 1936. This style of marching with high steps was known as goose-stepping.

SOURCE 11



An American cartoon entitled 'Ring-Around-the-Nazi!' published in March 1936 showing the encirclement of Germany by France and the USSR.

Think!

Fill out row 2 of your 'Versailles chart' on page 53 to summarise what happened in the Rhineland.

SOURCE 13

At that time we had no army worth mentioning . . . If the French had taken any action we would have been easily defeated; our resistance would have been over in a few days. And the Air Force we had then was ridiculous – a few Junkers 52s from Lufthansa and not even enough bombs for them . . .

Hitler looks back on his gamble over the Rhineland some years after the event.

SOURCE 14

Hitler has got away with it. France is not marching. No wonder the faces of Göring and Blomberg [Nazi leaders] were all smiles.

Oh, the stupidity (or is it the paralysis?) of the French. I learnt today that the German troops had orders to beat a hasty retreat if the French army opposed them in any way.

Written by William Shirer in 1936. He was an American journalist in Germany during the 1930s. He was a critic of the Nazi regime and had to flee from Germany in 1940.

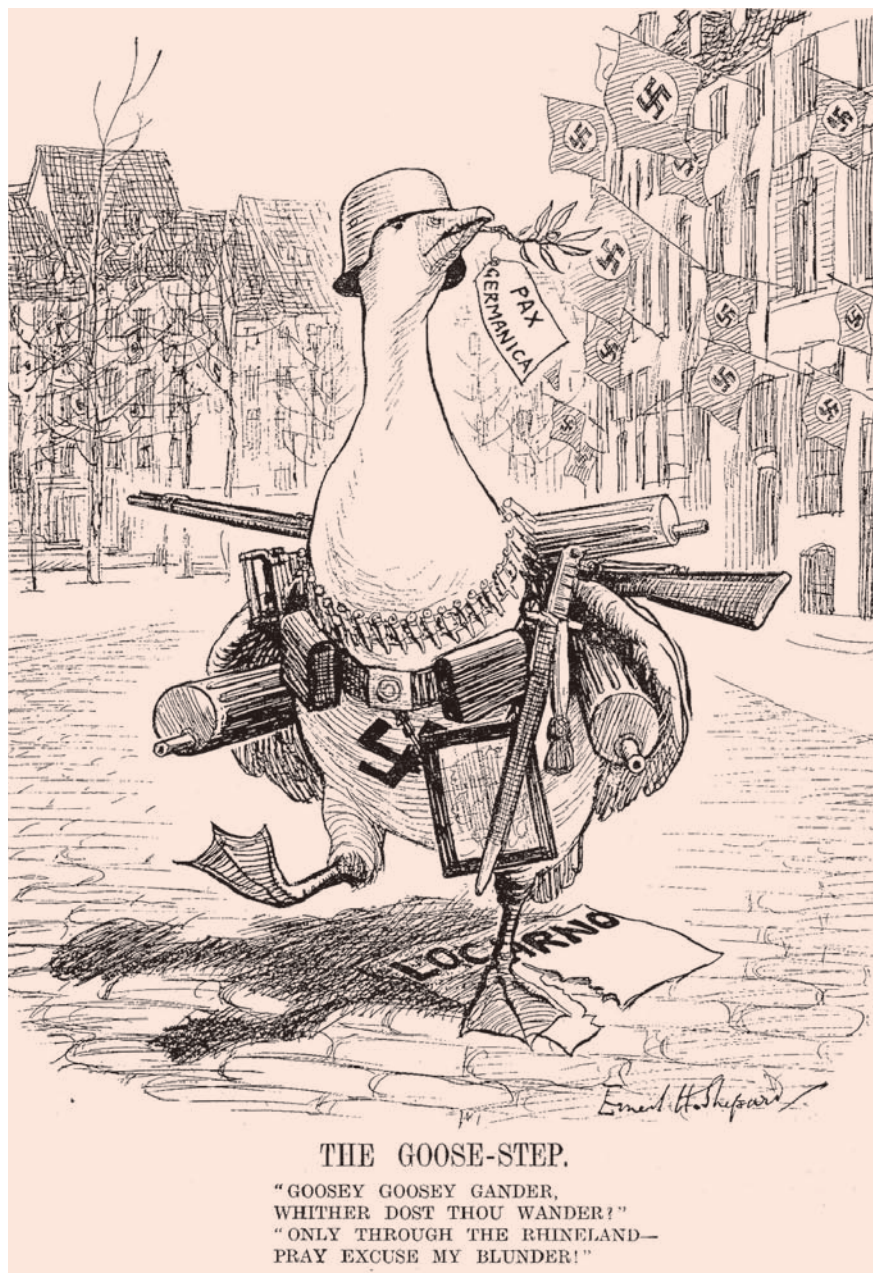
Source Analysis

- 1 Does Source 11 prove that Hitler was correct when he argued that Germany was under threat? Explain your answer.
- 2 What do Sources 13 and 14 disagree about? Why might they disagree about it?
- 3 Why has the cartoonist in Source 15 shown Germany as a goose?
- 4 Look at the equipment being carried by the goose. What does this tell you about how the cartoonist saw the new Germany?
- 5 Would you regard reoccupation of the Rhineland as a success for Hitler or as a failure for the French and the British? Explain your answer by referring to the sources.

As the troops moved into the Rhineland, Hitler and his generals sweated nervously. They had orders to pull out if the French acted against them. Despite the rearmament programme, Germany's army was no match for the French army. It lacked essential equipment and air support. In the end, however, Hitler's luck held.

The attention of the League of Nations was on the Abyssinian crisis which was happening at exactly the same time (see pages 44–47). The League condemned Hitler's action but had no power to do anything else. Even the French, who were most directly threatened by the move, were divided over what to do. They were about to hold an election and none of the French leaders was prepared to take responsibility for plunging France into a war. Of course, they did not know how weak the German army was. In the end, France refused to act without British support and so Hitler's big gamble paid off. Maybe next time he would risk more!

SOURCE 15



A British cartoon about the reoccupation of the Rhineland, 1936. Pax Germanica is Latin and means 'Peace, German style'.

Source Analysis ▼

- What can we learn from Source 16 about:
 - ◆ What happened at Guernica?
 - ◆ The views of French people on Guernica?
 - ◆ The views of the magazine which published the photograph and caption?
- Use your thinking in Question 1 to write an answer to the question:
How useful is Source 16 to a historian studying the Spanish Civil War?

SOURCE 16



A postcard published in France to mark the bombing of Guernica in 1937. The text reads 'The Basque people murdered by German planes. Guernica martyred 26 April 1937'.

Focus Task

What were the consequences of the failure of the League in the 1930s?

In Chapter 2 you studied the failures of the League of Nations in the 1930s. You are now in a position to evaluate the impact of those failures on Hitler's actions.

- Look back over pages 54–58. Look for evidence that the weakness of the League of Nations in the 1930s allowed Hitler to achieve what he did.
- Write a paragraph describing the effect of each of the following on Hitler's actions:
 - ◆ the Manchurian crisis
 - ◆ the failure of disarmament
 - ◆ the Abyssinian crisis.

The Spanish Civil War

In 1936 a civil war broke out in Spain between supporters of the Republican government and right-wing rebels under General Franco. A civil war in a European state would have been an important event anyway, but this one became extremely significant because it gained an international dimension.

Stalin's USSR's supported the Republican government (in the form of weapons, aircraft and pilots). Thousands of volunteers from around 50 countries joined International Brigades to support the Republicans. At the same time, Hitler and Mussolini declared their support for General Franco. He seemed to be a man who shared their world view.

The governments of Britain and France refused to intervene directly although France did provide some weapons for the Republicans. Germany and Italy also agreed not to intervene but then blatantly did so. Mussolini sent thousands of Italian troops, although officially they were 'volunteers'. Germany sent aircraft and pilots who took part in most of the major campaigns of the war. They helped transport Franco's forces from North Africa to Spain. Later they took part in bombing raids on civilian populations in Spanish cities (see Source 16 for example). Thanks partly to Hitler's help the Nationalists won the war and a right-wing dictatorship ruled Spain for the next 36 years.

The conflict had important consequences for peace in Europe. It gave combat experience to German and Italian forces. It strengthened the bonds between Mussolini and Hitler. Historian Zara Steiner argues that Britain's non-intervention in Spain convinced Hitler that he could form an alliance with Britain or persuade them (and France) to remain neutral in a future war. At the same time the devastating impact of modern weapons convinced Chamberlain and many others that war had to be avoided at all costs. Thus, the Spanish Civil War further encouraged Hitler in his main plan to reverse the Treaty of Versailles. At the same time, the USSR became increasingly suspicious of Britain and France because of their reluctance to get involved in opposing fascism.

Militarism and the Axis

When he wrote his memoirs in later years Winston Churchill described the 1930s as a 'Gathering Storm'. Many shared his gloomy view. Hitler and Mussolini had shown that their armed forces were effective and that they were ready to use them. Mussolini had triumphed in Abyssinia and was aggressively trying to assert his authority in the Mediterranean and North Africa.

Meanwhile in the east Japan was under the control of hardline nationalist commanders such as General Tojo. They also had the support of business leaders in Japan. They wanted to extend Japan's empire across Asia so it could compete with other world powers, particularly the United States. In 1937 the Japanese took their next big step with the invasion of China. Some historians regard this as the first campaign of the Second World War.

Hitler and Mussolini saw that they had much in common with the military dictatorship in Japan. In 1936, Germany and Japan signed an Anti-Comintern Pact, to oppose Communism. Comintern was the USSR's organisation for spreading Communism to other countries. In 1937, Italy also signed it. The new alliance was called the Axis alliance.

Think!

Complete row 3 of your 'Versailles chart' on page 53, summarising what Hitler did about Austria.

Source Analysis ▼

Work in pairs. Take either Source 17 or Source 18.

1 For your source work out:

- which character in the cartoon represents Mussolini and which Hitler
- what your cartoon suggests about the relationship between Hitler and Mussolini
- what is the cartoonist's opinion of the *Anschluss*. Find details in the source to support your view.

2 Compare your answers with your partner's and discuss any points of agreement or disagreement.

3 Write your own paragraph in answer to this question: How far do Sources 17 and 18 agree about the *Anschluss*?

Anschluss with Austria, 1938

With the successes of 1936 and 1937 to boost him, Hitler turned his attention to his homeland of Austria. The Austrian people were mainly German, and in *Mein Kampf* Hitler had made it clear that he felt that the two states belonged together as one German nation. Many in Austria supported the idea of union with Germany, since their country was so economically weak. Hitler was confident that he could bring them together into a 'greater Germany'. In fact, he had tried to take over Austria in 1934, but on that occasion Mussolini had stopped him. Four years later, in 1938, the situation was different. Hitler and Mussolini were now allies.

There was a strong Nazi Party in Austria. Hitler encouraged the Nazis to stir up trouble for the government. They staged demonstrations calling for union with Germany. They caused riots. Hitler then told the Austrian Chancellor Schuschnigg that only *Anschluss* (political union) could sort out these problems. He pressurised Schuschnigg to agree to *Anschluss*. Schuschnigg appealed for some kind of gesture of support such as threatening sanctions against Hitler or issuing a strong statement. France and Britain failed to provide this support so Schuschnigg felt he had no option but to call a plebiscite (a referendum), to see what the Austrian people wanted. Hitler was not prepared to risk this – he might lose! He simply sent his troops into Austria in March 1938, supposedly to guarantee a trouble-free plebiscite. Under the watchful eye of the Nazi troops, 99.75 per cent voted for *Anschluss*.

Anschluss was completed without any military confrontation with France and Britain. Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister, felt that Austrians and Germans had a right to be united and that the Treaty of Versailles was wrong to separate them. Britain's Lord Halifax had even suggested to Hitler before the *Anschluss* that Britain would not resist Germany uniting with Austria.

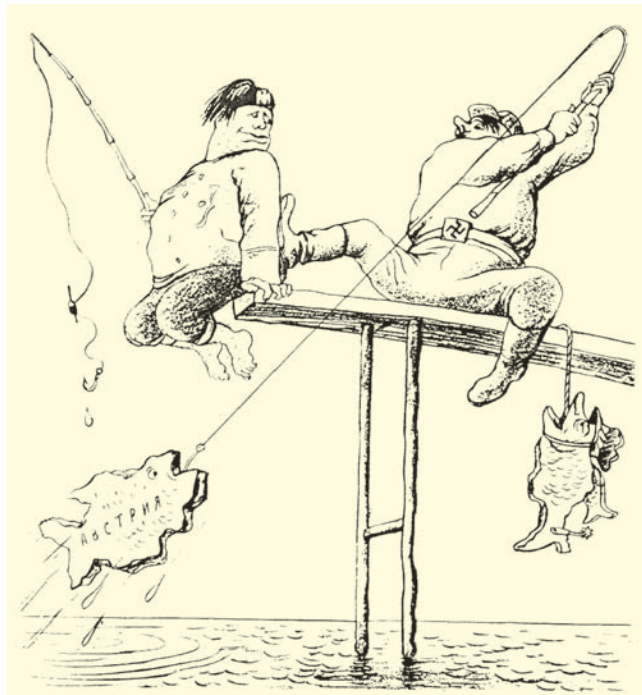
Once again, Hitler's risky but decisive action had reaped a rich reward – Austria's soldiers, weapons and its rich deposits of gold and iron ore were added to Germany's increasingly strong army and industry. Hitler was breaking yet another condition of the Treaty of Versailles, but the pattern was becoming clear. The Treaty itself was seen as suspect. Britain and France were not prepared to go to war to defend a flawed treaty.

SOURCE 17



A British cartoon commenting on the *Anschluss*.

SOURCE 18



A Soviet cartoon commenting on the *Anschluss* showing Hitler catching Austria.

Appeasement: for and against!

If Britain and France were not prepared to defend the Treaty of Versailles, would they let Hitler have more of his demands? The short answer is yes, and Britain's policy at this time is known as Appeasement. Neville Chamberlain is the man most associated with this policy (see Profile page 63) although he did not become Prime Minister until 1937. Many other British people (probably the majority), including many politicians, were also in favour of this policy. However, there were some at the time who were very critical. Here are the main arguments for and against.

Trusting Hitler

After each new move he made Hitler said this was all he wanted. Yet he often went back on those promises. Appeasement was based on the mistaken idea that Hitler was trustworthy.



Fear of Communism

Hitler was not the only concern of Britain and its allies. He was not even their main worry. They were more concerned about the spread of Communism and particularly the dangers to world peace posed by Stalin, the new leader in the USSR. Many saw Hitler as the buffer to the threat of spreading Communism.



Memories of the Great War

Both British and French leaders, and much of their population, vividly remembered the horrific experiences of the First World War. They wished to avoid another war at almost any cost.



German arms

Germany was rearming publicly and quickly year by year. Hitler claimed he was trying to catch up with other countries, but others could see that Germany was better armed than Britain or France.



British arms

The British government believed that the armed forces were not ready for war against Hitler. Britain only began rearming in 1935 and intelligence suggested the British were some way behind the Germans.



The USA

American support had been vital to Britain's success in the First World War. Britain could not be sure it could face up to Germany without the guarantee of American help. But since 1919 the USA had followed a policy of isolationism. American leaders were determined not to be dragged into another European war.



The British empire

For Britain to fight a war against Germany it needed to be sure it had the support of the countries in its empire or Commonwealth. It was not a guaranteed certainty that they would all support a war.



The Treaty of Versailles

Many felt that the Treaty of Versailles was unfair to Germany. Some of Hitler's demands were not unreasonable. They assumed that once these wrongs were put right then Germany would become a peaceful nation again.



Make a stand!

Hitler the gambler took increasing risks. He tried something out to see if there would be any come-back. At some point therefore Britain and France needed to stand up to Hitler to prevent a later bigger and more dangerous move.



The Soviet Union

Hitler made no secret of his plans to expand eastwards. He had openly talked of taking land in Russia. Appeasement sent the message to Stalin and the USSR that Britain and France would not stand in Hitler's way if he invaded Russia.



Hitler's allies

Hitler had already observed how his allies, particularly the right-wing dictatorships in Japan and Italy, had got away with acts of aggression.



Economic problems

Britain and France had large debts (many still left over from fighting the First World War) and huge unemployment as a result of the Depression. They could not afford a war.



Focus Task

Why did Britain and France follow a policy of Appeasement?

The cards on page 60 show various arguments that were advanced for or against Appeasement. Study the cards, then:

- 1 Sort them into arguments for and arguments against Appeasement. If there are any you are not sure about leave them aside as you can come back to them.
- 2 On each card write a 'for' or 'against'.
- 3 Sort the cards into those that:
 - a) would have been obvious to British and French leaders at the time
 - b) would only be clear with hindsight.

- 4 Make notes under the following headings to summarise why Britain followed a policy of appeasement:
 - a) military reasons
 - b) economic reasons
 - c) fear
 - d) public opinion

- 5 Use your notes to write a short paragraph to explain in your own words why the British government followed a policy of Appeasement.

Think!

Most people in Britain supported the policy of Appeasement. Write a letter to the *London Evening Standard* justifying Appeasement and pointing out why the cartoonist is wrong. Your letter should be written in either 1936 or 1938 and it will need to be different according to which source you pick. You can use some of the arguments from the Focus Task on page 53 in your letter.

Revision Tip

Make sure you can explain:

- ◆ what Appeasement was
- ◆ two examples of Appeasement in action.

Be sure you can describe:

- ◆ one reason why Chamberlain followed the policy of Appeasement
- ◆ one reason why people criticised the policy.

One of the most famous critics was David Low, cartoonist with the popular newspaper the *London Evening Standard*. You have seen many of Low's cartoons in this book already. Low was a fierce critic of Hitler, but also criticised the policy of Appeasement. Source 19 shows one of his cartoons on the issue, but if you visit the British Cartoon Archive web site you can see all of Low's cartoons.

SOURCE 19



A cartoon by David Low from the *London Evening Standard*, 1936. This was a popular newspaper with a large readership in Britain.

Source Analysis

Fill out a table like this to analyse Source 19. On page 64, fill out a second column to analyse Source 27 in the same way.

| | Source 19 | Source 27 |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Date published | | |
| Critical or supportive? | | |
| Of what/whom? | | |
| How can we tell? | | |
| Why was the cartoon published at this time? | | |

The Sudetenland, 1938

After the Austrian *Anschluss*, Hitler was beginning to feel that he could not put a foot wrong. But his growing confidence was putting the peace of Europe in increasing danger.

SOURCE 20



Central Europe after the *Anschluss*.

SOURCE 21

I give you my word of honour that Czechoslovakia has nothing to fear from the Reich.

Hitler speaking to Chamberlain in 1938.

Czech fears

Unlike the leaders of Britain and France, Edvard Beneš, the leader of Czechoslovakia, was horrified by the *Anschluss*. He realised that Czechoslovakia would be the next country on Hitler's list for takeover. It seemed that Britain and France were not prepared to stand up to Hitler. Beneš sought guarantees from the British and French that they would honour their commitment to defend Czechoslovakia if Hitler invaded. The French were bound by a treaty and reluctantly said they would. The British felt bound to support the French. However, Chamberlain asked Hitler whether he had designs on Czechoslovakia and was reassured by Hitler's promise (Source 21).

Hitler's threats

Despite what he said to Chamberlain, Hitler did have designs on Czechoslovakia. This new state, created by the Treaty of Versailles, included a large number of Germans – former subjects of Austria–Hungary's empire – in the Sudetenland area. Henlein, who was the leader of the Nazis in the Sudetenland, stirred up trouble among the Sudetenland Germans and they demanded to be part of Germany. In May 1938, Hitler made it clear that he intended to fight Czechoslovakia if necessary. Historians disagree as to whether Hitler really meant what he said. There is considerable evidence that the German army was not at all ready for war. Even so the news put Europe on full war alert.

Think!

Write a series of newspaper headlines for different stages of the Sudetenland crisis, for example:

- ◆ March 1938
- ◆ May 1938
- ◆ early September 1938
- ◆ 30 September 1938.

Include headlines for:

- ◆ a Czech newspaper
- ◆ a British newspaper
- ◆ a German newspaper.

Preparations for war

Unlike Austria, Czechoslovakia would be no walk-over for Hitler. Britain, France and the USSR had all promised to support Czechoslovakia if it came to war. The Czechs themselves had a modern army. The Czechoslovak leader, Beneš, was prepared to fight. He knew that without the Sudetenland and its forts, railways and industries, Czechoslovakia would be defenceless.

All through the summer the tension rose in Europe. If there was a war, people expected that it would bring heavy bombing of civilians as had happened in the Spanish Civil War, and in cities around Britain councils began digging air-raid shelters. Magazines carried advertisements for air-raid protection and gas masks.

SOURCE 22

How horrible, fantastic, incredible it is that we should be digging trenches and trying on gas masks here because of a quarrel in a far away country between people of whom we know nothing. I am myself a man of peace to the depths of my soul.

From a radio broadcast by Neville Chamberlain, September 1938.

Profile

Neville Chamberlain



- Born 1869.
- He was the son of the famous radical politician Joseph Chamberlain.
- He was a successful businessman in the Midlands before entering politics.
- During the First World War he served in the Cabinet as Director General of National Service. During this time he saw the full horrors of war.
- After the war he was Health Minister and then Chancellor. He was noted for his careful work and his attention to detail. However, he was not good at listening to advice.
- He was part of the government throughout the 1920s and supported the policy of Appeasement towards Hitler. He became Prime Minister in 1937, although he had little experience of foreign affairs.
- He believed that Germany had real grievances – this was the basis for his policy of Appeasement.
- He became a national hero after the Munich Conference of 1938 averted war.
- In 1940 Chamberlain resigned as Prime Minister and Winston Churchill took over.

SOURCE 23



Digging air raid defences in London, September 1938.

Crisis talks

In September the problem reached crisis point. In a last-ditch effort to avert war, Chamberlain flew to meet Hitler on 15 September. The meeting appeared to go well. Hitler moderated his demands, saying he was only interested in parts of the Sudetenland – and then only if a plebiscite showed that the Sudeten Germans wanted to join Germany. Chamberlain thought this was reasonable. He felt it was yet another of the terms of the Treaty of Versailles that needed to be addressed. Chamberlain seemed convinced that, if Hitler got what he wanted, he would at last be satisfied.

On 19 September the French and the British put to the Czechs their plans to give Hitler the parts of the Sudetenland that he wanted. However, three days later at a second meeting, Hitler increased his demands. He said he 'regretted' that the previously arranged terms were not enough. He wanted all the Sudetenland.

SOURCE 24

The Sudetenland is the last problem that must be solved and it will be solved. It is the last territorial claim which I have to make in Europe.

The aims of our foreign policy are not unlimited . . . They are grounded on the determination to save the German people alone . . . Ten million Germans found themselves beyond the frontiers of the Reich . . . Germans who wished to return to the Reich as their homeland.

Hitler speaking in Berlin, September 1938.

To justify his demands, he claimed that the Czech government was mistreating the Germans in the Sudetenland and that he intended to 'rescue' them by 1 October. Chamberlain told Hitler that his demands were unreasonable. The British navy was mobilised. War seemed imminent.

The Munich Agreement

With Mussolini's help, a final meeting was held in Munich on 29 September. While Europe held its breath, the leaders of Britain, Germany, France and Italy decided on the fate of Czechoslovakia.

On 29 September they decided to give Hitler what he wanted. They announced that Czechoslovakia was to lose the Sudetenland. They did not consult the Czechs, nor did they consult the USSR. This is known as the Munich Agreement. The following morning Chamberlain and Hitler published a joint declaration (Source 26) which Chamberlain said would bring 'peace for our time'.

SOURCE 25

People of Britain, your children are safe. Your husbands and your sons will not march to war. Peace is a victory for all mankind. If we must have a victor, let us choose Chamberlain, for the Prime Minister's conquests are mighty and enduring – millions of happy homes and hearts relieved of their burden.

The *Daily Express* comments on the Munich Agreement, 30 September 1938.

SOURCE 26

We regard the Agreement signed last night . . . as symbolic of the desire of our two peoples never to go to war with one another again. We are resolved that we shall use consultation to deal with any other questions that may concern our two countries, and we are determined to continue our efforts to assure the peace of Europe.

The joint declaration of Chamberlain and Hitler, 30 September 1938.

SOURCE 28

By repeatedly surrendering to force, Chamberlain has encouraged aggression . . . our central contention, therefore, is that Mr Chamberlain's policy has throughout been based on a fatal misunderstanding of the psychology of dictatorship.

The *Yorkshire Post*, December 1938.

Consequences

Hitler had gambled that the British would not risk war. He spoke of the Munich Agreement as 'an undreamt-of triumph, so great that you can scarcely imagine it'. The prize of the Sudetenland had been given to him without a shot being fired. On 1 October German troops marched into the Sudetenland. At the same time, Hungary and Poland helped themselves to Czech territory where Hungarians and Poles were living.

The Czechs had been betrayed. Beneš resigned. But the rest of Europe breathed a sigh of relief. Chamberlain received a hero's welcome back in Britain, when he returned with the 'piece of paper' – the Agreement – signed by Hitler (see Profile, page 63).

SOURCE 27



A GREAT MEDIATOR

John Bull. "I've known many Prime Ministers in my time, Sir, but never one who worked so hard for security in the face of such terrible odds."

A British cartoon published in 1938 at the time of the Munich Agreement. John Bull represents Britain. You can find many more cartoons about the Agreement at the British Cartoon Archive website.

SOURCE 29

We have suffered a total defeat . . . I think you will find that in a period of time Czechoslovakia will be engulfed in the Nazi regime. We have passed an awful milestone in our history. This is only the beginning of the reckoning.

Winston Churchill speaking in October 1938. He felt that Britain should resist the demands of Hitler. However, he was an isolated figure in the 1930s.

Triumph or sell-out?

What do you think of the Munich Agreement? Was it a good move or a poor one? Most people in Britain were relieved that it had averted war, but many were now openly questioning the whole policy of Appeasement. Even the public relief may have been overstated. Opinion polls in September 1938 show that the British people did not think Appeasement would stop Hitler. It simply delayed a war, rather than preventing it. Even while Chamberlain was signing the Munich Agreement, he was approving a massive increase in arms spending in preparation for war.

Think!

Complete row 4 of your 'Versailles chart' on page 53.

Source Analysis

- Study Sources 25–29. Sort them into the categories:
 - those that support the Munich Agreement
 - those that criticise the Munich Agreement.
- List the reasons why each source supports or criticises the agreement.
- Imagine you are a teacher setting a test.
 - ◆ Which of Sources 25–29 would work well for an 'Are you surprised?' question?
 - ◆ Which of Sources 25–29 would work well for a 'How useful is this source?' question?
 Explain your answers.

The end of Appeasement

Czechoslovakia, 1939

Although the British people welcomed the Munich Agreement, they did not trust Hitler. In an opinion poll in October 1938, 93 per cent said they did not believe him when he said he had no more territorial ambitions in Europe. In March 1939 they were proved right. On 15 March, with Czechoslovakia in chaos, German troops took over the rest of the country.

SOURCE **30**

Key

- October 1938
Teschen taken by Poland
- November 1938 to March 1939
Slovak border areas and Ruthenia taken by Hungary
- October 1938
Sudetenland region given to Germany in the Munich Agreement
- March 1939
Remainder of Czechoslovakia taken under German control
- German border in 1939



The take-over of Czechoslovakia by 1939.

SOURCE **31**



German troops entering Prague, the capital of Czechoslovakia, in March 1939.

Think!

- 1 Choose five words to describe the attitude of the crowd in Source 31.
- 2 Why do you think that there was no resistance from the Czechs?
- 3 Why do you think Britain and France did nothing in response to the invasion?

There was no resistance from the Czechs. Nor did Britain and France do anything about the situation. However, it was now clear that Hitler could not be trusted. For Chamberlain it was a step too far. Unlike the Sudeten Germans, the Czechs were not separated from their homeland by the Treaty of Versailles. This was an invasion. If Hitler continued unchecked, his next target was likely to be Poland. Britain and France told Hitler that if he invaded Poland they would declare war on Germany. The policy of Appeasement was ended. However, after years of Appeasement, Hitler did not actually believe that Britain and France would risk war by resisting him.

The Nazi–Soviet Pact, 1939

Look at your ‘Versailles chart’ from page 53. You should have only one item left. As Hitler was gradually retaking land lost at Versailles, you can see from Source 31 that logically his next target was the strip of former German land in Poland known as the Polish Corridor. He had convinced himself that Britain and France would not risk war over this, but he was less sure about Stalin and the USSR. Let’s see why.

Stalin’s fears

Stalin had been very worried about the German threat to the Soviet Union ever since Hitler came to power in 1933. Hitler had openly stated his interest in conquering Russian land. He had denounced Communism and imprisoned and killed Communists in Germany. Even so, Stalin could not reach any kind of lasting agreement with Britain and France in the 1930s. From Stalin’s point of view, it was not for want of trying. In 1934 he had joined the League of Nations, hoping the League would guarantee his security against the threat from Germany. However, all he saw at the League was its powerlessness when Mussolini successfully invaded Abyssinia, and when both Mussolini and Hitler intervened in the Spanish Civil War. Politicians in Britain and France had not resisted German rearmament in the 1930s. Indeed, some in Britain seemed even to welcome a stronger Germany as a force to fight Communism, which they saw as a bigger threat to British interests than Hitler.

Stalin’s fears and suspicions grew in the mid 1930s.

- He signed a treaty with France in 1935 that said that France would help the USSR if Germany invaded the Soviet Union. But Stalin was not sure he could trust the French to stick to it, particularly when they failed even to stop Hitler moving his troops into the Rhineland, which was right on their own border.
- The Munich Agreement in 1938 increased Stalin’s concerns. He was not consulted about it. Stalin concluded from the agreement that France and Britain were powerless to stop Hitler or, even worse, that they were happy for Hitler to take over eastern Europe and then the USSR.

SOURCE **32**



A Soviet cartoon from 1939. СССР is Russian for USSR. The French and the British are directing Hitler away from western Europe and towards the USSR.

Stalin’s negotiations

Despite his misgivings, Stalin was still prepared to talk with Britain and France about an alliance against Hitler. The three countries met in March 1939, but Chamberlain was reluctant to commit Britain. From Stalin’s point of view, France and Britain then made things worse by giving Poland a guarantee that they would defend it if it was invaded. Chamberlain meant the guarantee as a warning to Hitler. Stalin saw it as support for one of the USSR’s potential enemies.

Negotiations between Britain, France and the USSR continued through the spring and summer of 1939. However, Stalin also received visits from the Nazi foreign minister Ribbentrop. They discussed a rather different deal, a Nazi–Soviet Pact.

Stalin’s decision

In August, Stalin made his decision. On 24 August 1939, Hitler and Stalin, the two arch enemies, signed the Nazi–Soviet Pact and announced the terms to the world. They agreed not to attack one another. Privately, they also agreed to divide Poland between them.

Source Analysis

- 1 What do Sources 32 and 33 agree about?
- 2 Which source do you most trust to tell you about the reasons Stalin signed the Pact?

SOURCE 33

It will be asked how it was possible that the Soviet government signed a non-aggression pact with so deceitful a nation, with such criminals as Hitler and Ribbentrop . . . We secured peace for our country for eighteen months, which enabled us to make military preparations.

Stalin, in a speech in 1941.

Why did Stalin sign the Pact?

It was clear what Hitler gained from the Pact. He regarded it as his greatest achievement. It gave him half of Poland and ensured he would not face a war on two fronts if he invaded Poland. He had promised the Russians they could have the rest of Poland as well as the Baltic states but he never intended to allow Stalin to keep these territories.

It is also clear what Stalin gained from it. It gave him some territory that had once been part of Russia, but that was not the main point. The real benefit was time! Stalin did not expect Hitler to keep his word. He knew he was Hitler's number one target. But he did not trust Britain and France either. He did not think they were strong enough or reliable enough as allies against Hitler. He expected to have to fight Hitler alone at some point. So it was important to get his forces ready. So what he most needed was time to build up his forces to protect the USSR from the attack he knew would come.

Consequences

The Pact cleared the way for Hitler to invade Poland. On 1 September 1939 the Germany army invaded Poland from the west, where they met little resistance. Britain and France demanded he withdraw from Poland or they would declare war. After the experience of the past three years Hitler was certain Britain and France would not actually do anything about this. If he was planning ahead at all, then in his mind the next move would surely be an attack against his temporary ally, the USSR. However Hitler was in for a surprise. Britain and France kept their pledge. On 2 September they declared war on Germany.

Focus Task A

How important was the Nazi–Soviet Pact?

These statements suggest different reasons why the Nazi–Soviet Pact is important.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| A. It showed that 'internationalism' had been completely abandoned. | B. It freed Hitler from the problem of a two-front war, which helped him to conquer Poland and most of Western Europe in 1939–40. | C. It exposed Britain and France's hope that Nazi Germany and the USSR would fight each other rather than them. |
| D. It showed that Britain feared Stalin's USSR as much as Hitler's Germany. | E. It gave Stalin time to build up forces for future war with Germany. | F. It gave Hitler the confidence to defy Britain and France and attack Poland. |

- 1 In groups decide which statements fit best under each of these headings

| The Nazi Soviet Pact was important because... | |
|---|---|
| ...it demonstrated important aspects of international relations at this time. | ...it had direct military and political consequences. |
| | |

- 2 Now take one comment from each column and explain:
 - a) how the Nazi–Soviet Pact led to this consequence
 - b) whether this would have happened anyway, even without the Nazi–Soviet Pact.

Focus Task B

What were the long-term consequences of the peace treaties of 1919–23?

- 1 You have been filling out your Versailles chart. Now fill out the final row about what Hitler did about Poland.
- 2 'Germany's bitterness about the Treaty of Versailles was the cause of Hitler's aggressive foreign policy.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer carefully.

Focus Task

Was the policy of Appeasement justified?

The right policy at the right time.

The wrong policy, but only with hindsight.

A betrayal of the people of Czechoslovakia.

A risky policy that purchased valuable time.

- 1 Work in pairs or groups. Collect evidence from pages 60–69 to support each of the above views.
- 2 Choose one viewpoint that you most agree with and write some well-argued paragraphs to explain your choice:
 - a) what the viewpoint means – in your own words
 - b) what evidence there is to support it
 - c) what evidence there is against it and why you have rejected that evidence
 - d) your conclusion as to why this is a good verdict.

Think!

- 1 What is Source 34 trying to say about the policy of Appeasement?
- 2 Make a list of the reasons why Appeasement has generally been seen in negative terms.
- 3 Churchill once remarked to President Roosevelt 'History will judge us kindly because I shall write the history'. Read Source 35. How should this affect our viewpoints on Appeasement?

SOURCE 35

The Gathering Storm has been one of the most influential books of our time. It is no exaggeration to claim that it has strongly influenced the behaviour of Western politicians from Harry S. Truman to George W. Bush.

... It is a good tale, told by a master story-teller, who did, after all, win the Nobel prize for literature; but would a prize for fiction have been more appropriate?

Professor John Charmley of the University of East Anglia writing about Churchill's account of the 1930s called *The Gathering Storm*.

Was Appeasement justified?

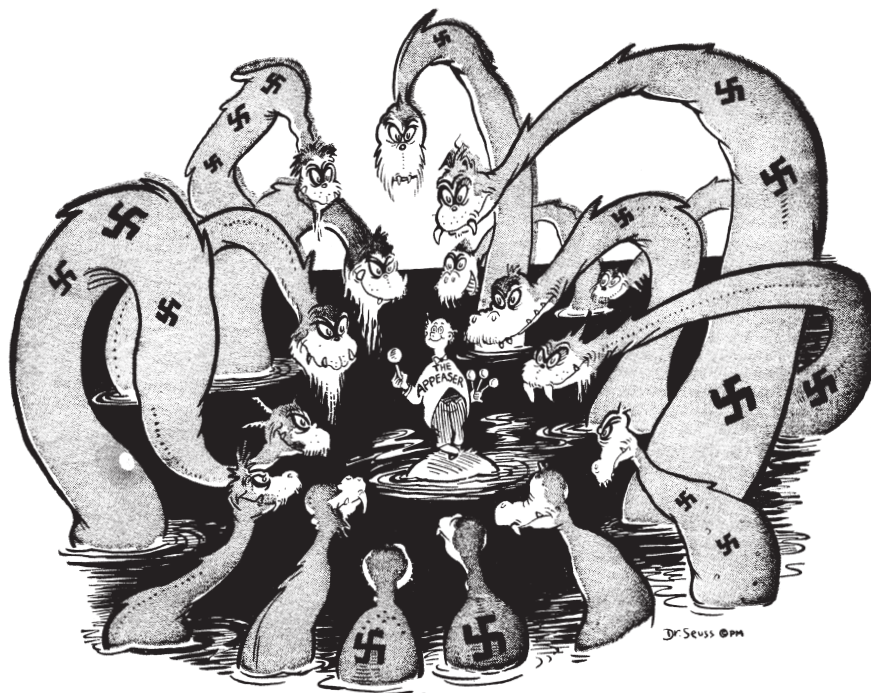
Chamberlain certainly believed in Appeasement. In June 1938 he wrote in a letter to his sister: 'I am completely convinced that the course I am taking is right and therefore cannot be influenced by the attacks of my critics.' He was not a coward or a weakling. When it became obvious that he had no choice but to declare war in 1939 he did.

On page 60 you studied the main reasons Chamberlain followed this policy and the reasons why people opposed him. However, remember that Chamberlain was not alone. There were many more politicians who supported him in 1938 than opposed him. It looked pretty clear to them in 1938 that the balance fell in favour of Appeasement.

Yet when Hitler broke his promises and the policy did not stop war, the supporters of Appeasement quickly turned against the policy, some claiming that they had been opposed all along. Appeasers were portrayed as naïve, foolish or weak – Source 34 is one of hundreds of examples which parody the policy and the people who pursued it. Historians since then and popular opinion too have judged Chamberlain very harshly. Chamberlain's 'Peace for our time' speech is presented as self-deception and a betrayal. Chamberlain and his cabinet are seen as 'second-rate politicians' who were out of their depth as events unfolded before them. On the other hand the opponents of Appeasement such as Winston Churchill are portrayed as realists who were far-sighted and brave.

SOURCE 34

'Remember . . . One More Lollypop, and Then You All Go Home!'



A cartoon by the American artist Dr Seuss published on 13 August 1941 (before the USA entered the Second World War).

It really has been a very one-sided debate. Yet this debate matters because the failure of Appeasement to stop Hitler has had a profound influence on British and American foreign policy ever since. It is now seen as the 'right thing' to stand up to dictators. You will find an example of this in Chapter 7 when you study the Gulf War. This is a lesson that people have learned from history. One of the reasons why people study history is to avoid making the same mistakes from the past but before we leap so quickly to judgement on this issue, let's run this argument through two different checks.

SOURCE 36

So how did my pre-emptive strategy stand up to a computer stress test? Not as well as I had hoped, I have to confess. The Calm & the Storm made it clear that lining up an anti-German coalition in 1938 might have been harder than I'd assumed. To my horror, the French turned down the alliance I proposed to them. It also turned out that, when I did go to war with Germany, my own position was pretty weak. The nadir [low point] was a successful German invasion of England, a scenario my book rules out as militarily too risky.

Professor Niall Ferguson in an article for the *New York Magazine*, 16 October 2006.

Think!

Study graphs A–C in Source 37.

- 1 What evidence do they provide to support the view that Britain's armed forces caught up with Germany's between 1938 and 1939?
- 2 What evidence do they provide to oppose this view?

Check 1: If Chamberlain had stood up to Hitler in 1938 what would have happened?

The historian Professor Niall Ferguson of Harvard University has set out some 'counter-factual' scenarios – suggesting what might have happened if particular policies were followed. In particular, he has argued that confronting Hitler in 1938 instead of appeasing him 'would have paid handsome dividends. Even if it had come to war over Czechoslovakia, Germany would not have won. Germany's defences were not yet ready for a two-front war.'

Professor Ferguson then had the chance to test his scenario by playing a computer game! *The Calm & the Storm* is a powerful simulation which allows users to make decisions and then computes the possible impact of those decisions. You can read his conclusions in Source 36.

Professor Ferguson believes that using computer simulations could help leaders of the future make key decisions in times of crisis. Maybe you don't trust a computer game to teach you anything about history! But you might trust some hard statistics. So try check 2.

Check 2: Did Appeasement buy time for Chamberlain to rearm Britain?

One of the strongest arguments for Appeasement was that in 1938 Britain simply was not equipped to fight a war with Germany. So did Appeasement allow Britain to catch up?

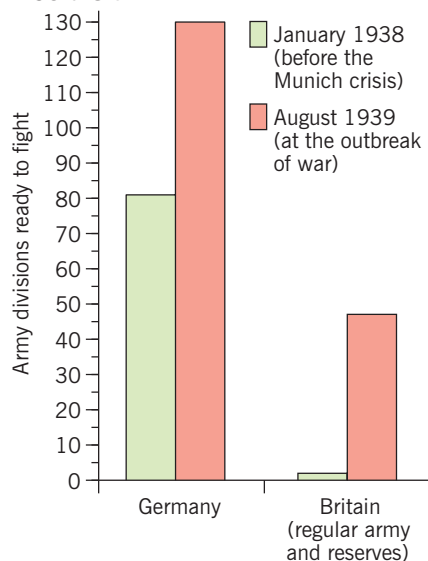
In the 1960s British historian AJP Taylor argued that Chamberlain had an exaggerated view of Germany's strength. Taylor believed that German forces were only 45 per cent of what British intelligence reports said they were.

But Taylor was writing in 1965 – not much help to Chamberlain in the 1930s. Britain had run down its forces in the peaceful years of the 1920s. The government had talked about rearmament since 1935 but Britain only really started rearming when Chamberlain became Prime Minister in 1937. Chamberlain certainly thought that Britain's armed forces were not ready for war in 1938. His own military advisers and his intelligence services told him this.

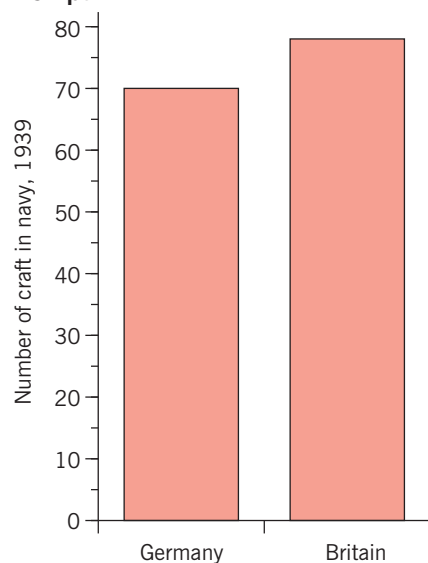
So did Appeasement allow Britain the time it needed to rearm? Source 37 will help you to decide.

SOURCE 37

A Soldiers

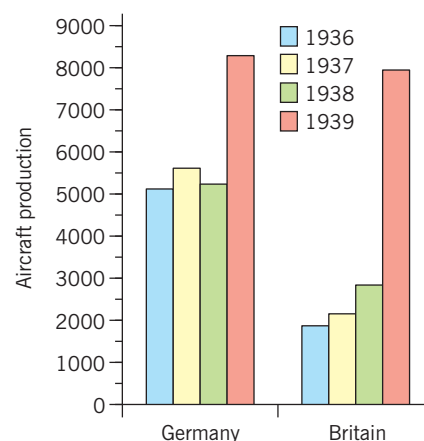


B Ships



C Aircraft

In the 1930s, aircraft were generally seen as the most important weapon.



The armaments build-up in the 1930s.

Focus Task

Why had international peace collapsed by 1939?

You have covered a lot of material in the last two chapters. In this task you are going to make sure that you have the important events and developments clear in your mind.

- 1 Work in groups of six. Each take a blank sheet of paper and write a heading like the ones on the right. On your sheet summarise the ways in which this factor helped to bring about the war.
- 2 Now come back together as a group and write your own summary of how the war broke out. You can use this structure, but set yourself a word limit of 75 words per paragraph, less if you can.

1 Treaties after the First World War particularly the Treaty of Versailles

2 The failures of the League of Nations

3 The worldwide economic Depression

4 The policy of Appeasement

5 The Nazi–Soviet Pact

6 Hitler's actions and particularly his foreign policy

Paragraph 1:

(This is the place to explain how resentment against the Versailles Treaty brought Hitler to power in the first place and guided his actions in the 1930s.)

There were important long-term factors which help to explain why war broke out in 1939. One factor was the Versailles Treaty. It was important because ...

Paragraph 2:

(Here you should explain how the failure of the League encouraged Hitler and made him think he could achieve his aims.)

The failure of the League of Nations in the 1930s also contributed towards the outbreak of war. This was because ...

Paragraph 3:

(Here you should explain how the Depression was an underlying cause of the failure of the League, Japan's aggression and Hitler's rise to power.)

Economic factors also played an important role. The worldwide economic Depression ...

Paragraph 4:

(Here you should briefly describe what Appeasement was, and how instead of stopping Hitler it encouraged him. You could also point out the links between Appeasement and the Depression.)

Another factor which helps to explain the outbreak of war was the policy of Appeasement. Appeasement ...

Paragraph 5:

(Here you should explain how the Nazi–Soviet Pact led to the invasion of Poland and how that in turn led to war. You could also point out that these short-term factors probably could not have happened if there had not been a policy of Appeasement.)

There were also key short-term factors which actually sparked off the war. One of these was ...

Paragraph 6:

(Here you should comment on Hitler's overall responsibility. How far do you agree that Hitler wanted war, planned for it, and if so does that mean he caused the war?)

Some people describe the Second World War as Hitler's war. I think this is a GOOD/POOR description because...

Paragraph 7:

(Here you should indicate which factor(s) you think were most important. This is where you should bring in any of the factors you discussed in stage 5 of the Focus Task.)

All of these factors played important roles. However, [INSERT YOUR CHOICE OF FACTOR(S)] was / were particularly important because ...

Chapter Review Focus Task

Reaching a judgement

Almost there! In the last task you wrote a clear explanation of the various reasons why peace collapsed by 1939. Unfortunately, this is not enough! You also need to be able to compare the importance of these reasons (or factors) and see the links between them. For example, if you were asked this question:

'The Nazi Soviet Pact of 1939 was more important than the policy of Appeasement in causing the Second World War.'
How far do you agree with this statement?

what would you say? Most students find it hard to explain what they think and end up **giving information about each factor** (describing events) rather than **making a judgement and supporting it**. This review task helps you to overcome this problem.

Stage 1: Understand and evaluate each factor

There are six major factors. The cards analyse why each one might be seen as:

- ♦ a **critical** factor (i.e. the war probably would not have happened without it) or just
 - ♦ one of several **important** factors (i.e. the war could still possibly have happened without it).
- a) Read the cards carefully to make sure you understand the arguments.
 - b) For each of the 'killer sources' 1-6 (on page 72) decide whether this supports the argument that this factor was critical or just one of several important factors.

Factor 1: The Treaty of Versailles

- ♦ **Critical?** Versailles and the other Treaties created a situation in Europe which made war inevitable. It was only a matter of time before Germany tried to seek revenge, overturn the Treaty and start another war. Many commentators felt at the time that it was only a question of when war might come not **whether** it would.
- ♦ **Important?** The Treaties contributed to the tensions of the time but they did not create them. Politicians in the 1930s could have defended the treaties or changed them. It was political choices in the 1930s which caused war not the treaties.

Factor 2: The failure of the League of Nations

- ♦ **Critical?** The League of Nations' job was to make sure that disputes were sorted out legally. In the 1920s it created a spirit of cooperation. But, in Manchuria 1931 and Abyssinia 1935–36 the League completely failed to stand up to aggression by Japan and Italy. This encouraged Hitler's aggression from 1936 onwards since he believed no one would try to stop him.
- ♦ **Important?** The League never really fulfilled the role of peacekeeper – even in the 1920s it gave in to Italy over Corfu. The failure of the League in the 1930s was important because it encouraged Hitler but even if the League had been stronger Hitler would still have tried to overturn the Treaty of Versailles and to destroy Communism.

Factor 3: The worldwide economic Depression

- ♦ **Critical?** The Depression critically weakened the League of Nations. It destroyed the spirit of international cooperation which had built up in the 1920s and set countries against each other. Without the Depression leading to these problems there could not have been a war.
- ♦ **Important?** The Depression was certainly important – it made Japan and Italy invade Manchuria and Abyssinia. It brought Hitler to power in Germany and started German rearmament. However it is linked to all the other factors – it did not cause the war in itself. Even with the Depression Hitler could have been stopped if Britain and France had had the will to resist him. The Depression did not make war inevitable.

Factor 4: The policy of Appeasement

- ♦ **Critical?** Appeasement was critical because it made Hitler think he could get away with anything. Britain and France could have stopped Hitler in 1936 when he marched troops into the Rhineland but their nerve failed. From this point on Hitler felt he could not lose and took gamble after gamble. As a result of appeasement he did not even believe Britain would fight him when he invaded Poland in 1939.
- ♦ **Important?** The policy of Appeasement only came about because, without the USA, the League of Nations, and its leading members, Britain and France, were not strong enough to keep peace. The Depression so weakened Britain and France that they did not have the money to oppose Hitler. The policy of appeasement would not have been followed without these other factors.

Factor 5: The Nazi–Soviet Pact

- ♦ **Critical?** Although Hitler thought that Britain and France would not fight him he was not sure about the Soviet Union. So the Soviet Union was the only country that stood in the way of his plans. Without the Nazi–Soviet Pact Hitler would not have taken the gamble to invade Poland and war would never have begun.
- ♦ **Important?** The Pact allowed Hitler to invade Poland, but war was already inevitable before that – due to Hitler's actions and his hatred of Communism. Hitler had made clear his plans to take land from the USSR. Plus which it was the policy of Appeasement that drove Stalin to sign the Pact because he thought he could not rely on the support of Britain or France to oppose Hitler.

Factor 6: Hitler's actions

- ♦ **Critical?** There could have been no war without Hitler. It was Hitler's vision of Lebensraum, his hatred of Communism and his determination to reverse the Versailles settlement which led to war. He consciously built up Germany's army and weapons with the intention of taking it to war. At each stage of the road to war from 1936 to 1939 it was Hitler's beliefs or actions or decisions that caused the problem.
- ♦ **Important?** Hitler was the gambler. He only did what he could get away with. So without the weakness of the League of Nations, or the reluctance of Britain, France, or the Soviet Union to stand up to him; without the flawed Treaties; without the economic problems of the 1930s Hitler would not have got anywhere. He would have been forced to follow a more peaceful foreign policy and there would have been no war.

Stage 2: Investigate connections between factors

From Stage 1 it should be clear to you that these factors are connected to each other. Let's investigate these connections.

- Make six simple cards with just the factor heading.
- Display your cards on a large sheet of paper and draw lines connecting them together. Some links are already mentioned on the cards on page 71 but you may be able to think of many more.
- Write an explanation along each link. For example between 'the policy of Appeasement' and 'The Nazi-Soviet Pact' you might write:
'The policy of Appeasement helped cause the Nazi-Soviet Pact. It alarmed Stalin so that he felt he had to make his own deal with Hitler thinking that France and Britain would just give him whatever he wanted.'
- Take a photo of your finished chart.

Stage 3: Rank the factors

Which of these factors is most important? In Stage 2 you will already have started to draw your own conclusions about this. It will be really helpful when you come to answering questions about relative importance if you have already decided what you think! Remember there is no right answer to which is most important but whatever your view you must be able to support it with key points and with evidence. So:

- Take your cards and put them in a rank order of importance.
- To justify your order, in the space between each card you need to be able to complete this sentence:
'X was more important than Y because...'

Stage 4: Compare two factors

Back to the question we started with:

'The Nazi Soviet Pact of 1939 was more important than the policy of Appeasement in causing the Second World War.' How far do you agree with this statement?

With all the thinking that you have done you should have already made up your mind on what you think, but to help you structure and support your argument you could complete a chart like this. NB if you can include the killer source in your written answer all the better.

| | Reasons more important | Reasons less important |
|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Policy of Appeasement | | |
| Nazi-Soviet Pact | | |

Killer sources and quotations

SOURCE 1

When war came in 1939, it was a result of twenty years of decisions taken or not taken, not of arrangements made in 1919.

Historian Margaret Macmillan writing in 2001

SOURCE 2

The failure of the World Disarmament Conference not only crushed the hopes of many supporters of the League of Nations and the disarmament movements but also strengthened the ranks of those who opted for appeasement or some form of pacifism. Pressures for collective action gave way to policies of self-defence, neutrality and isolation. Against such a background, the balance of power shifted steadily away from the status quo nations in the direction of those who favoured its destruction. The reconstruction of the 1920s was not inevitably doomed to collapse by the start of the 1930s. Rather, the demise of the Weimar Republic and the triumph of Hitler proved the motor force of destructive systemic change.

Historian Zara Steiner writing in 2011

SOURCE 3

If new accounts by historians show that statesmen were able to use the League to ease tensions and win time in the 1920s, no such case appears possible for the 1930s. Indeed, the League's processes may have played a role in that deterioration. Diplomacy requires leaders who can speak for their states; it requires secrecy; and it requires the ability to make credible threats. The Covenant's security arrangements met none of those criteria.

Historian Susan Pedersen writing in 2007

SOURCE 4

We turn our eyes towards the lands of the east . . . When we speak of new territory in Europe today, we must principally think of Russia and the border states subject to her. Destiny itself seems to wish to point out the way for us here. Colonisation of the eastern frontiers is of extreme importance. It will be the duty of Germany's foreign policy to provide large spaces for the nourishment and settlement of the growing population of Germany.

Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 1923

SOURCE 5

The vindictiveness of British and French peace terms helped to pave the way for Nazism in Germany and a renewal of hostilities. World War 2 resulted from the very silly and humiliating punitive peace imposed on Germany after World War 1.

Historian George Kennan writing in 1984

SOURCE 6

By repeatedly surrendering to force, Chamberlain has encouraged aggression... our central contention, therefore, is that Mr Chamberlain's policy has throughout been based on a fatal misunderstanding of the psychology of dictatorship.

The Yorkshire Post, December 1938.

SOURCE 7

The effects of the depression encouraged not only the emergence of authoritarian and interventionist governments but led to the shattering of the global financial system. Most European states followed 'beggar-thy-neighbour' tactics. Germany, Hungary, and most of the East European states embarked on defensive economic policies – often at cost to their neighbours.

Historian Zara Steiner writing in 2011

Exam Practice

See pages 168–175 and pages 316–319 for advice on the different types of questions you might face.

- 1 (a) What was the policy of Appeasement? [4]
- (b) What was the significance of the Munich Agreement of 1938? [6]
- (c) 'Appeasement was a wise policy that delayed war until Britain was ready.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer. [10]

Keywords

Make sure you know what these terms mean and are able to define them confidently.

Essential

- ◆ *Anschluss*
- ◆ Anti-Comintern Pact
- ◆ Appeasement
- ◆ Bolshevism
- ◆ Communism
- ◆ *Lebensraum*
- ◆ *Mein Kampf*
- ◆ Rearmament
- ◆ Remilitarisation
- ◆ Spanish Civil War
- ◆ Sudetenland
- ◆ The Munich Agreement
- ◆ The Nazi–Soviet Pact
- ◆ The Polish Corridor

Useful

- ◆ Conscription
- ◆ Mobilised
- ◆ Radical
- ◆ 'The November Criminals'

Chapter Summary

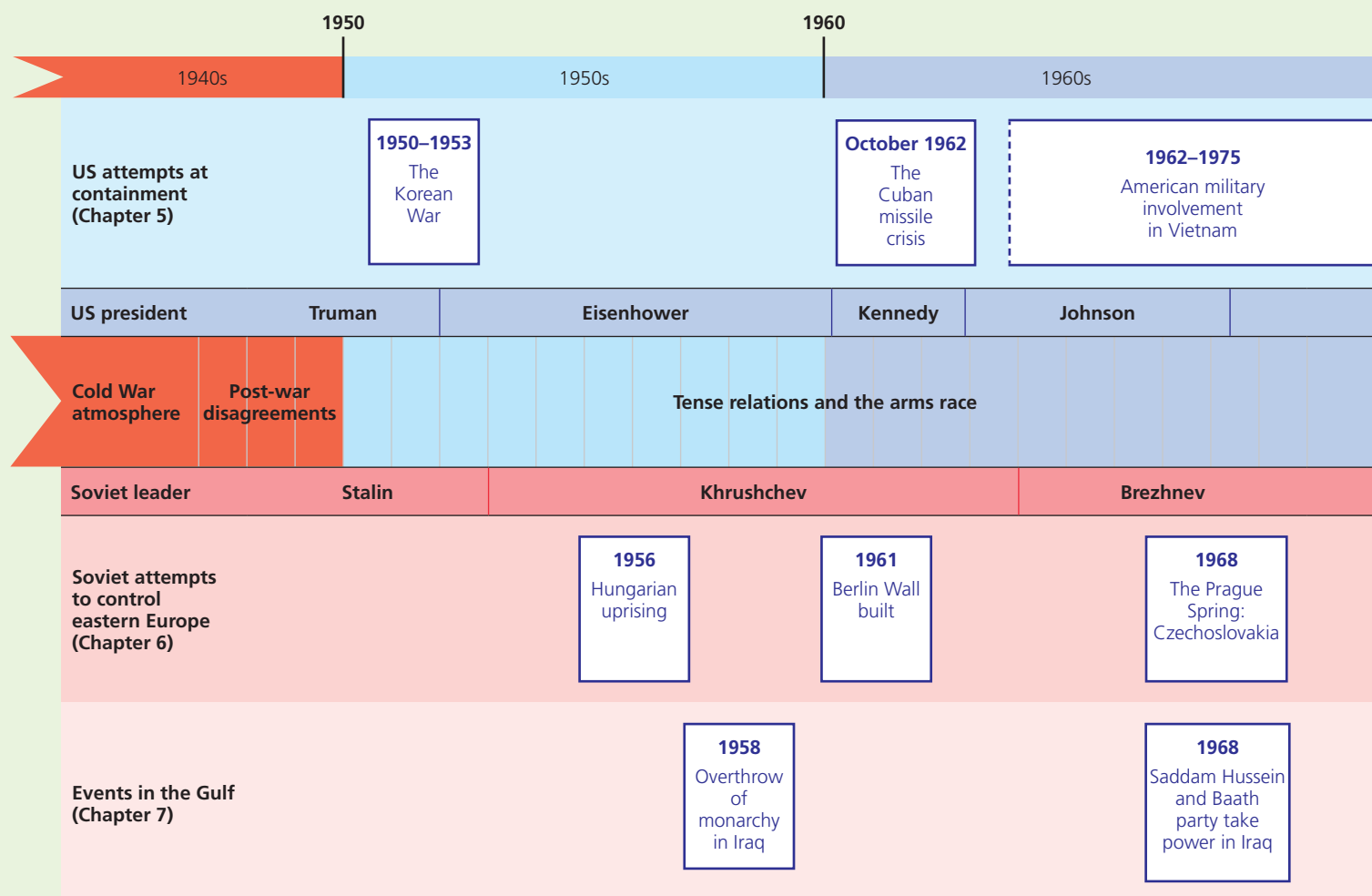
The collapse of international peace

- 1 The late 1920s had been a time of hope for international relations with a series of agreements that seemed to make the world a more peaceful place with countries co-operating and trading with each other.
- 2 The Great Depression of the 1930s led to political turmoil in many countries and the rise of the dictators such as Hitler in Germany. Hitler formed alliances with other right-wing regimes in Italy and Japan.
- 3 Germany was still unhappy about its treatment under the Treaty of Versailles and Hitler set out to challenge the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, first of all by rearming Germany (secretly from 1933, then publicly from 1935).
- 4 He also challenged the Treaty, for example by sending troops into the demilitarised zone of the Rhineland in 1936.
- 5 The League of Nations and Britain and France did not try to stop Hitler doing these things. This policy was called Appeasement – giving Hitler what he wanted in the hope he would not ask for more.
- 6 The most famous act of Appeasement was over the Sudetenland – an area of Czechoslovakia that Hitler wanted to take over.
- 7 In the Munich Agreement (October 1938) Britain and France let Hitler have the Sudetenland as long as he did not try to take over the rest of Czechoslovakia. When Hitler invaded the rest of Czechoslovakia in early 1939 it marked the end of the policy of Appeasement and they told Hitler that any further expansion would lead to war.
- 8 Although Hitler was very anti-Communist and saw Stalin and the USSR as his enemy he signed a Pact with Stalin in 1939 to not attack each other but to divide Poland between them.
- 9 When Hitler invaded Poland in September 1939 Britain declared war on Germany.
- 10 Hitler's foreign policy played a major role in causing the Second World War but historians argue that there were other very important factors that contributed as well, particularly the economic Depression, the failures of the League of Nations and the unfairness of the post-First World War peace treaties.



The Cold War and the Gulf, 1945–2000

PART 2



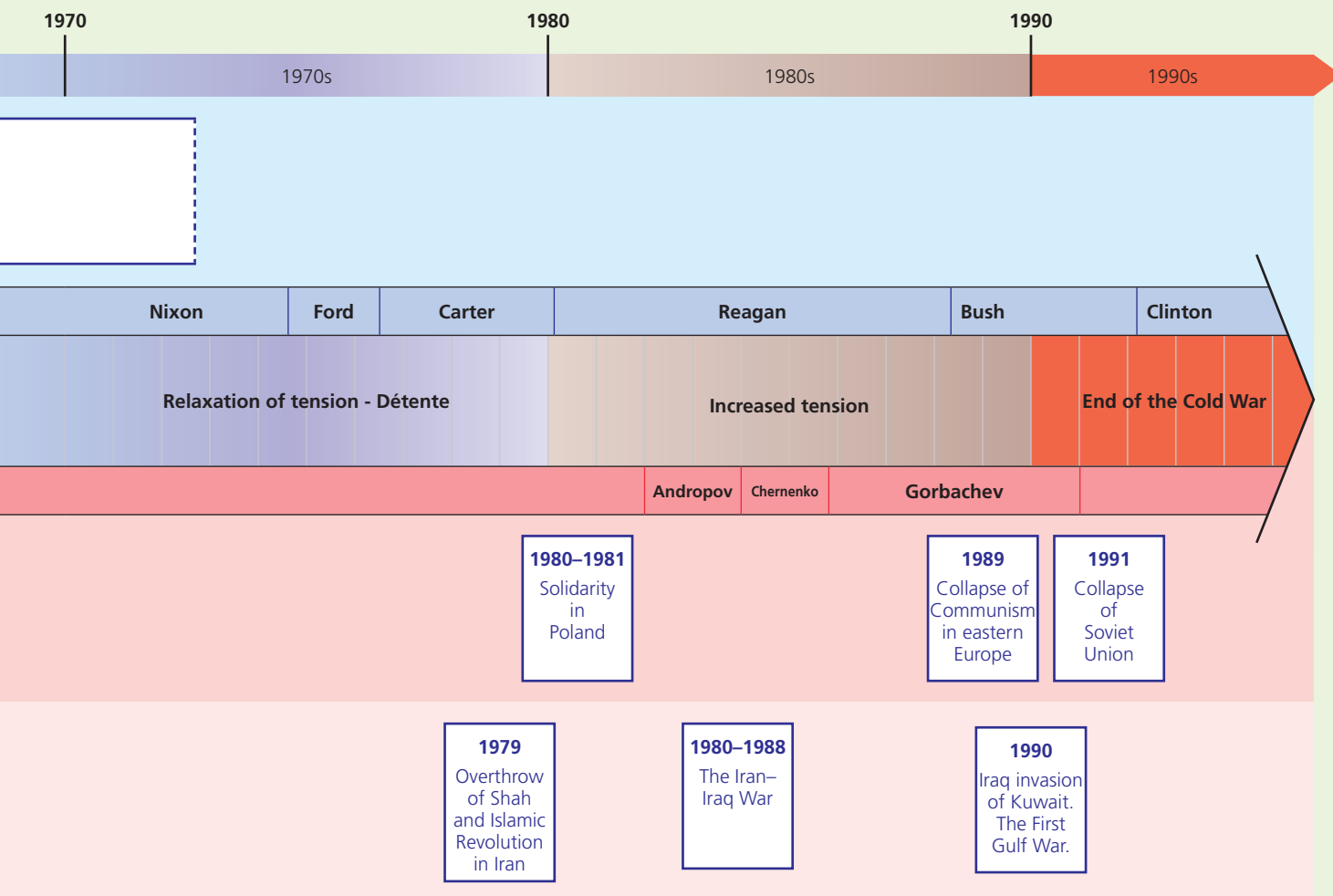
Focus

The Second World War led to a decisive change in the balance of power around the world. The countries that had dominated European affairs from 1919 to 1939 such as France, Britain or Germany were now much poorer or less powerful. World history was much more affected by what the leaders of the new 'superpowers' (the USA and the USSR) believed and did. So the big story of Part 2 is how the superpowers became enemies, how they clashed (directly or indirectly) during the Cold War and how they tried to influence the affairs of other countries.

- ◆ In Chapter 4 you will examine the short-term causes of the Cold War. Why did the USA and the USSR, who had fought together as allies against Hitler, fall out and enter a 40-year period of tension and distrust?
- ◆ One of the USA's obsessions in this Cold War period was to hold back the spread of Communism. Chapter 5 examines why they so feared the spread of Communism, how they tried to contain it and helps you to judge how successful they were.

- ◆ While the USA was trying to contain Communism, the Soviet Union was trying to shore it up in its east European neighbours. This was no easy task. They faced frequent protests and problems. In Chapter 6 you will consider how they did this, how far they succeeded and why in the end it all came crashing down with the demolition of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union itself.
- ◆ Finally, in Chapter 7 you will shift your focus to the Persian Gulf and the intertwined fates of two countries Iraq and Iran. You will examine how they developed in the period 1970–2000 and why they came into conflict with each other and with the western powers.

The events in these chapters overlap. The timeline below gives you an overview of the main events you will be studying. It would be helpful if you made your own copy and added your own notes to it as you study.





4

Who was to blame for the Cold War?

FOCUS POINTS

- Why did the USA–USSR alliance begin to break down in 1945?
- How had the USSR gained control of eastern Europe by 1948?
- How did the USA react to Soviet expansionism?
- What were the consequences of the Berlin Blockade?
- Who was the more to blame for starting the Cold War: the USA or the USSR?

In May 1945 American troops entered Berlin from the west, as Russian troops moved in from the east. They met and celebrated victory together. Yet three years later these former allies were arguing over Berlin and war between them seemed a real possibility.

What had gone wrong?

In this chapter you will consider:

- ♦ how the wartime alliance between the USA and the USSR broke down
- ♦ how the Soviet Union gained control over eastern Europe and how the USA responded
- ♦ the consequences of the Berlin Blockade in 1948.

The key question you will be returning to at the end is who is most to blame for this increasing tension (which became known as 'The Cold War').

- ♦ Was it the USSR and Stalin with his insistence on taking over and controlling eastern Europe?
- ♦ Or was it the USA and President Truman with the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Aid?
- ♦ Or should they share the blame? In the post-war chaos in Europe they both saw it as their role to extend their influence, to proclaim the benefits of their own political system and denounce the other side. So maybe they should share the blame.
- ♦ Or was the Cold War inevitable – beyond the control of either country?

Here are some of the factors that you will study in this chapter. At the end you will be asked to become an expert in one of them so you could help yourself by making notes about each one as you read the chapter.

The situation
before the
Second World
War

The personal
relationships
between various
leaders

The conflicting
beliefs of the
superpowers

The war damage
suffered by the
USSR

Stalin's take-
over of eastern
Europe

Marshall Aid for
Europe

The Berlin
Blockade

◀ It is not just cartoons that can have messages. Photos can too. This photo shows American and Soviet soldiers shaking hands in April 1945.

- 1 What is the message of the photo?
- 2 How far do you trust it to show relations between the USA and the USSR in 1945?

Think!

Create your own version of the timeline on pages 74–75. You will be adding events and comments to it throughout the chapter to help you in your final Focus Task.

To start, extend the timeline back to 1917 and use the information on these two pages to mark any events or developments that might affect relationships between the USA and the Soviet Union.

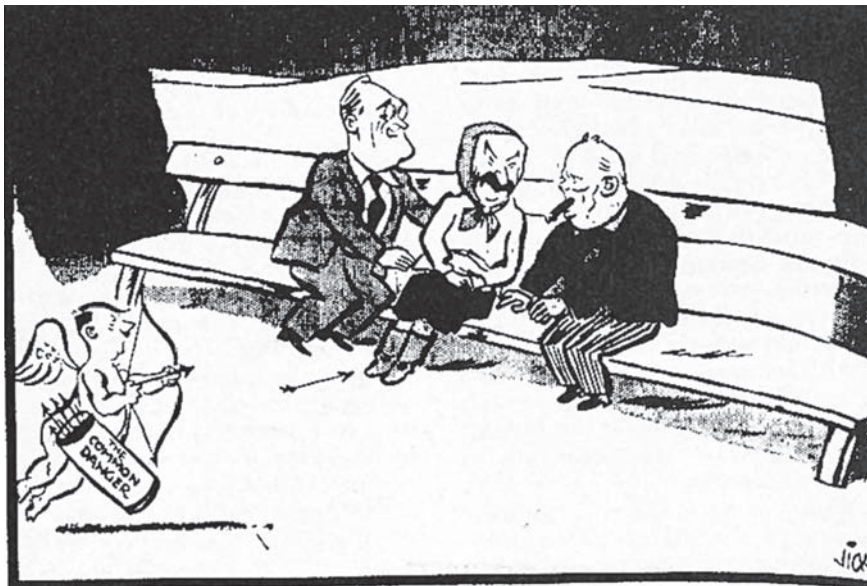
Source Analysis

- 1 Cartoons often criticise particular people or their actions. Sometimes they praise. Sometimes they simply comment on a situation. Would you say Source 1 is criticising, praising or commenting? Explain how the points in the cartoon helped you to decide.
- 2 Spot the loaded language! What words and phrases in Source 2 tell us that this source is hostile to Communism and the USSR?

Allies against Hitler

During the Second World War the Allies produced many images showing friendly co-operation between American, British and Soviet forces and peoples. In fact the real story is rather different. Hitler was the common danger which united President Roosevelt (USA), Winston Churchill (Britain) and Communist leader Josef Stalin of the Soviet Union (the USSR). This is shown in Source 1. It was a strategic wartime alliance not a bond of brotherhood. This becomes clear when we look back further into history.

SOURCE 1



A British cartoon from 1941, with the caption 'Love conquers all'.

The two sides were enemies long before they were allies. The USSR had been a Communist country for more than 30 years. The majority of politicians and business leaders in Britain and the USA hated and feared Communist ideas (see the Factfiles on page 79). In the past they had helped the enemies of the Communists. This made the USSR wary of Britain and the USA. And Britain and the USA were just as wary of the USSR. In the **1920s** suspected Communists had been persecuted in a 'Red Scare'. In **1926** the British government reacted harshly to a General Strike partly because it was convinced that the Strike was the work of agents of the USSR.

- Relations between Britain and the USSR were harmed in the **1930s** by the policy of Appeasement (see page 60). It seemed to Stalin that Britain was happy to see Germany grow in power so that Hitler could attack him.
- Stalin responded by signing a pact with Hitler (see page 66) – they promised not to attack each other, and divided Poland between them! To the western nations this seemed like a cynical act on Stalin's part.

So in many ways the surprising thing is that the old enemies managed a war-time alliance at all. But they did and the course of the war in Europe was decisively altered when Germany invaded the USSR in 1941. The Soviets mounted a fierce defence of their country against the power of the German forces from 1941 to 1945. It was Soviet determination and Soviet soldiers that turned the tide of the European war against Germany. Churchill and Roosevelt admired the Soviets and sent vital supplies but tension remained. Stalin wanted his allies to launch a second military front against Germany and was bitter that this did not happen until June 1944.

SOURCE 2

Like a prairie-fire, the blaze of revolution was sweeping over every American institution of law and order a year ago. It was eating its way into the homes of the American workmen . . . crawling into the sacred corners of American homes . . .

Robbery, not war, is the ideal of Communism . . . Obviously it is the creed of any criminal mind, which acts always from motives impossible to understand for those with clean thoughts.

Extract from a statement by Mitchell Palmer, Attorney General of the USA, April 1920.

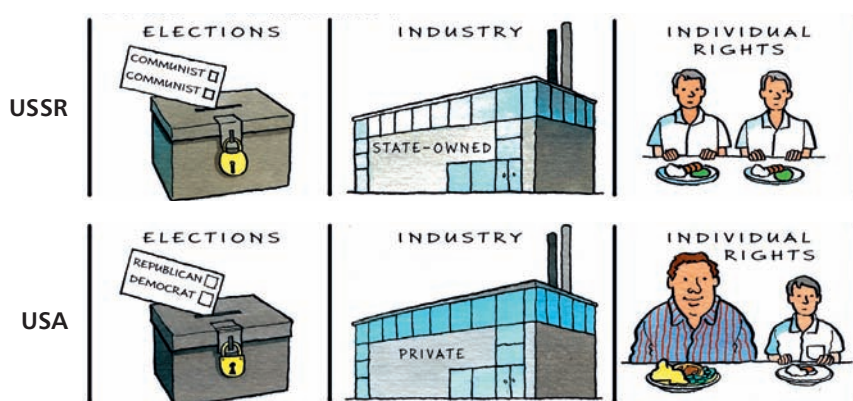
Factfile

A clash of ideologies

| The USA | The USSR |
|--|---|
| The USA was capitalist. Business and property were privately owned. | The USSR was Communist. All industry was owned and run by the state. |
| It was a democracy. Its government was chosen in free democratic elections. | It was a one-party dictatorship. Elections were held, but all candidates belonged to the Communist Party. |
| It was the world's wealthiest country. But as in most capitalist countries, there were extremes – some great wealth and great poverty as well. | It was an economic superpower because its industry had grown rapidly in the 1920s and 1930s, but the general standard of living in the USSR was much lower than in the USA. Even so, unemployment was rare and extreme poverty was rarer than in the USA. |
| For Americans, being free of control by the government was more important than everyone being equal. | For Communists, the rights of individuals were seen as less important than the good of society as a whole. So individuals' lives were tightly controlled. |
| Americans firmly believed that other countries should be run in the American way. | Soviet leaders believed that other countries should be run in the Communist way. |
| People in the USA were alarmed by Communist theory, which talked of spreading revolution. | Communism taught that the role of a Communist state was to encourage Communist revolutions worldwide. In practice, the USSR's leaders tended to take practical decisions rather than be led by this ideology. |
| Americans generally saw their policies as 'doing the right thing' rather than serving the interests of the USA. | Many in the USSR saw the USA's actions as selfishly building its economic empire and political influence. |

Revision Tip

You need to know these things so make your own copies of the diagrams on the right and then use the Factfile to make notes around them summarising the two systems.



Superpowers

The USA and the USSR had emerged from the war as the two 'superpowers'. After the Second World War powers like Britain and France were effectively relegated to a second division. US leaders felt there was a responsibility attached to being a superpower. In the 1930s, the USA had followed a policy of isolation – keeping out of European and world affairs. The Americans might have disapproved of Soviet Communism, but they tried not to get involved. However, by the 1940s the US attitude had changed. Roosevelt had set the Americans firmly against a policy of isolation and this effectively meant opposing Communism. In March 1945 he said to the American Congress that America 'will have to take the responsibility for world collaboration or we shall have to bear the responsibilities for another world conflict'. There would be no more appeasement of dictators. From now on, every Communist action would meet an American reaction.

Revision Tip

Make sure you can remember at least two examples of agreement at Yalta and one (the main!) disagreement.

The Yalta Conference, February 1945

In February 1945 it was clear that Germany was losing the European war, so the Allied leaders met at Yalta in the Ukraine to plan what would happen to Europe after Germany's defeat. The Yalta Conference went well. Despite their differences, the Big Three – Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill – agreed on some important matters.

It seemed that, although they could not all agree, they were still able to negotiate and do business with one another.

Agreements

✓ Japan

Stalin agreed to enter the war against Japan once Germany had surrendered.

✓ Germany

They agreed that Germany would be divided into four zones: American, French, British and Soviet.

✓ Elections

They agreed that as countries were liberated from occupation by the German army, they would be allowed to hold free elections to choose the government they wanted.

✓ United Nations

The Big Three all agreed to join the new United Nations Organisation, which would aim to keep peace after the war.

✓ War criminals

As Allied soldiers advanced through Germany, they were revealing the horrors of the Nazi concentration camps. The Big Three agreed to hunt down and punish war criminals who were responsible for the genocide.

✓ Eastern Europe

The Soviet Union had suffered terribly in the war. An estimated 20 million Soviet people had died. Stalin was therefore concerned about the future security of the USSR and specifically the risk of another invasion from Europe. The Big Three agreed that eastern Europe should be seen as a 'Soviet sphere of influence'.

Disagreements

✗ Poland

The only real disagreement was about Poland.

- Stalin wanted the border of the USSR to move westwards into Poland. Stalin argued that Poland, in turn, could move its border westwards into German territory.
- Churchill did not approve of Stalin's plans for Poland, but he also knew that there was not very much he could do about it because Stalin's Red Army was in total control of both Poland and eastern Germany.
- Roosevelt was also unhappy about Stalin's plan, but Churchill persuaded Roosevelt to accept it, as long as the USSR agreed not to interfere in Greece where the British were attempting to prevent the Communists taking over. Stalin accepted this.

SOURCE 3

We argued freely and frankly across the table. But at the end on every point unanimous agreement was reached ... We know, of course, that it was Hitler's hope and the German war lords' hope that we would not agree – that some slight crack might appear in the solid wall of allied unity ... But Hitler has failed. Never before have the major allies been more closely united – not only in their war aims but also in their peace aims.

Extract from President Roosevelt's report to the US Congress on the Yalta Conference.

SOURCE 4

I want to drink to our alliance, that it should not lose its ... intimacy, its free expression of views ... I know of no such close alliance of three Great Powers as this ... May it be strong and stable, may we be as frank as possible.

Stalin, proposing a toast at a dinner at the Yalta Conference, 1945.

Think!

- The photo on page 1 of this book shows the Big Three at the Yalta Conference. Imagine you were describing the scene in this photo for a radio audience in 1945. Describe for the listeners:
 - ◆ the obvious points (such as people you can see)
 - ◆ the less obvious points (such as the mood of the scene)
 - ◆ the agreements and disagreements the Big Three had come to.

Source Analysis

Behind the scenes at Yalta

The war against Hitler had united Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill and at the Yalta Conference they appeared to get on well. But what was going on behind the scenes? Sources 5–10 will help you decide.

SOURCE 5

In the hallway [at Yalta] we stopped before a map of the world on which the Soviet Union was coloured in red. Stalin waved his hand over the Soviet Union and exclaimed, 'They [Roosevelt and Churchill] will never accept the idea that so great a space should be red, never, never!'

Milovan Djilas writing about Yalta in 1948.

SOURCE 7

Perhaps you think that just because we are the allies of the English we have forgotten who they are and who Churchill is. There's nothing they like better than to trick their allies. During the First World War they constantly tricked the Russians and the French. And Churchill? Churchill is the kind of man who will pick your pocket of a kopeck! [A kopeck is a low value Soviet coin.] And Roosevelt? Roosevelt is not like that. He dips in his hand only for bigger coins. But Churchill? He will do it for a kopeck.

Stalin speaking to a fellow Communist, Milovan Djilas, in 1945. Djilas was a supporter of Stalin.

SOURCE 10

[At Yalta] Churchill feared that Roosevelt was too pro-Russian. He pressed for a French zone to be added to the other three to add another anti-Russian voice to the armies of occupation.

Written by Christopher Culpin in a school textbook, *The Modern World*, 1984.

SOURCE 6

I have always worked for friendship with Russia but, like you, I feel deep anxiety because of their misinterpretation of the Yalta decisions, their attitude towards Poland, their overwhelming influence in the Balkans excepting Greece, the difficulties they make about Vienna, the combination of Russian power and the territories under their control or occupied, coupled with the Communist technique in so many other countries, and above all their power to maintain very large Armies in the field for a long time. What will be the position in a year or two?

Extract from a telegram sent by Prime Minister Churchill to President Truman in May 1945.

SOURCE 8

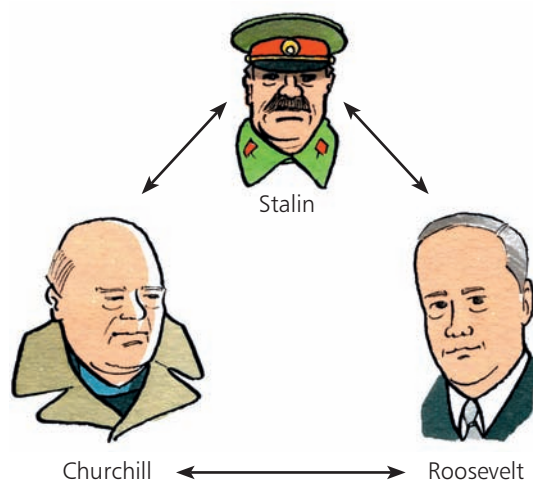
The Soviet Union has become a danger to the free world. A new front must be created against her onward sweep. This front should be as far east as possible. A settlement must be reached on all major issues between West and East in Europe before the armies of democracy melt.

Churchill writing to Roosevelt shortly after the Yalta Conference. Churchill ordered his army leader Montgomery to keep German arms intact in case they had to be used against the Russians.

SOURCE 9

Once, Churchill asked Stalin to send him the music of the new Soviet Russian anthem so that it could be broadcast before the summary of the news from the Soviet German front. Stalin sent the words [as well] and expressed the hope that Churchill would set about learning the new tune and whistling it to members of the Conservative Party. While Stalin behaved with relative discretion with Roosevelt, he continually teased Churchill throughout the war.

Written by Soviet historian Sergei Kudryashov after the war.



- 1 Draw a simple diagram like this and use Sources 5–10 to summarise what each of the leaders thought of the other.
- 2 How do Sources 5–10 affect your impression of the Yalta Conference?
- 3 How far do you trust these sources to tell you what the leaders actually thought of each other?

SOURCE 11

This war is not as in the past; whoever occupies a territory also imposes on it his own social system. Everyone imposes his own system as far as his army has power to do so. It cannot be otherwise.

Stalin speaking, soon after the end of the Second World War, about the take-over of eastern Europe.

SOURCE 12

Unless Russia is faced with an iron fist and strong language another war is in the making. Only one language do they understand – ‘how many [army] divisions have you got?’ ... I’m tired of babying the Soviets.

President Truman, writing to his Secretary of State in January 1946.

Think!

- 1 Read Source 11. At Yalta, Churchill and Roosevelt had agreed with Stalin that eastern Europe would be a Soviet ‘sphere of influence’. Do you think Source 11 is what they had in mind?
- 2 Explain how each of the three developments described in the text might affect relationships at Potsdam.
- 3 What is your overall impression of Source 12:
 - ◆ a reasonable assessment of Stalin based on the facts
 - ◆ an overreaction to Stalin based on fear and prejudice against the USSR?
 Use extracts from the source to support your view.

Focus Task

Why did the USA–USSR alliance begin to break down in 1945?

Under the following headings, make notes to summarise why the Allies began to fall out in 1945:

- ◆ Personalities
- ◆ Actions by the USA
- ◆ Actions by the USSR
- ◆ Misunderstandings

The Potsdam Conference, July–August 1945

In May 1945, three months after the Yalta Conference, Allied troops reached Berlin. Hitler committed suicide. Germany surrendered. The war in Europe was won.

A second conference of the Allied leaders was arranged for July 1945 in the Berlin suburb of Potsdam. However, in the five months since Yalta a number of changes had taken place which would greatly affect relationships between the leaders.

1 Stalin’s armies were occupying most of eastern Europe

Soviet troops had liberated country after country in eastern Europe, but instead of withdrawing his troops Stalin had left them there. Refugees were fleeing out of these countries fearing a Communist take-over. Stalin had set up a Communist government in Poland, ignoring the wishes of the majority of Poles. He insisted that his control of eastern Europe was a defensive measure against possible future attacks.

2 America had a new president

On 12 April 1945, President Roosevelt died. He was replaced by his Vice-President, Harry Truman. Truman was a very different man from Roosevelt. He was much more anti-Communist than Roosevelt and was very suspicious of Stalin. Truman and his advisers saw Soviet actions in eastern Europe as preparations for a Soviet take-over of the rest of Europe.

3 The Allies had tested an atomic bomb

On 16 July 1945 the Americans successfully tested an atomic bomb at a desert site in the USA. At the start of the Potsdam Conference, Truman informed Stalin about it.

The Potsdam Conference finally got under way on 17 July 1945. Not surprisingly, it did not go as smoothly as Yalta.

To change the situation further still, in July there was an election in Britain. Churchill was defeated, so half way through the conference he was replaced by a new Prime Minister, Clement Attlee. In the absence of Churchill, the conference was dominated by rivalry and suspicion between Stalin and Truman. A number of issues arose on which neither side seemed able to appreciate the other’s point of view.

Disagreements at Potsdam

✗ Germany

Stalin wanted to cripple Germany completely to protect the USSR against future threats. Truman did not want to repeat the mistake of the Treaty of Versailles.

✗ Reparations

Twenty million Russians had died in the war and the Soviet Union had been devastated. Stalin wanted compensation from Germany. Truman, however, was once again determined not to repeat the mistakes at the end of the First World War and resisted this demand.

✗ Eastern Europe

At Yalta, Stalin had won agreement from the Allies that he could set up pro-Soviet governments in eastern Europe. He said, ‘If the Slav [the majority of east European] people are united, no one will dare move a finger against them’. Truman became very unhappy about Russian intentions and soon adopted a ‘get tough’ attitude towards Stalin.

Revision Tip

Your notes from the Focus Task will be useful for revision. Make sure you can remember one example of each.

Source Analysis ▼

- 1 How do Sources 13 and 14 differ in their interpretation of Stalin's actions?
- 2 Explain why they see things so differently.
- 3 How do Sources 15 and 16 differ in their interpretation of Churchill?
- 4 Explain why there are differences.

The 'iron curtain'

The Potsdam Conference ended without complete agreement on these issues. Over the next nine months, Stalin achieved the domination of eastern Europe that he was seeking. By 1946 Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Albania all had Communist governments which owed their loyalty to Stalin. Churchill described the border between Soviet-controlled countries and the West as an iron curtain (see Source 13). The name stuck.

SOURCE 13

A shadow has fallen upon the scenes so lately lighted by the Allied victory. From Stettin on the Baltic to Trieste on the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended. Behind that line lie all the states of central and eastern Europe. The Communist parties have been raised to power far beyond their numbers and are seeking everywhere to obtain totalitarian control. This is certainly not the liberated Europe we fought to build. Nor is it one which allows permanent peace.

Winston Churchill speaking in the USA, in the presence of President Truman, March 1946.

SOURCE 14

The following circumstances should not be forgotten. The Germans made their invasion of the USSR through Finland, Poland and Romania. The Germans were able to make their invasion through these countries because, at the time, governments hostile to the Soviet Union existed in these countries. What can there be surprising about the fact that the Soviet Union, anxious for its future safety, is trying to see to it that governments loyal in their attitude to the Soviet Union should exist in these countries?

Stalin, replying to Churchill's speech (Source 13).

SOURCE 15



A British cartoon commenting on Churchill's 'iron curtain' speech, in the *Daily Mail*, 6 March 1946.

SOURCE 16



A Soviet cartoon. Churchill is shown with two flags, the first proclaiming that 'Anglo-Saxons must rule the world' and the other threatening an 'iron curtain'. Notice who is formed by his shadow!

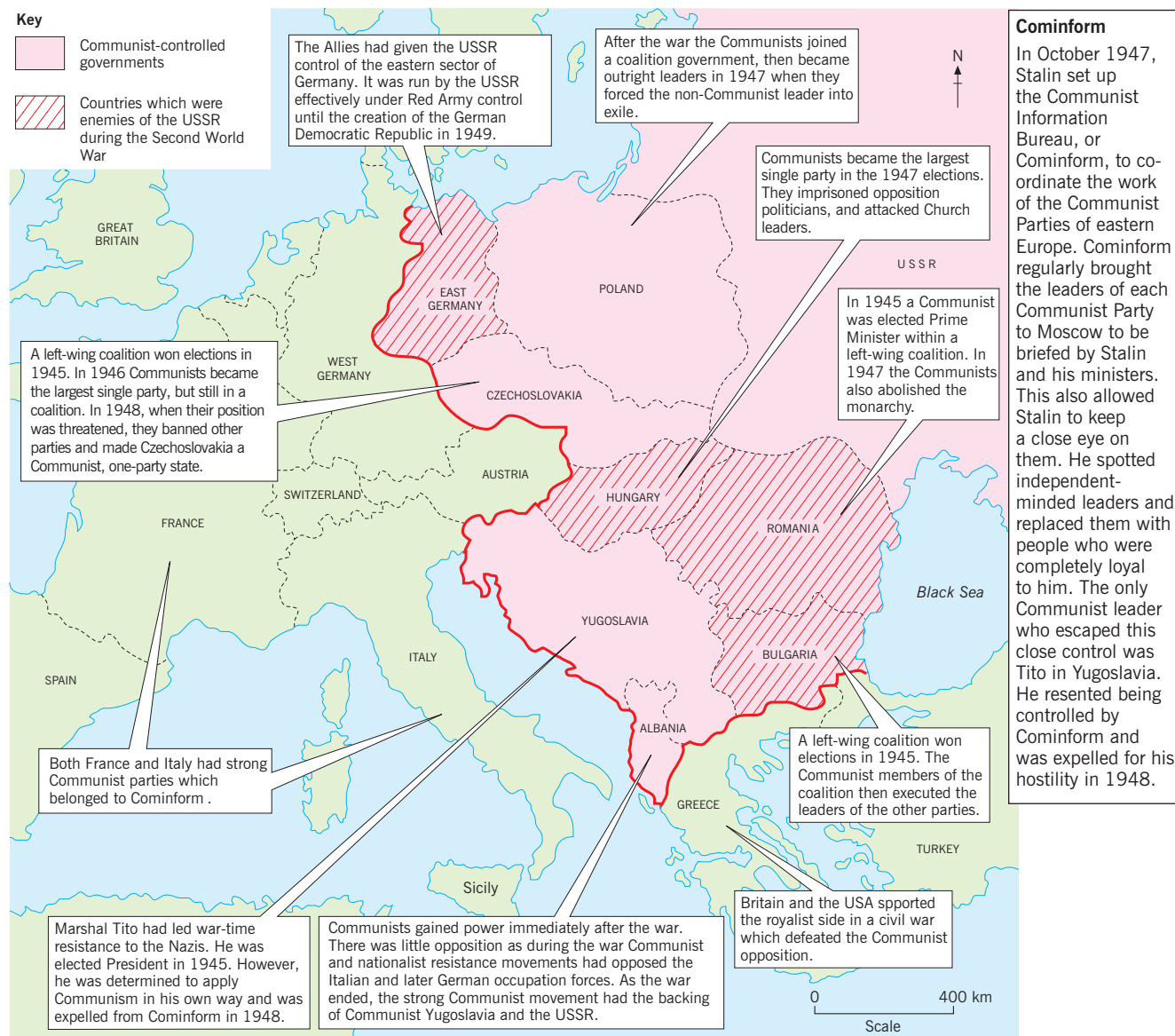
Think!

Some historians say that Churchill is as much to blame for the post-war distrust between the Soviet Union and the West as Roosevelt, Truman or Stalin. What evidence is there on pages 80–83 to support or challenge this view?

Stalin strengthens his grip

Source 17 shows how Stalin extended Soviet power across eastern Europe. With Communist governments established throughout eastern Europe, Stalin gradually tightened his control in each country. The secret police imprisoned anyone who opposed Communist rule.

SOURCE 17



The Communists in eastern Europe, 1945–48.

Focus Task

How did the USSR gain control of eastern Europe?

- Study Source 17. Find examples of the Communists:
 - banning other parties
 - killing or imprisoning opponents
 - winning democratic elections
- Find examples of how these factors helped the USSR take control
 - the Red Army
 - Communist involvement in resistance movements
 - agreements at Yalta
- 'The only important factor in the Communist take-over of eastern Europe was armed force.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer carefully.

Source Analysis ▼

- 1 Do Sources 18 and 19 have the same message?
- 2 Source 18 is a British source. Does it seem likely that similar documents were being produced by the American government?

The reaction of the USA

The Western powers were alarmed by Stalin's take-over of eastern Europe. Roosevelt, Churchill and their successors had accepted that Soviet security needed friendly governments in eastern Europe. They had agreed that eastern Europe would be a Soviet 'sphere of influence' and that Stalin would heavily influence this region. However, they had not expected such complete Communist domination. They felt it should have been possible to have governments in eastern Europe that were both democratic and friendly to the USSR. Stalin saw his policy in eastern Europe as making himself secure, but Truman could only see the spread of Communism.

SOURCE 18

After all the efforts that have been made and the appeasement that we followed to try and get a real friendly settlement, not only is the Soviet government not prepared to co-operate with any non-Communist government in eastern Europe, but it is actively preparing to extend its hold over the remaining part of continental Europe and, subsequently, over the Middle East and no doubt the Far East as well. In other words, physical control of Europe and Asia and eventual control of the whole world is what Stalin is aiming at – no less a thing than that. The immensity of the aim should not betray us into thinking that it cannot be achieved.

Extract from a report by the British Foreign Secretary to the British Cabinet in March 1948. The title of the report was 'The Threat to Civilisation'.

SOURCE 19



An American cartoon commenting on Stalin's take-over of eastern Europe. The bear represents the USSR.

Revision Tip

Make sure you can remember two examples of methods that the USSR and the Communist parties used to take power in Eastern Europe, and one reason why Greece was important in the Cold War.

By 1948, Greece and Czechoslovakia were the only eastern European countries not controlled by Communist governments. It seemed to the Americans that not only Greece and Czechoslovakia but even Italy and France were vulnerable to Communist take-over. Events in two of these countries were to have a decisive effect on America's policy towards Europe.

Greece, 1947

When the Germans retreated from Greece in 1944, there were two rival groups – the monarchists and the Communists – who wanted to rule the country. Both had been involved in resistance against the Nazis. The Communists wanted Greece to be a Soviet republic. The monarchists wanted the return of the king of Greece. Churchill sent British troops to Greece in 1945 supposedly to help restore order and supervise free elections. In fact, the British supported the monarchists and the king was returned to power.

In 1946, the USSR protested to the United Nations that British troops were a threat to peace in Greece. The United Nations took no action and so the Communists tried to take control of Greece by force. A civil war quickly developed. The British could not afford the cost of such a war and announced on 24 February 1947 that they were withdrawing their troops. Truman stepped in. Paid for by the Americans, some British troops stayed in Greece. They tried to prop up the king's government. By 1950 the royalists were in control of Greece, although they were a very weak government, always in crisis.

SOURCE 20

I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures . . . The free peoples of the world look to us for support in maintaining those freedoms. If we falter in our leadership, we may endanger the peace of the world.

President Truman speaking on 12 March 1947, explaining his decision to help Greece.

The Truman Doctrine

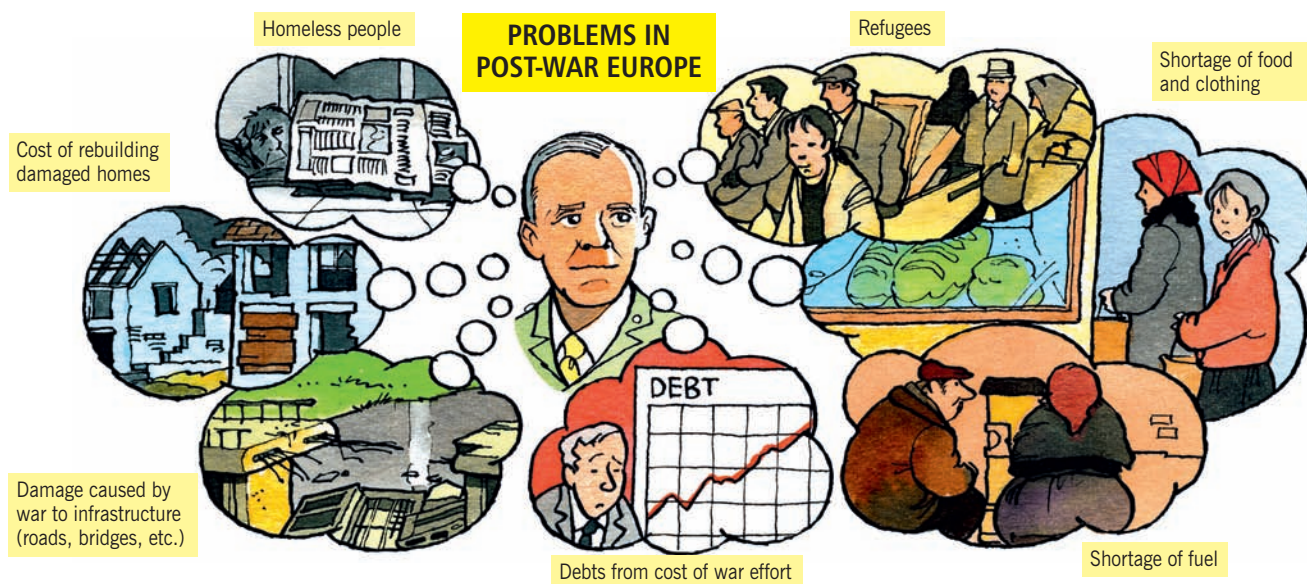
American intervention in Greece marked a new era in the USA's attitude to world politics, which became known as 'the Truman Doctrine' (see Source 20).

Under the Truman Doctrine, the USA was prepared to send money, equipment and advice to any country which was, in the American view, threatened by a Communist take-over. Truman accepted that eastern Europe was now Communist. His aim was to stop Communism from spreading any further. This policy became known as containment.

Others thought containment should mean something firmer. They said that it must be made clear to the Soviet Union that expansion beyond a given limit would be met with military force.

The Marshall Plan

Truman believed that Communism succeeded when people faced poverty and hardship. He sent the American General George Marshall to assess the economic state of Europe. What he found was a ruined economy. The countries of Europe owed \$11.5 billion to the USA. There were extreme shortages of all goods. Most countries were still rationing bread. There was such a coal shortage in the hard winter of 1947 that in Britain all electricity was turned off for a period each day. Churchill described Europe as 'a rubble heap, a breeding ground of hate'.



Marshall suggested that about \$17 billion would be needed to rebuild Europe's prosperity. 'Our policy', he said, 'is directed against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos.'

In December 1947, Truman put his plan to Congress. For a short time, the American Congress refused to grant this money. Many Americans were becoming concerned by Truman's involvement in foreign affairs. Besides, \$17 billion was a lot of money!

Czechoslovakia, 1948

Americans' attitude changed when the Communists took over the government of Czechoslovakia. Czechoslovakia had been ruled by a coalition government which, although it included Communists, had been trying to pursue policies independent of Moscow. The Communists came down hard in March 1948. Anti-Soviet leaders were purged. One pro-American Minister, Jan Masaryk, was found dead below his open window. The Communists said he had jumped. The Americans suspected he'd been pushed. Immediately, Congress accepted the Marshall Plan and made \$17 billion available over a period of four years.

Think!

Explain how events in

- Greece
- Czechoslovakia affected American policy in Europe.

Think!

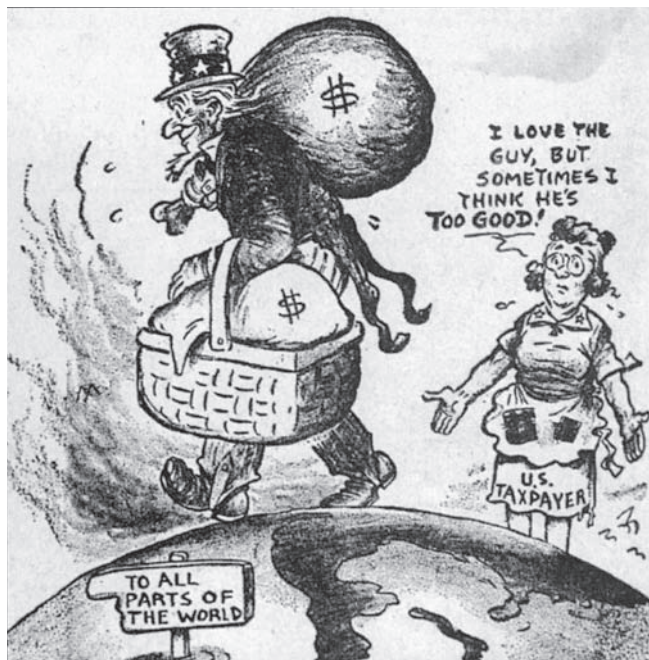
- 1 Draw a diagram to summarise the aims of Marshall Aid. Put political aims on one side and economic aims on the other. Draw arrows and labels to show how the two are connected.
- 2 Which of the problems in post-war Europe do you think would be the most urgent for Marshall Aid to tackle. Explain your choice.

Marshall Aid

On the one hand, Marshall Aid was an extremely generous act by the American people. On the other hand, it was also motivated by American self-interest. They wanted to create new markets for American goods. The Americans remembered the disastrous effects of the Depression of the 1930s and Truman wanted to do all he could to prevent another worldwide slump.

Stalin viewed Marshall Aid with suspicion. After expressing some initial interest, he refused to have anything more to do with it. He also forbade any of the eastern European states to apply for Marshall Aid. Stalin's view was that the anti-Communist aims behind Marshall Aid would weaken his hold on eastern Europe. He also felt that the USA was trying to dominate as many states as possible by making them dependent on dollars.

SOURCE 21



An American cartoon, 1949.

SOURCE 22



A Soviet cartoon commenting on Marshall Aid. The rope spells out the words 'Marshall Plan' and the lifebuoy magnet is labelled 'Aid to Europe'.

Source Analysis

- 1 Do Sources 21 and 22 support or criticise Marshall Aid?
- 2 Do you think the sources give a fair impression of Marshall Aid? Explain your answer.

Revision Tip

Stalin and Truman saw Marshall Aid differently. Try to sum up each view in a sentence.

Focus Task

How did the USA react to Soviet expansion?

- 1 Work in pairs and write two accounts of US policy in Europe. One of you should write from the point of view of the Americans; the other should write from the point of view of the Soviets. The sources and text on these two pages will help you.

You should include reference to:

- a) US actions in the Greek Civil War in 1947
- b) the Truman Doctrine
- c) Soviet action in Czechoslovakia in 1948
- d) the Marshall Plan and Marshall Aid.

As you consider each event, try to use it to make one side look reasonable or the other side unreasonable – or both!

- 2 Was the distrust between the USA and the USSR a problem of action (what each side is actually doing) or interpretation (how things are seen)?

The Berlin Blockade

By 1948 the distrust between the USA and the USSR was so great that leaders were talking in public about the threat of war between the two countries. Instead of running down arms expenditure, as you would expect them to after a war, the two sides actually increased their stock of weapons.

Each side took every opportunity to denounce the policies or the plans of the other. A propaganda war developed. Despite all the threatening talk, the two sides had never actually fired on one another. But in 1948 they came dangerously close to war.

SOURCE **23**



Germany in 1948.

The Western zones recover

After the war, Germany was divided into four zones (see Source 23). Germany had become a real headache for the Western Allies. After the destruction of war, their zones were in economic chaos. Stalin feared a recovering Germany and wanted to keep it crippled. But it was clear to the Allies that Germany could not feed its people if it was not allowed to rebuild its industries. Although they themselves were wary of rebuilding Germany too quickly, Britain, France and the USA combined their zones in 1946 to form one zone which was called Trizonia to start with but became known in 1949 as West Germany. In 1948 they reformed the currency and within months there were signs that Germany was recovering.

SOURCE **24**



Berlin shoppers look at goods in shop windows a few days after the new currency was brought in. The notices say 'Our new prices'. Before the new currency, shops had few goods on display and there had been a thriving black market.

SOURCE 25

On 23 June the Soviet authorities suspended all traffic into Berlin because of alleged technical difficulties . . . They also stopped barge traffic on similar grounds. Shortly before midnight, the Soviet authorities issued orders to . . . disrupt electric power from Soviet power plants to the Western sectors. Shortage of coal was given as a reason for this measure.

US Government report, June 1948.

SOURCE 26

The crisis was planned in Washington, behind a smokescreen of anti-Soviet propaganda. In 1948 there was danger of war. The conduct of the Western powers risked bloody incidents. The self-blockade of the Western powers hit the West Berlin population with harshness. The people were freezing and starving. In the Spring of 1949 the USA was forced to yield . . . their war plans had come to nothing, because of the conduct of the USSR.

A Soviet commentary on the crisis.

Source Analysis

- 1 Read Source 25. What reasons did the Soviet Union give for cutting off West Berlin?
- 2 Why do you think the USA did not believe these were genuine reasons?
- 3 How do Sources 26 and 27 differ in their interpretation of the blockade?
- 4 What is the message of the cartoon in Source 28?
- 5 Which source do you think gives the most reliable view of the blockade?

The blockade

Stalin felt that the USA's handling of western Germany was provocative. He could do nothing about the reorganisation of the western zones, or the new currency, but he felt that he could stamp his authority on Berlin. It was deep in the Soviet zone and was linked to the western zones of Germany by vital roads, railways and canals. In June 1948, Stalin blocked all these supply lines, cutting off the two-million strong population of West Berlin from western help. Stalin believed that this would force the Allies out of Berlin and make Berlin entirely dependent on the USSR.

It was a clever plan. If US tanks did try to ram the road-blocks or railway blocks, Stalin would see it as an act of war. However, the Americans were not prepared to give up. They saw West Berlin as a test case. If they gave in to Stalin on this issue, the western zones of Germany might be next. Truman wanted to show that he was serious about his policy of containment. He wanted Berlin to be a symbol of freedom behind the Iron Curtain.

The Berlin airlift

The only way into Berlin was by air. So in June 1948 the Allies decided to air-lift supplies. As the first planes took off from their bases in West Germany, everyone feared that the Soviets would shoot them down, which would have been an act of war. People waited anxiously as the planes flew over Soviet territory, but no shots were fired. The planes got through and for the next ten months West Berlin was supplied by a constant stream of aeroplanes (three per minute) bringing in everything from food and clothing to oil and building materials. It made life possible in the western sectors, although there were enormous shortages and many Berliners decided to leave the city altogether. By May 1949, however, it was clear that the blockade of Berlin would not make the Western Allies give up Berlin, so Stalin reopened communications.

SOURCE 27

We refused to be forced out of the city of Berlin. We demonstrated to the people of Europe that we would act and act resolutely, when their freedom was threatened. Politically it brought the people of Western Europe closer to us. The Berlin blockade was a move to test our ability and our will to resist.

President Truman, speaking in 1949.

SOURCE 28



A cartoon by Leslie Illingworth from the *Daily Mail*, 20 April 1949.

SOURCE 29

The Berlin air-lift was a considerable achievement but neither side gained anything from the confrontation. The USSR had not gained control of Berlin. The West had no guarantees that land communications would not be cut again. Above all confrontation made both sides even more stubborn.

Historian Jack Watson writing in 1984.

The consequences of the Berlin Blockade

A divided Germany

As a result of the Berlin Blockade, Germany was firmly divided into two nations. In May 1949, the British, French and American zones became the Federal Republic of Germany (known as West Germany). The Communist eastern zone was formed into the German Democratic Republic (or East Germany) in October 1949.

A powerful symbol

Germany would stay a divided country for 41 years. Throughout that time Berlin would remain a powerful symbol of Cold War tensions – from the American point of view, an oasis of democratic freedom in the middle of Communist repression; from the Soviet point of view, an invasive cancer growing in the workers' paradise of East Germany.

SOURCE 30

Think!

It is difficult to give an exact date for when the Cold War actually started.

- ◆ Some might say that it was at Yalta, as Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt argued over Poland.
- ◆ Others might say that it started in 1948 with the Berlin Blockade.
- ◆ There are other possible starting dates as well between 1945 and 1948.

What do you think? As a class, list all the possible starting dates you can think of. Then choose three to compare. Whatever your choice, support it with evidence from this chapter.



A 1958 Soviet cartoon. A Soviet doctor is injecting the cancer (the 'Occupation regime' of the Western Allies) with a medicine called 'Free City Status for West Berlin'.

A flashpoint

Berlin was more than a symbol, however. It was also a potential flashpoint. As you study the story of the Cold War, you will find that the USA's and the USSR's worries about what might happen in Berlin affected their policies in other areas of the world. You will pick up the story of Berlin again in Chapter 6, page 133.

A pattern for the Cold War

Since 1946 some people had been using the term 'Cold War' to describe the tense relationships between the Western powers and the Soviet Union. The Berlin Blockade helped demonstrate what this Cold War actually consisted of. It set out a pattern for Cold War confrontations.

- On the one hand, the two superpowers and their allies had shown how suspicious they were of each other; how they would obstruct each other in almost any way they could; how they would bombard each other with propaganda.
- On the other hand, each had shown that it was not willing to go to war with the other.

The Berlin Blockade established a sort of tense balance between the superpowers that was to characterise much of the Cold War period.

Revision Tip

For the topic of the Berlin Blockade, aim to be able to explain (with examples):

- ◆ how the Allies started to rebuild Germany
- ◆ one reason this alarmed Stalin
- ◆ two important consequences of the blockade.

SOURCE 31

Article 3: To achieve the aims of this Treaty, the Parties will keep up their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack.

Article 5: The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all.

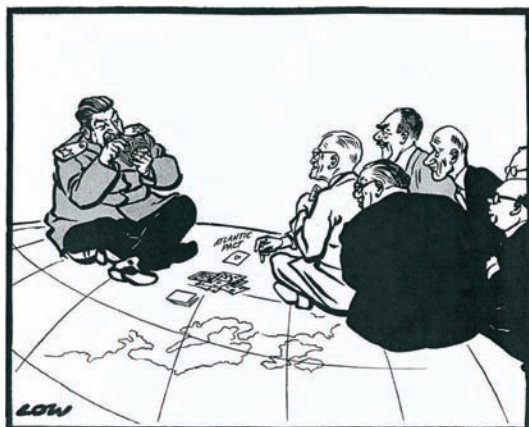
Extracts from the NATO Charter.

NATO and the Warsaw Pact

During the Berlin Blockade, war between the USSR and the USA seemed a real possibility. At the height of the crisis, the Western powers met in Washington and signed an agreement to work together. The new organisation they formed in April 1949 was known as NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation). Source 33 shows the main terms of the NATO alliance, and Source 34 shows Stalin's reaction to it.

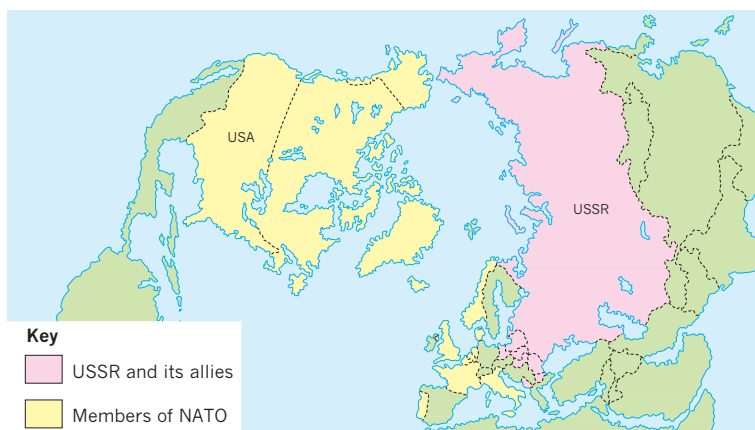
Although the USSR was critical of NATO it took no further action until 1955 when the NATO powers allowed West Germany to join NATO. This brought back terrible reminders of the Second World War. In response the USSR and the main Communist states in Eastern Europe (including Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Hungary) formed the Warsaw Pact alliance. The members of the alliance promised to defend each other if any one member was attacked. They also promised not to interfere in the internal affairs of each member state and asserted the independence of each member of the alliance. In reality of course the USSR had huge influence over the independence and internal affairs of each of the member states.

SOURCE 32



A cartoon by David Low, 1949, entitled 'Your play, Joe'. Western leaders wait to see how Stalin will react to the formation of NATO.

SOURCE 33



NATO and the Soviet satellites of eastern Europe. With the establishment of NATO, Europe was once again home to two hostile armed camps, just as it had been in 1914.

SOURCE 34

The Soviet government did everything it could to prevent the world from being split into two military blocks. The Soviet Union issued a special statement analysing the grave consequences affecting the entire international situation that would follow from the establishment of a military alliance of the Western powers. All these warnings failed, however, and the North Atlantic Alliance came into being.

Stalin commenting on the formation of NATO, 1949.

Source Analysis

- 1 What evidence is there in Sources 31–34 to indicate that NATO was a purely defensive alliance?
- 2 Read Source 34. What 'grave consequences' do you think Stalin had in mind?

Focus Task

What were the consequences of the Berlin Blockade?

Here are some consequences of the Berlin Blockade.

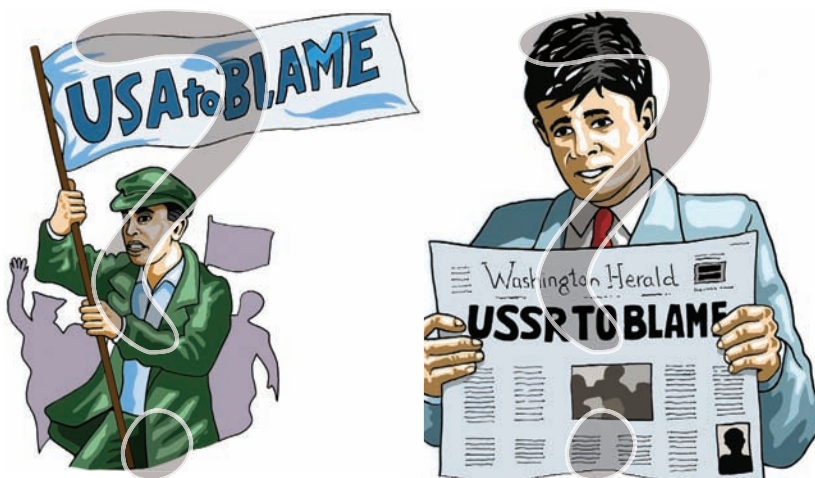
- ◆ The Soviet Union and the West both claimed a victory.
- ◆ The Western Allies set up a military alliance called NATO.
- ◆ Many westerners left Berlin for good.
- ◆ The airlift showed the West's commitment to Berlin.
- ◆ The airlift kept Berlin working.
- ◆ Berlin became a symbol of Cold War tension.
- ◆ It ended the four-power administration of Germany and Berlin and split Germany into two blocs. Germany remained a divided country for 40 years.
- ◆ There was no fighting – the dispute ended peacefully.
- ◆ It heightened fear of the Soviet Union in the west.
- ◆ The airlift improved relations between Germans and the Allies (who had so recently been at war).

Write each consequence on a card then:

- a) divide the cards into short-term and long-term consequences
- b) choose two which you think are the most significant consequences and explain your choice.

Focus Task

Who was more to blame for the Cold War?



Work in small groups. Five people per group would be ideal.

You are going to investigate who was to blame for the Cold War. The possible verdicts you might reach are:

- A** The USA was most to blame.
- B** The USSR was most to blame.
- C** Both sides were equally to blame.
- D** No one was to blame. The Cold War was inevitable.

This is our suggested way of working.

- 1** Start by discussing the verdicts together. Is one more popular than another in your group?
- 2 a)** Each member of the group should research how one of the following factors helped to lead to the Cold War:
 - ◆ the situation before the Second World War (pages 78–79).
 - ◆ the personal relationships between the various leaders (pages 77–84).
 - ◆ the conflicting beliefs of the superpowers (pages 83–84).
 - ◆ the war damage suffered by the USSR (pages 80 and 83).
 - ◆ Stalin's take-over of eastern Europe (pages 82–83).
 - ◆ Marshall Aid for Europe (pages 86–87).
 - ◆ the Berlin Blockade (pages 88–90)

You can start with the page numbers given. You can introduce your own research from other books or the internet if you wish.
- b)** Present your evidence to your group and explain which, if any, of the verdicts A–D your evidence most supports.
- 3** As a group, discuss which of the verdicts now seems most sensible.
- 4** Write a balanced essay on who was to blame, explaining why each verdict is a possibility but reaching your own conclusion about which is best. The verdicts A–D give you a possible structure for your essay. Write a paragraph on each verdict, selecting relevant evidence for your group discussion. A final paragraph can explain your overall conclusion.

Revision Tip

It is useful to think about big questions like 'who was most to blame...' but it is also useful to think about the role of specific factors so turn your research for question 2 into revision cards and share them with your fellow students.

Keywords

Make sure you know what these terms mean and are able to define them confidently.

Essential

- ◆ Atomic bomb
- ◆ Alliance
- ◆ Appeasement
- ◆ Berlin airlift
- ◆ Berlin Blockade
- ◆ Capitalism
- ◆ Cominform
- ◆ Communism
- ◆ Democracy
- ◆ Dictatorship
- ◆ Iron curtain
- ◆ Isolationism
- ◆ Marshall Aid
- ◆ Marshall Plan
- ◆ NATO
- ◆ Potsdam Conference
- ◆ Russia
- ◆ Soviet sphere of influence
- ◆ Superpower
- ◆ The Soviet Union
- ◆ The West/The Western Powers
- ◆ Truman Doctrine
- ◆ Yalta Conference

Chapter Summary

The beginnings of the Cold War

- 1** The USSR was a Communist country with a one-party state; the USA was a capitalist democracy. They had very different ideas about how a country should be run and had been enemies throughout the 1930s. However, because they had a shared enemy (Hitler) they were allies during the Second World War.
- 2** When it was clear that Germany was going to be defeated their leaders met together at Yalta (in the USSR) to plan what would happen after the war. The US and Soviet leaders, Roosevelt and Stalin, appeared to get on well, although behind the scenes there were tensions and disagreements.
- 3** They agreed that after the war Germany (and its capital Berlin) would be divided into four sectors run by Britain, the USA, France and the USSR, and that eastern Europe would be a Soviet 'sphere of influence'.
- 4** After the war ended the countries met again at Potsdam in Germany but by this time much had changed: Roosevelt had been replaced as President by Truman; Stalin's troops were occupying most of eastern Europe and the Americans had dropped an atomic bomb.
- 5** Relations between the USA and USSR quickly deteriorated and a Cold War started (a Cold War is the threat of war and deep mistrust but no outright fighting).
- 6** All the countries of eastern Europe elected or had forced on them a Communist government that was allied to the USSR. The division between Communist east and capitalist west became known as the iron curtain.
- 7** The USA wanted to stop Communism spreading – the Truman Doctrine said that America would help any country that was resisting outside pressure (by which Truman meant Communism). This marked a decisive end to US isolationism.
- 8** The USA offered financial help (Marshall Aid) to countries in western Europe to rebuild.
- 9** The USSR saw Marshall Aid and the Truman Doctrine as a threat to the USSR, which might lead to an attack on the USSR itself.
- 10** Berlin became the first focus of Cold War tension when it was blockaded by Stalin to prevent supplies getting into the US/British/French sectors. The western allies responded with the Berlin airlift.

Exam Practice

See pages 168–175 and pages 316–319 for advice on the different types of questions you might face.

- 1 (a)** What was agreed by the Allied leaders at the Yalta Conference? **[4]**
- (b)** Why had relationships between the USA and the USSR changed by the time of the Potsdam Conference? **[6]**
- (c)** 'The Cold War was caused by the Soviet take-over of eastern Europe.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer. **[10]**
- 2** Study Source 3 on page 80 and Source 7 on page 81. Why are these sources so different? Explain your answer using the sources and your knowledge. **[7]**
- 3** Study Source 15 on page 83. What is the message of the cartoonist? Explain your answer. **[7]**
- 4** Study Sources 26, 27 and 28 on page 89. Which of Sources 26 or 27 would the cartoonist in Source 28 agree with? Explain your answer using the sources and your own knowledge. **[8]**

IS THIS TOMORROW



AMERICA UNDER COMMUNISM!

5

How effectively did the USA contain the spread of Communism?

FOCUS POINTS

This key question will be explored through case studies of the following:

- the Korean War, 1950–53
- the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962
- US involvement in the Vietnam War

Although the USA was the world's most powerful nation, in 1950 it seemed to President Truman that events were not going America's way, particularly with regard to Communism.

- ◆ As you have seen in Chapter 4 most of eastern Europe had fallen under the influence of the Communist USSR 1945–48.
- ◆ China became Communist in 1949. The Americans had always regarded China as their strongest ally in the Far East. Between 1946 and 1949 they gave billions of dollars of aid to the Nationalist government in China, largely to prevent a Communist takeover. That had failed. Suddenly a massive new Communist state had appeared on the map.
- ◆ Also in 1949 the Soviet leader Stalin announced that the USSR had developed its own atomic bomb. The USA was no longer the world's only nuclear power.
- ◆ Furthermore American spies reported to President Truman that Stalin was using his network (Cominform) to help Communists win power in Malaya, Indonesia, Burma, the Philippines and Korea. The USA had visions of the Communists overrunning all of Asia, with country after country being toppled like a row of dominoes.

There was already a strong anti-Communist feeling in the USA. These developments made it stronger. There was no doubt in the minds of American leaders (indeed most American people) that this spread should be resisted. If they could have done, they would have liked to turn back the Communist advances but that was unrealistic. So from 1947 onwards the USA followed the policy of Containment – holding back Communism so it did not spread any further. But as the 1950s dawned this looked like a serious challenge.

In this chapter you will investigate:

- ◆ the different methods the USA used to try to contain the spread of Communism
- ◆ how successful these methods were during the Korean War, the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Vietnam War – using these case studies you will make up your own mind
- ◆ how successful the policy was in the years 1950–75: how effectively did the USA contain the spread of Communism?

◀ This is a cover of a comic book published in the United States in 1947.

1 What impression does this comic cover give you of:

- a) the USA?
- b) Communism?

2 What is the message of this picture?

Case study 1: The Korean War

Think!

The situation in Korea has sometimes been compared to the situation in Germany in 1945 (which you studied in Chapter 4). Explain:

- how these situations were similar
- how they were different.

SOURCE 1

The UN will render such assistance to the republic of Korea as may be necessary to restore international peace and security to the area.

Resolution 84 passed by the United Nations in 1950.

SOURCE 2

Korea is a symbol to the watching world. If we allow Korea to fall within the Soviet orbit, the world will feel we have lost another round in our match with the Soviet Union, and our prestige and the hopes of those who place their faith in us will suffer accordingly.

The US State Department, 1950.

SOURCE 3

If the UN is ever going to do anything, this is the time, and if the UN cannot bring the crisis in Korea to an end then we might as well just wash up the United Nations and forget it.

American Senator Tom Connally speaking in 1950. He was a Republican and strongly anti-Communist.

Background

Korea had been ruled by Japan until 1945. At the end of the Second World War the northern half was liberated by Soviet troops and the southern half by Americans. When the war ended:

- **The North** remained Communist-controlled, with a Communist leader who had been trained in the USSR, and with a Soviet-style one-party system.
- **The South** was anti-Communist. It was not very democratic, but the fact that it was anti-Communist was enough to win it the support of the USA.

There was bitter hostility between the North's Communist leader, Kim Il Sung, and Syngman Rhee, President of South Korea. Reunification did not seem likely. In 1950 this hostility spilled over into open warfare. North Korean troops overwhelmed the South's forces. By September 1950 all except a small corner of south-east Korea was under Communist control (see Source 5, map 1).

As you have already seen in Chapter 4, US President Truman was determined to contain Communism – to stop it spreading further. In his view, Korea was a glaring example of how Communism would spread if the USA did nothing (see Source 2). Remember that for Truman and for many Americans, containment was not so much a policy they wanted as a policy they had to make do with. If they could have done they would have liked to turn back the spread of Communism but that would have risked an all-out war with the USSR. So from the US point of view, it was not so much that they believed in containment, it was that they believed that they could not accept anything less.

USA or United Nations?

President Truman immediately sent advisers, supplies and warships to the waters around Korea. But he was aware that if he was going to take action it would look better to the rest of the world if he had the support of other countries, especially if he had the support of the United Nations. In fact the ideal situation would be a UN intervention in Korea rather than an American one.

Truman put enormous pressure on the UN Security Council to condemn the actions of the North Koreans and to call on them to withdraw their troops. The USA was the single biggest contributor to the UN budget and was therefore in a powerful position to influence its decisions. However, this did not mean the USA always got its own way and it would probably have failed this time except for some unusual circumstances. In the Cold War atmosphere of 1950, each superpower always denounced and opposed the other. Normally, in a dispute such as this, the Soviet Union would have used its right of veto to block the call for action by the UN. However, the USSR was boycotting the UN at this time over another issue (whether Communist China should be allowed to join the UN). So when the resolution was passed the USSR was not even at the meeting to use its veto. So Truman was able to claim that this was a UN-sponsored operation, even if Soviet newspapers and other media claimed that the decision was not valid.

Under the resolution (see Source 1) the UN committed itself to using its members' armies to drive North Korean troops out of South Korea. Eighteen states (including Britain) provided troops or support of some kind, mostly allies of the USA. However, the overwhelming part of the UN force that was sent to Korea was American. The commander, General MacArthur, was also an American.

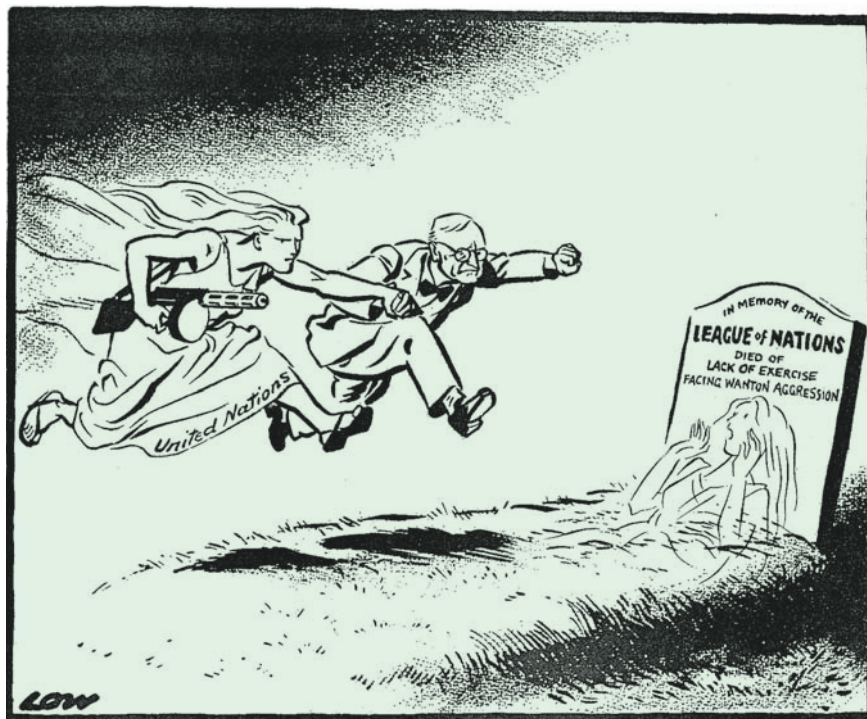
September 1950 – the UN force advances

United Nations forces stormed ashore at Inchon in September 1950 (see Source 5, map 1). At the same time, other UN forces and South Korean troops advanced from Pusan. The North Koreans were driven back beyond their original border (the 38th parallel) within weeks.

Source Analysis ►

Source 4 makes a comparison with earlier events you may have studied in this book – see Chapter 2. Use that knowledge to write a 100-word explanation of the message of this cartoon for someone who does not know anything about the League of Nations.

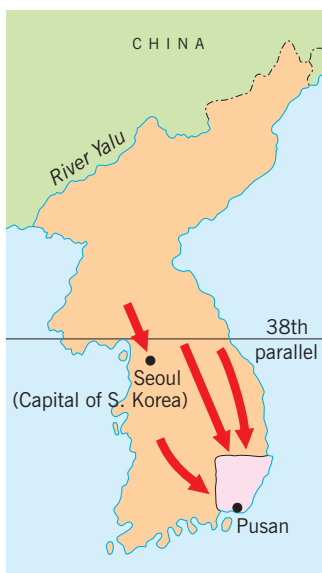
SOURCE 4



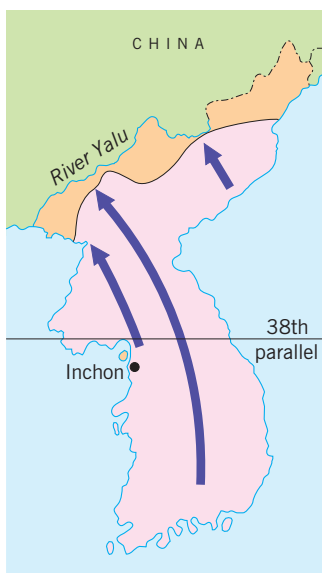
A cartoon by David Low, 1950.

SOURCE 5

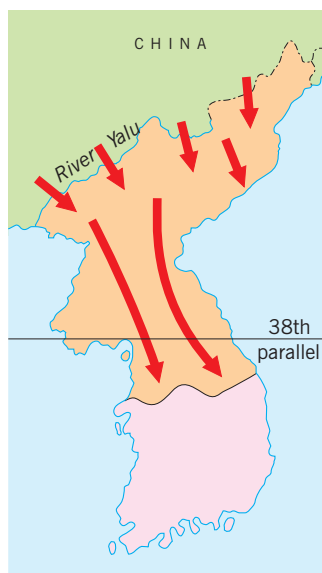
Map 1: September 1950



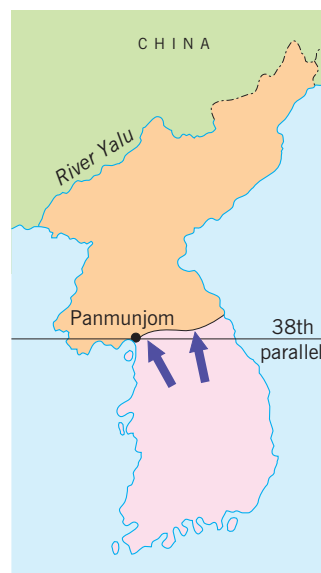
Map 2: October 1950



Map 3: January 1951



Map 4: July 1953



Key

Land controlled by North Koreans and Chinese

Land controlled by South Koreans, Americans and UN forces

← Communist advances

← UN advances

The 38th parallel was the border between North and South Korea from 1945 to June 1950.

The Korean War, 1950–53

SOURCE 6

Had they [the Chinese] intervened in the first or second months it would have been decisive, [but] we are no longer fearful of their intervention. Now that we have bases for our Air Force in Korea, there would be the greatest slaughter.

General MacArthur speaking in October 1950.

Profile

General Douglas MacArthur
(1880–1964)

- Born 1880. His father was a successful army leader.
- Trained at West Point, the top American military academy.
- Fought in the First World War. Became the youngest commander in the American army in France. Received 13 medals for bravery.
- During the Second World War he was the commander of the war against the Japanese. He devised the 'island-hopping' strategy that allowed the Americans to defeat the Japanese.
- In 1945 he personally accepted the Japanese surrender, and from 1945 to 1951 he virtually controlled Japan, helping the shattered country get back on its feet.
- He was aged 70 when he was given command of the UN forces in Korea.
- He tried unsuccessfully to run for US President in 1952.

Think!

Use the text to write some extra bullet points for the Profile describing:

- a) MacArthur's personality and beliefs
- b) his actions in Korea.

October 1950 – the UN force presses on

MacArthur had quickly achieved the original UN aim of removing North Korean troops from South Korea. But the Americans did not stop. Despite warnings from China's leader, Mao Tse-tung, that if they pressed on China would join the war, the UN approved a plan to advance into North Korea. By October, US forces had reached the Yalu River and the border with China (see Source 5, map 2). The nature of the war had now changed. It was clear that MacArthur and Truman were after a bigger prize, one which went beyond containment. As the UN forces advanced and secured their positions (see Source 6), Truman and MacArthur saw an opportunity to remove Communism from Korea entirely. Even Mao's warnings were not going to put them off.

November 1950 – the UN force retreats

MacArthur underestimated the power of the Chinese. Late in October 1950, 200,000 Chinese troops (calling themselves 'People's Volunteers') joined the North Koreans. They launched a blistering attack. They had soldiers who were strongly committed to Communism and had been taught by their leader to hate the Americans. They had modern tanks and planes supplied by the Soviet Union. The United Nations forces were pushed back into South Korea.

Conditions were some of the worst the American forces had known, with treacherous cold and blinding snowstorms in the winter of 1950–51. The Chinese forces were more familiar with fighting in the jagged mountains, forested ravines and treacherous swamps – as the landscape was similar to many areas of China.

SOURCE 7

Even the reports to the UN were censored by [American] state and defence departments. I had no connection with the United Nations whatsoever.

From General MacArthur's memoirs.

March 1951 – MacArthur is sacked

At this point, Truman and MacArthur fell out. MacArthur wanted to carry on the war. He was ready to invade China and even use nuclear weapons if necessary. Truman, on the other hand, felt that saving South Korea was good enough. His allies in the UN convinced Truman that the risks of attacking China and of starting a war that might bring in the USSR were too great, and so an attack on China was ruled out.

However, in March 1951 MacArthur blatantly ignored the UN instruction and openly threatened an attack on China. In April Truman removed MacArthur from his position as commander and brought him back home. He rejected MacArthur's aggressive policy towards Communism. Containment was underlined as the American policy. One of the American army leaders, General Omar Bradley, said that MacArthur's approach would have 'involved America in the wrong war, in the wrong place, at the wrong time, and with the wrong enemy'. Truman agreed with Bradley and was effectively returning to the policy of containment and accepting that he could not drive the Communists out of North Korea.

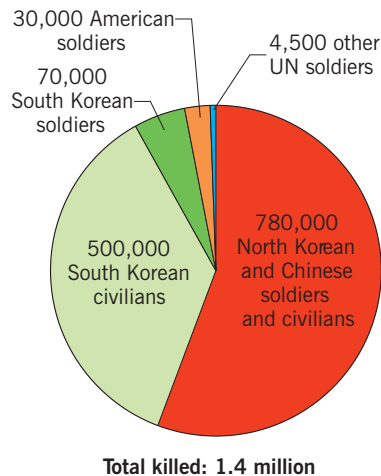
June 1951 – peace talks begin

The fighting finally reached stalemate around the 38th parallel (see Source 5, map 3) in the middle of 1951. Peace talks between North and South Korea began in June 1951, although bitter fighting continued for two more years. The casualties on all sides were immense – but particularly among civilians (see Sources 8 and 9).

July 1953 – armistice

In 1952 Truman was replaced by President Eisenhower, who wanted to end the war. Stalin's death in March 1953 made the Chinese and North Koreans less confident. An armistice was finally signed in July 1953. The border between North and South Korea was much the same as it had been before war started in 1950.

SOURCE 8



Civilian and military deaths in the Korean War. American military fatalities per year of conflict were actually higher than the Vietnam War.

SOURCE 9



Civilian casualty in the early stages of the Korean War as South Koreans fled from the advancing North Koreans.

A success for containment?

In one sense the Korean War was a success for the USA. The cost and the casualties were high but it showed that the USA had the will and the means to contain Communism. South Korea remained out of Communist hands.

On the other hand it showed the limits of the policy. The USA had to accept that North Korea remained Communist. It also highlighted tensions among American leaders. Hardline anti-Communist politicians and military leaders wanted to go beyond containment – to push back Communism. They thought that Truman had shown weakness in not going for outright victory. More moderate politicians and commanders argued that this would not be worth the risk.

These tensions would affect US policy over the coming decades.

Focus Task

Was the Korean War a success for containment?

Draw up your own copy of this table. You will use it to compare the three case studies. At this stage, just focus on the Korean War. You are going to revisit this task at the end of the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Vietnam War as well. We have started it off for you. Your completed chart will be a useful revision tool.

| Case study | Why were the Americans worried? | What methods did the Americans use to contain Communism? | What problems did they face? | What was the outcome? | Success or failure (out of 10) with reasons supported by evidence |
|------------|--|--|------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Korea | Communist North Korea invaded capitalist South Korea | | | | |

Methods of containment

There was no doubt at all in the minds of American leaders that Communism had to be resisted. The question was how to do it. The Korean War showed the Americans that they could not just send their soldiers to fight a war whenever they saw a problem. It was too expensive and it did not really work very well. Containment needed other methods.

Alliances

The USA created a network of anti-Communist alliances around the world: SEATO in South East Asia and CENTO in central Asia and the Middle East. The USA gave money, advice and arms to these allies. In return, the leaders of these countries suppressed Communist influence in their own countries.

The USSR saw these alliances as aggressive. They accused the USA of trying to encircle the Communist world. In 1955 the Soviet Union set up the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, better known as the Warsaw Pact. This included the USSR and all the Communist east European countries except Yugoslavia.

SOURCE 10

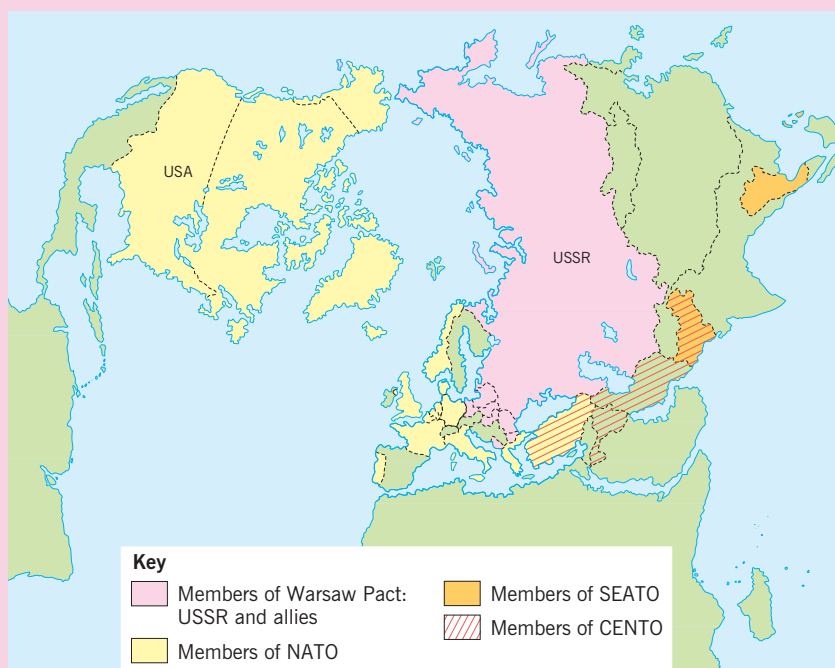
We shall never have a secure peace and a happy world so long as Soviet Communism dominates one-third of all the world's people and is in the process of trying to extend its rule to many others. Therefore we must have in mind the liberation of these captive peoples. Now liberation does not mean war. Liberation can be achieved by processes short of war. A policy which only aims at containing Russia is an unsound policy ... If our only policy is to stay where we are, we will be driven back.

JF Dulles, US Secretary of State, speaking on his appointment in 1952.

Think!

Read Source 10. What methods do you think Dulles had in mind to 'liberate captive peoples' without a war?

SOURCE 11



Membership of the organisations allied to the USA and USSR in 1955.

Arms race

At the same time both the USSR and the USA were engaged in an 'arms race'.

The Americans had developed their first atomic bomb in 1945. They did not share the secret of their bomb with the USSR, even while they were still allies. When the USA dropped the first bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, 70,000 people were killed instantly. The awesome power of the explosions and the incredible destruction caused by the bombs made Japan surrender within a week. It was clear to both the USA and the USSR that atomic bombs were the weapons of the future.

Over the next decade the USA and USSR developed ever bigger, more deadly and more flexible weapons. They spent vast amounts

of money on new weapons. They spied on one another to steal technological secrets. The USSR tended to use spies such as Rudolf Abel. He worked in New York until he was arrested in 1957. The USA favoured hi-tech spying such as the U2 plane – a spy plane which flew so high it could not be shot down but took incredibly detailed photos of the ground. It could read a newspaper from 14 miles up in the sky!

Each side perfected nuclear bombs that could be launched from submarines or planes. The USA placed short-range nuclear weapons in Turkey (one of their CENTO allies). Both sides developed ICBMs, which could travel from continent to continent in half an hour.

The impact of the arms race

The arms race was partly about **quality** – who had the most sophisticated weapons. The Soviets took the lead in technology in the 1950s, building on the achievements of their successful space programme. These technological advances by the USSR rocked public opinion in the USA. The Cold War was a propaganda war much more than a military war. You had to show that your system was superior; that your scientists were cleverer. To lose advantage to the Soviet Union was a blow to the USA.

However the arms race was also about **quantity**. The US public was alarmed to be told that the USSR had many more nuclear missiles than the USA. This so-called ‘missile gap’ was widely reported in the American media during the 1950s. We now know that the missile gap was a myth. The USA always had more missiles than the USSR. However:

- Khrushchev was not going to admit this because he would look foolish and it would aid his critics inside the USSR.
- At the same time, the American military commanders were happy to go along with the claims that there was a missile gap because it helped them to get funding from the government to pay for the development of new weapons systems.
- By the early 1960s Eisenhower also knew the missile gap was a myth because he had an important source in the Soviet military who had defected to the CIA. However, because this contact was still in the USSR, Eisenhower could not admit he knew how many missiles the Soviets actually had without revealing his source.

So, myth or not, the USA forged ahead with its own missile production programme to ‘narrow the missile gap’.

Deterrence and MAD

The result was that by 1961, both of the superpowers had hundreds of missiles pointed at each other. The USA had more than the USSR, but the advantage did not really matter because both sides had enough to destroy each other many times over. On each side the theory was that such weapons made them more secure. The ‘nuclear deterrent’ meant the enemy would not dare attack first, because it knew that, if it did, the other would strike back before its bombs had even landed and it too would be destroyed. It would be suicidal. So having nuclear weapons deterred the other side from attacking first. This policy also became known as MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction). Surely no side would dare strike first when it knew the attack would destroy itself too.

Think!

Create a diagram that shows how the following factors were connected:

- ◆ alliances
- ◆ nuclear arms race
- ◆ propaganda
- ◆ spying.

The author recommends a Venn diagram but you might prefer a spider diagram or some other format. Or try different formats and see which works well for you.

Revision Tip

Make sure you can remember:

- ◆ one example of the USA creating an alliance to contain Communism
- ◆ one example of it using arms technology to contain Communism.

Fear

Leaders might see their nuclear weapons as a deterrent, but others worried that the world was moving into a very dangerous time. For example, an American B-47 bomber crashed in Norfolk, England in 1957. The resulting fire came within minutes of setting off two nuclear bombs that would have devastated all of East Anglia. In 1962, a US radar station mistook one of its own satellites for an incoming Soviet missile and was minutes away from triggering a full nuclear ‘response’ attack on the USSR. Of course, governments did not tell their people about these incidents – both Soviet and US leaders were very secretive. But they could not hide the big issue – that the nuclear arms race seemed to have raised the stakes so high that one suicidal leader, one poor decision or (most worryingly of all) one small and innocent mistake could trigger a catastrophe that could destroy Europe, the USA and the Soviet Union within minutes.

Fear of ‘the bomb’ was a common feature of life in 1950s’ and 1960s’ America. The arms race was a topic of everyday conversation. Children were taught at school what to do if there was a nuclear attack. Some people protested against the arms race. Robert Oppenheimer, the man who led the team that developed the atom bomb, opposed the H-bomb. He felt it was wrong to develop a more powerful bomb in peacetime. Others protested at the vast amounts being spent on weapons. But the most common feelings were of helplessness and fear. People wondered whether this was the end. Were they the last generation to walk this planet? Would nuclear warfare signal the end of the world?

It was against the background of the nuclear arms race that Cuba became the next major flashpoint of the Cold War.

Case study 2: The Cuban Missile Crisis

SOURCE 12

We considered it part of the United States practically, just a wonderful little country over there that was of no danger to anybody, as a matter of fact it was a rather important economic asset to the United States.

American TV reporter Walter Cronkite

SOURCE 13

I believe there is no country in the world . . . whose economic colonisation, humiliation and exploitation were worse than in Cuba, partly as a consequence of US policy during the Batista regime. I believe that, without being aware of it, we conceived and created the Castro movement, starting from scratch.

President Kennedy speaking in 1963.

Source Analysis

- 1 How far do Sources 12 and 13 agree about Cuba's relationship with the USA before the revolution?
- 2 Apart from the caption in Russian, how else can you tell that the cartoon in Source 14 is a Soviet cartoon?
- 3 'The aim of the cartoonist in Source 14 was simply to tell people that the USA was forbidding Cuba to make friends with the USSR, nothing more.' Do you agree with this statement?

Revision Tip

From these two pages you should make sure you remember:

- ♦ one reason why the USA disliked Castro's government
- ♦ how the USA initially tried to contain Communism on Cuba.

The Cuban Revolution?

Cuba is a large island just 160 km from Florida in the southern USA. It had long been an American ally. Americans owned most of the businesses on the island and they had a huge naval base there (see Source 18 on page 104). The Americans also provided the Cuban ruler, General Batista, with economic and military support. Batista was a dictator. His rule was corrupt and unpopular. The Americans supported Batista primarily because he was just as opposed to Communism as they were.

Enter Fidel Castro

There was plenty of opposition to Batista in Cuba itself. In 1959, after a three-year campaign, Fidel Castro overthrew Batista. Castro was charming, clever and also ruthless. He quickly killed, arrested or exiled many political opponents. Castro was also a clever propagandist. He was very charismatic, and he had a vision for a better Cuba which won over the majority of Cubans.

The USA responds

The USA was taken by surprise at first and decided to recognise Castro as the new leader of Cuba. However, within a short period of time relations between the two countries grew worse. There were two important reasons:

- There were thousands of Cuban exiles in the USA who had fled from Castro's rule. They formed powerful pressure groups demanding action against Castro.
- Castro took over some American-owned businesses in Cuba, particularly the agricultural businesses. He took their land and distributed it to his supporters among Cuba's peasant farmer population.

SOURCE 14



A 1960 Soviet cartoon. The notice held by the US Secretary of State says to Castro in Cuba: 'I forbid you to make friends with the Soviet Union.'

SOURCE 15

By October 1962 the historic friendship between Cuba and the USA was gone. Behind this change was the story of the betrayal of the Cuban people. It began with Fidel Castro triumphantly entering Havana in 1959. Castro promised democracy and freedom and for a time it appeared to most Cubans that they were liberated. But it soon became apparent that Castro had sold out to Premier Khrushchev of the Communists.

Commentary from an American TV programme made in 1962.

SOURCE 16

I think he [Khrushchev] did it [was so aggressive in the meeting] because of the Bay of Pigs. He thought that anyone who was so young and inexperienced as to get into that mess could be beaten; and anyone who got into it and didn't see it through had no guts. So he just beat the hell out of me.

If he thinks I'm inexperienced and have no guts, until we remove those ideas we won't get anywhere with him.

Kennedy speaking after a meeting with Khrushchev in 1961

Factfile**Bay of Pigs invasion**

- Cuban exiles were funded and trained by CIA and supported by US air power.
- Plan originally devised by President Eisenhower's government but Kennedy approved it when he became President. Training began in April 1960.
- Cuban security services knew that the invasion was coming.
- Invasion took place on 17 April 1961. It was a complete failure. US intelligence which stated that Cuban people would rebel against Castro proved to be wrong.

Kennedy ordered extensive investigations into the disaster. Key failings included:

- lack of secrecy so that USA could not deny its involvement;
- poor links between various US departments;
- failure to organise resistance inside Cuba;
- insufficient Spanish-speaking staff.

As early as June 1960, US President Eisenhower authorised the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to investigate ways of overthrowing Castro. The CIA provided support and funds to Cuban exiles. They also investigated ways to disrupt the Cuban economy, such as damaging sugar plantations. American companies working in Cuba refused to co-operate with any Cuban businesses which used oil or other materials which had been imported from the USSR. The American media also broadcast a relentless stream of criticism of Castro and his regime (see Source 15 for example).

Castro responded to US hostility with a mixed approach. He assured Americans living in Cuba that they were safe and he allowed the USA to keep its naval base. He said he simply wanted to run Cuba without interference. However, by the summer of 1960 he had allied Cuba with the Soviet Union. Soviet leader Khrushchev signed a trade agreement giving Cuba \$100 million in economic aid. Castro also began receiving arms from the Soviet Union and American spies knew this.

To invade or not to invade, that is the question!

In January 1961 the USA's new President, John F Kennedy, broke off diplomatic relations with Cuba. Castro thought that the USA was preparing to invade his country. The Americans did not invade directly, but Kennedy was no longer prepared to tolerate a Soviet satellite in the USA's 'sphere of influence'. The plans to overthrow Castro which were begun under Eisenhower began to take shape.

The Bay of Pigs

Rather than a direct invasion, President Kennedy supplied arms, equipment and transport for 1,400 anti-Castro exiles to invade Cuba and overthrow him. In April 1961 the exiles landed at the Bay of Pigs. They were met by 20,000 Cuban troops, armed with tanks and modern weapons. The invasion failed disastrously. Castro captured or killed them all within days.

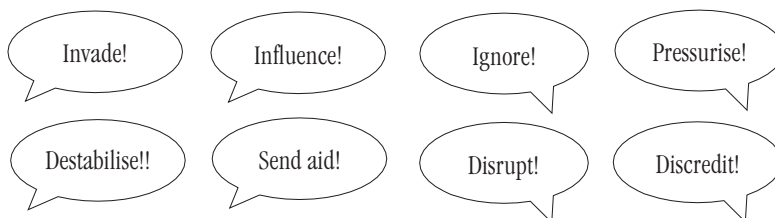
The impact of the invasion

The half-hearted invasion suggested to Cuba and the Soviet Union that, despite its opposition to Communism in Cuba, the USA was unwilling to get directly involved in Cuba. The Soviet leader Khrushchev was scornful of Kennedy's pathetic attempt to oust Communism from Cuba.

Historians too argue that the Bay of Pigs fiasco further strengthened Castro's position in Cuba. It suggested to the USSR that Kennedy was weak. It also made Castro and Khrushchev very suspicious of US policy.

Focus Task**How did the USA respond to the Cuban revolution?**

- 1 The President has asked his advisers how he should deal with Cuba. Here are some suggestions they might have made:



Record examples you can find of the USA doing any of these things. If you find examples of American actions that are not covered by these words record them too.

- 2 Place these actions on a 'containment continuum' like this:



SOURCE 17

[Estimates were that the] missiles had an atomic warhead [power] of about half the current missile capacity of the entire Soviet Union. The photographs indicated that missiles were directed at certain American cities. The estimate was that within a few minutes of their being fired 80 million Americans would be dead.

President Kennedy's brother, Robert Kennedy, describing events on Thursday 18 October in the book he wrote about the crisis, *13 Days*.

Khrushchev arms Castro

After the Bay of Pigs fiasco, Soviet arms flooded into Cuba. In May 1962 the Soviet Union announced publicly for the first time that it was supplying Cuba with arms. By July 1962 Cuba had the best-equipped army in Latin America. By September it had thousands of Soviet missiles, plus patrol boats, tanks, radar vans, missile erectors, jet bombers, jet fighters and 5,000 Soviet technicians to help to maintain the weapons.

The Americans watched all this with great alarm. They seemed ready to tolerate conventional arms being supplied to Cuba, but the big question was whether the Soviet Union would dare to put **nuclear** missiles on Cuba. In September Kennedy's own Intelligence Department said that it did not believe the USSR would send nuclear weapons to Cuba. The USSR had not taken this step with any of its satellite states before and the US Intelligence Department believed that the USSR would consider it too risky to do it in Cuba. On 11 September, Kennedy warned the USSR that he would prevent 'by whatever means might be necessary' Cuba's becoming an offensive military base – by which, everyone knew, he meant a base for nuclear missiles. The same day the USSR assured the USA that it had no need to put nuclear missiles on Cuba and no intention of doing so.

The October crisis

On Sunday, 14 October 1962, an American spy plane flew over Cuba. It took amazingly detailed photographs of missile sites in Cuba. To the military experts two things were obvious – that these were nuclear missile sites, and that they were being built by the USSR.

More photo reconnaissance followed over the next two days. This confirmed that some sites were nearly finished but others were still being built. Some were already supplied with missiles, others were awaiting them. The experts said that the most developed of the sites could be ready to launch missiles in just seven days. American spy planes also reported that twenty Soviet ships were currently on the way to Cuba carrying missiles.

SOURCE 18



Map showing the location of Cuba and the range of the Cuban missiles.

Think!

How should President Kennedy deal with the Cuban crisis?

On Tuesday 16 October, President Kennedy was informed of the discovery. He formed a special team of advisers called Ex Comm.

They came up with several choices.

Work in groups. You are advisers to the President. You have to reduce Ex Comm's five options to just two for the President to choose between.

When you have made your decision explain why you have rejected the three you have.

Option 1 Do nothing?

For: The Americans still had a vastly greater nuclear power than the Soviet Union. The USA could still destroy the Soviet Union, so – the argument went – the USSR would never use these missiles. The biggest danger to world peace would be to overreact to this discovery.

Against: The USSR had lied about Cuban missiles. Kennedy had already issued his solemn warning to the USSR. To do nothing would be another sign of weakness.



Option 2 Surgical air attack?

An immediate selected air attack to destroy the nuclear bases themselves.

For: It would destroy the missiles before they were ready to use.

Against:

- 1 Destruction of all sites could not be guaranteed. Even one left undamaged could launch a counter-attack against the USA.
- 2 The attack would inevitably kill Soviet soldiers. The Soviet Union might retaliate at once.
- 3 To attack without advance warning was seen as immoral.



Option 3 Invasion?

All-out invasion of Cuba by air and sea.

For: An invasion would not only get rid of the missiles but Castro as well. The American forces were already trained and available to do it.

Against: It would almost certainly guarantee an equivalent Soviet response, either to protect Cuba, or within the Soviet sphere of influence – for example, a take-over of Berlin.



Option 4 Diplomatic pressures?

To get the United Nations or other body to intervene and negotiate.

For: It would avoid conflict.

Against: If the USA was forced to back down, it would be a sign of weakness.



Option 5 Blockade?

A ban on the Soviet Union bringing in any further military supplies to Cuba, enforced by the US navy who would stop and search Soviet ships. And a call for the Soviet Union to withdraw what was already there.

For: It would show that the USA was serious, but it would not be a direct act of war. It would put the burden on Khrushchev to decide what to do next. The USA had a strong navy and could still take the other options if this one did not work.

Against: It would not solve the main problem – the missiles were already on Cuba. They could be used within one week. The Soviet Union might retaliate by blockading Berlin as it had done in 1948.



Tue 16 October

Sat 20 October

Mon 22 October

Source Analysis ►

- 1 What words and phrases in Source 19 reveal how serious Kennedy believed the situation was in October 1962?
- 2 Kennedy was renowned as a skilled communicator. How did he convince his audience that he was in the right?

Tue 23 October

Wed 24 October

Source Analysis ►

- 1 Source 20 is a British cartoon. Pretend you did not know this. Explain why it is unlikely to be an American or Soviet cartoon.
- 2 What is its attitude to the two sides in the crisis?

What happened next?

President Kennedy was informed of the missile build-up. Ex Comm formed.**Kennedy decided** on a blockade of Cuba.**Kennedy announced** the blockade and called on the Soviet Union to withdraw its missiles. He addressed the American people:

SOURCE 19

Good Evening, My Fellow Citizens:

This government, as promised, has maintained the closest surveillance of the Soviet military build-up on the island of Cuba. Within the past week, unmistakable evidence has established the fact that a series of offensive missile sites is now in preparation on that imprisoned island. The purpose of these bases can be none other than to provide a nuclear strike capability against the Western Hemisphere. . .

Acting, therefore, in the defence of our own security and of the entire Western Hemisphere, and under the authority entrusted to me by the Constitution as endorsed by the resolution of the Congress, I have directed that the following initial steps be taken immediately:

First: To halt this offensive build-up, a strict quarantine on all offensive military equipment under shipment to Cuba . . . Second: I have directed the continued and increased close surveillance of Cuba and its military build-up. . . . I have directed the Armed Forces to prepare for any eventualities . . . Third: It shall be the policy of this nation to regard any nuclear missile launched from Cuba against any nation in the Western Hemisphere as an attack on the United States, requiring a full retaliatory response upon the Soviet Union.

Extract from President Kennedy's TV broadcast to the American people on
22 October 1962.

Kennedy received a letter from Khrushchev saying that Soviet ships would not observe the blockade. Khrushchev did not admit the presence of nuclear missiles on Cuba.**The blockade began.** The first missile-carrying ships, accompanied by a Soviet submarine, approached the 500-mile (800-km) blockade zone. Then suddenly, at 10.32 a.m., the twenty Soviet ships which were closest to the zone stopped or turned around.

SOURCE 20



BRITISH CARTOON ARCHIVE, UNIVERSITY OF KENT © SOLO SYNDICATION/
ASSOCIATED NEWSPAPERS LTD.

A cartoon by Vicky (Victor Weisz) from the *London Evening Standard*, 24 October 1962.

Thu 25 October**Despite the Soviet ships turning around**, intensive aerial photography revealed that work on the missile bases in Cuba was proceeding rapidly.**Fri 26 October****Kennedy received a long personal letter from Khrushchev.** The letter claimed that the missiles on Cuba were purely defensive, but went on: 'If assurances were given that the USA would not participate in an attack on Cuba and the blockade was lifted, then the question of the removal or the destruction of the missile sites would be an entirely different question.' This was the first time Khrushchev had admitted the presence of the missiles.**Sat 27 October a.m.****Khrushchev sent a second letter** – revising his proposals – saying that the condition for removing the missiles from Cuba was that the USA withdraw its missiles from Turkey.**An American U-2 plane was shot down** over Cuba. The pilot was killed. The President was advised to launch an immediate reprisal attack on Cuba.**Sat 27 October p.m.****Kennedy decided to delay** an attack. He also decided to ignore the second Khrushchev letter, but accepted the terms suggested by Khrushchev on 26 October. He said that if the Soviet Union did not withdraw, an attack would follow.**SOURCE 21***It was a beautiful autumn evening, the height of the crisis, and I went up to the open air to smell it, because I thought it was the last Saturday I would ever see.*

Robert McNamara talking about the evening of 27 October 1962. McNamara was one of Kennedy's closest advisers during the Cuban Crisis.

Sun 28 October**Khrushchev replied to Kennedy:** 'In order to eliminate as rapidly as possible the conflict which endangers the cause of peace . . . the Soviet Government has given a new order to dismantle the arms which you described as offensive and to crate and return them to the Soviet Union.'**SOURCE 22**A cartoon from the British newspaper, the *Daily Mail*.**Source Analysis** ►

Does Source 22 give the impression that either Khrushchev or Kennedy has the upper hand? Explain whether you think the events of the Crisis on these pages support that view.

Think!

Kennedy described Wednesday 24 October and Saturday 27 October as the darkest days of the crisis. Use the information on this page to explain why.

Why did the Soviet Union place nuclear missiles on Cuba?

It was an incredibly risky strategy. The USSR had supplied many of its allies with conventional weapons but this was the first time that any Soviet leader had placed nuclear weapons outside Soviet territory. Why did Khrushchev take such an unusual step? The USSR must have known that it would cause a crisis. What's more, the USSR made no attempt at all to camouflage the sites, and even allowed the missiles to travel on open deck. This has caused much debate as to what Khrushchev was really doing. Historians have suggested various possible explanations.



To bargain with the USA

If Khrushchev had missiles on Cuba, he could agree to remove them in return for some American concessions.



To test the USA

In the strained atmosphere of Cold War politics the missiles were designed to see how strong the Americans really were – whether they would back off or face up.



To trap the USA

Khrushchev wanted the Americans to find them and be drawn into a nuclear war. He did not even try to hide them.



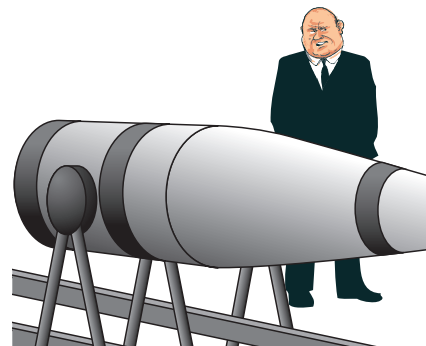
To close the missile gap

Khrushchev was so concerned about **the missile gap** between the USSR and the USA that he would seize any opportunity he could to close it. With missiles on Cuba it was less likely that the USA would ever launch a 'first strike' against the USSR.



To defend Cuba

Cuba was the only Communist state in the Western hemisphere, and it had willingly become Communist rather than having become Communist as a result of invasion by the USSR. In addition, Cuba was in 'Uncle Sam's backyard'. As Castro himself put it: 'The imperialist cannot forgive that we have made a socialist revolution under the nose of the United States.' Just by existing, Castro's Cuba was excellent propaganda for the USSR.



To strengthen his own position in the USSR

The superiority of the USA in nuclear missiles undermined Khrushchev's credibility inside the USSR. His critics pointed out that he was the one who had urged the USSR to rely on nuclear missiles. Now, could he show that the USSR really was a nuclear power?

Think!

- Which of the explanations above do Sources 23 and 24 support?
- Talking in private Khrushchev called the missiles 'a hedgehog in Uncle Sam's pants'. Which of the explanations does this statement support?
- Which explanation do you think Khrushchev's actions on 26 and 27 October support (see page 107)?
- Choose the explanation(s) that you think best fit what you have found out about the crisis. Explain your choice.

SOURCE 23

From the territory of the Soviet Union, the medium-range missiles couldn't possibly reach the territory of the USA, but deployed on Cuba they would become strategic nuclear weapons. That meant in practical terms we had a chance to narrow the differences between our forces.

General Anatoly Gribkov, commander, Soviet forces, Cuba.

SOURCE 24

In addition to protecting Cuba, our missiles would have equalized what the West likes to call the 'balance of power'. The Americans had surrounded our country with military bases and threatened us with nuclear weapons, and now they would learn just what it feels like to have enemy missiles pointing at you ...

Khrushchev writing in his memoirs in 1971.

The outcomes ...

For Kennedy and the USA

- Kennedy came out of the crisis with a greatly improved reputation in his own country and throughout the West. He had stood up to Khrushchev and had made him back down.
- Kennedy had also successfully stood up to the hardliners in his own government. Critics of containment had wanted the USA to invade Cuba – to turn back Communism. However, the Cuban Missile Crisis highlighted the weakness of their case. Such intervention was not worth the high risk.
- On the other hand, he did secretly agree to remove the missiles from Turkey. This was slightly awkward for him as technically the decision to remove them was a decision for NATO. His NATO allies were unhappy that Kennedy had traded them during the Cuban Missile Crisis but clearly this was much better than a nuclear war.
- Kennedy also had to accept that Castro's Cuba would remain a Communist state in America's backyard. The USA still has trade and other economic restrictions in place against Cuba today.

For Khrushchev and the USSR

- In public Khrushchev was able to highlight his role as a responsible peacemaker, willing to make the first move towards compromise.
- There was no question that keeping Cuba safe from American action was a major achievement for the Soviets. Cuba was a valuable ally and proved a useful base to support Communists in South America.
- Khrushchev did also get the USA to withdraw its nuclear missiles from Turkey. However, Khrushchev had to agree that this withdrawal was to be kept secret so he was unable to use it for propaganda purposes.
- The crisis also exposed the USA to criticism amongst some of its allies. Newspaper articles in Britain, for example, felt that the USA was unreasonable to have missiles in Turkey and then object to Soviet missiles in Cuba.
- On the other hand, there was no denying the fact that Khrushchev had been forced to back down and remove the missiles. The Soviet military was particularly upset at the terms of the withdrawal. They were forced to put the missiles on the decks of their ships so the Americans could count them. They felt this was a humiliation.
- Khrushchev's actions in Cuba made no impact on the underlying problem of the Missile Gap. The USSR went on to develop its stockpile of ICBMs at a huge financial cost, but it never caught up with the USA.
- In 1964 Khrushchev himself was forced from power by his enemies inside the USSR. Many commentators believe that the Cuban Missile Crisis contributed to this.

For the Cold War

- Historians agree that the Cuban Missile Crisis helped to thaw Cold War relations between the USA and the USSR.
- Both leaders had seen how their game of brinkmanship had nearly ended in nuclear war. Now they were more prepared to take steps to reduce the risk of nuclear war.
- A permanent 'hot line' phone link direct from the White House to the Kremlin was set up.
- The following year, in 1963, they signed a Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. It did not stop the development of weapons, but it limited tests and was an important step forward.
- Although it was clear the USSR could not match US nuclear technology or numbers of weapons, it was also clear that this was not necessary. The Soviet nuclear arsenal was enough of a threat to make the USA respect the USSR. It is noticeable that for the rest of the Cold War the Superpowers avoided direct confrontation and fought through their allies where possible.

For Castro's Cuba

- Castro was very upset by the deal which Khrushchev made with America but he had little choice. He needed the support of the USSR.
- Cuba stayed Communist and highly armed. The nuclear missiles were removed but Cuba remained an important base for Communist supporters in South America. Cuban forces also intervened to help the Communist side in a civil war in Angola (in South-West Africa) in the 1970s.
- Castro also kept control of the American companies and other economic resources he nationalised during his revolution. This remains a source of dispute between Cuba and the USA today but Castro has never backed down.

Think!

- 1 Use the information on this page to fill out a table of positive and negative outcomes for the USA and the USSR.
- 2 Who do you think gained the most from the Cuban Missile Crisis?

Focus Task

Was the Cuban Missile Crisis a success for containment?

Look back at your table from page 99. Complete a second row for the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Revision Tip

Make sure you can remember from this case study:

- ◆ one reason that this might be seen as a success for containment
- ◆ one reason it might be seen as a failure.

Case study 3: The Vietnam War

SOURCE 25

A poor feudal nation had beaten a great colonial power ... It meant a lot; not just to us but to people all over the world.

Viet Minh commander Vo Nguyen Giap commenting on the victory over France in 1954.

SOURCE 26

It was generally agreed that had an election been held, Ho Chi Minh would have been elected Premier ... at the time of the fighting, possibly 80 per cent of the population would have voted for the communist Ho Chi Minh as their leader.

President Eisenhower writing after the Vietnam War.

SOURCE 27



Quang Duc, a 73-year-old Buddhist priest, burns himself to death in protest against the attacks on Buddhist shrines by the government of South Vietnam in 1963

Although Americans were relieved at the outcome of the Cuban Crisis it did not reduce their fear of Communism. Very soon they found themselves locked in a costly war in Vietnam, which put a massive question mark over the very policy of containment.

Origins of the Vietnam War

Vietnam had a long history of fighting outsiders.

Fighting the Japanese

Before the Second World War, Vietnam (or Indochina as it was called then) had been ruled by France. During the war the region was conquered by the Japanese. They treated the Vietnamese people savagely. As a result, a strong anti-Japanese resistance movement (the Viet Minh) emerged under the leadership of Communist Ho Chi Minh.

Ho was a remarkable individual. He had lived in the USA, Britain and France. In the 1920s he had studied Communism in the USSR. In 1930 he had founded the Indochinese Communist Party. He inspired the Vietnamese people to fight the Japanese.

When the Second World War ended, the Viet Minh entered the northern city of Hanoi in 1945 and declared Vietnam independent.

Fighting the French

The French had other ideas. In 1945 they came back wanting to rule Vietnam again, but Ho was not prepared to let this happen. Another nine years of war followed between the Viet Minh who controlled the north of the country and the French who controlled much of the south.

From 1949 Ho was supported by China, which had become a Communist state in 1949. You have already studied how the USA dealt with a similar situation in Korea (pages 96–99) so how would you expect the USA to react to this development? In this case rather than sending troops or getting a UN resolution the USA poured \$500 million a year into the French war effort. Despite this the French were unable to hold on to the country and pulled out of Vietnam in 1954.

A peace conference was held in Geneva and the country was divided into North and South Vietnam until elections could be held to decide its future (see Source 25).

Why did US involvement escalate?

Under the terms of the ceasefire, elections were to be held within two years to reunite the country. You will remember how the USA criticised Stalin for not holding free elections in Soviet-controlled eastern Europe after the war (see pages 82–85). In Vietnam in 1954 the USA applied a different rule. It prevented the elections from taking place because it feared that the Communists would win (see Source 26).

Why did the Americans do this? Their policy was a strange combination of determination and ignorance. President Eisenhower and his Secretary of State JF Dulles were convinced that China and the USSR were planning to spread Communism throughout Asia. The idea was often referred to as the domino theory. If Vietnam fell to Communism, then Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Burma and possibly even India might also fall — just like a row of dominoes. The Americans were determined to resist the spread of Communism in Vietnam, which they saw as the first domino in the row. However, their methods and policies showed their ignorance of the Vietnamese people and the region.

Think!

- 1 Many neutral observers in Vietnam were critical of US policy towards Diem's regime. Explain why.
- 2 Explain how US politicians would have defended their policies.

Financial support for Diem's regime

In 1955 the Americans helped Ngo Dinh Diem to set up the Republic of South Vietnam. They supported him because he was bitterly anti-Communist and was prepared to imprison or exile Communists. However, Diem's regime was very unpopular with the Vietnamese people.

- He belonged to the landlord class, which treated the Vietnamese peasants with contempt.
- He was a Christian and showed little respect for the Buddhist religion of most Vietnamese peasants (see Source 27).
- Diem's regime was also extremely corrupt. He appointed members of his family or other supporters to positions of power and refused to hold elections, even for local councils.

The Americans were concerned and frustrated by his actions, but as Dulles said, 'We knew of no one better.' The USA supported Diem's regime with around \$1.6 billion in the 1950s. Diem was overthrown by his own army leaders in November 1963, but the governments that followed were equally corrupt. Even so, they also received massive US support.

The emergence of the Viet Cong

The actions of these anti-Communist governments increased support among the ordinary peasants for the Communist-led National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam, which was set up in December 1960. This movement was usually called the Viet Cong. It included South Vietnamese opponents of the government, but also large numbers of Communist North Vietnamese taking their orders from Ho Chi Minh. Peasants who did not support the Viet Cong faced intimidation and violence from them.

The Viet Cong also started a guerrilla war against the South Vietnamese government. Using the Ho Chi Minh trail (see Source 28), the Viet Cong sent reinforcements and ferried supplies to guerrilla fighters. These fighters attacked South Vietnamese government forces, officials and buildings. They gradually made the countryside unsafe for government forces. They also attacked American air force and supply bases.

In response the South Vietnamese government launched their 'strategic hamlet' programme, which involved moving peasant villages from Viet Cong-controlled areas to areas controlled by the South Vietnamese government. The Americans helped by supplying building materials, money, food and equipment for the villagers to build improved farms and houses. In practice this policy backfired as the peasants resented it – and corrupt officials pocketed money meant to buy supplies for the villagers.

From 'advisers' to combat troops

By 1962 President Kennedy was sending military personnel (he always called them 'advisers') to help the South Vietnamese army fight the Viet Cong (see Source 29). However, Kennedy said he was determined that the USA would not 'blunder into war, unclear about aims or how to get out again'. He was a keen historian himself and had studied the USA's past successes and failures. He was well aware from the Korean war ten years earlier what could and could not be achieved by military intervention.

However President Kennedy was assassinated in 1963. His successor, Lyndon Johnson, was more prepared than Kennedy to commit the USA to a full-scale conflict in Vietnam to prevent the spread of Communism.

In August 1964, North Vietnamese patrol boats opened fire on US ships in the Gulf of Tonkin. In a furious reaction, the US Congress passed the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, which gave the President power to 'take all necessary measures to prevent further aggression and achieve peace and security'. It effectively meant that Johnson could take the USA into a full-scale war if he felt it was necessary, and very soon he did.

- **In February 1965 the US started** Operation Rolling Thunder – a gigantic bombing campaign against North Vietnamese cities, factories, army bases and the Ho Chi Minh Trail, which continued for three years.

- **On 8 March 1965**, 3,500 US marines, combat troops rather than advisers, came ashore at Da Nang.

The USA was now officially at war in Vietnam.

SOURCE 28



Vietnam in the mid 1960s

SOURCE 29

First is the simple fact that South Vietnam, a member of the free world family, is striving to preserve its independence from Communist attack. Second, South East Asia has great significance in the forward defence of the USA. For Hanoi, the immediate object is limited: conquest of the south and national unification. For Peking, however, Hanoi's victory would only be a first step towards eventual Chinese dominance of the two Vietnams and South East Asia and towards exploitation of the new strategy in other parts of the world.

Robert McNamara, US Defence Secretary, explaining in 1964 why he supported the policy of sending US troops to Vietnam.

Source Analysis ▲

Compare Source 29 with Source 2 on page 96. How similar are the arguments used in 1964 about Vietnam to those used in 1950 about Korea?

Revision Tip

Make sure you can recall:

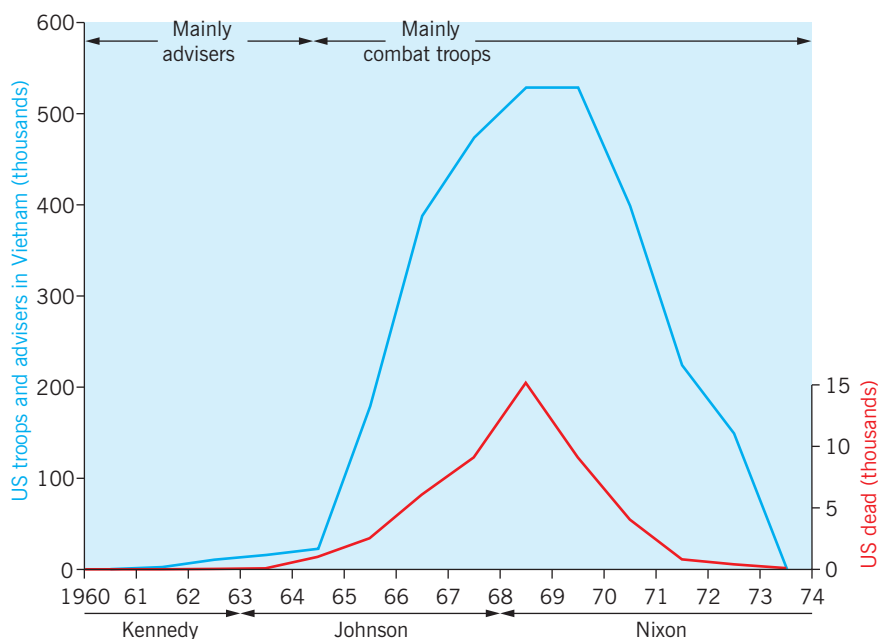
- ◆ two reasons why Communism was becoming stronger in Vietnam
- ◆ two measures taken by the USA to resist the spread of Communism.

Why did US send troops to Vietnam?

The answer to this question may seem obvious! It was because of the policy of containment and the 'domino theory'. That is certainly how the President and his advisers explained it (see Source 29 for example). However there is a more controversial view held by some historians that powerful groups within the USA wanted a war.

In 1961 President Eisenhower himself warned that America had developed a powerful 'military-industrial complex'. The government gave huge budgets to the military commanders. These budgets were spent on weapons made by some of America's biggest companies. Thus, both the armed forces and business actually gained from conflict. Eisenhower did not accuse business and military leaders of anything, but in his last speech as President he warned the American people not to let these groups become too influential. Some historians believe that this was a factor in American involvement in Vietnam, but it is hotly disputed by others.

SOURCE 30



US troops and deaths in Vietnam, 1960–74. US troops were not the only foreign soldiers in the war. About 46,000 Australian and New Zealand troops fought too.

Focus Task A

Why did the USA get increasingly involved in Vietnam?

- 1 Draw a timeline of the period 1945–65.
- 2 Mark on it increasing American involvement using the following headings:
 - ◆ No direct American involvement
 - ◆ Financial support
 - ◆ Political involvement
 - ◆ Military involvement
- 3 Write annotations to show the date on which each of these phases started and what events triggered the increasing involvement.
- 4 Choose two events that you think were critical in increasing the USA's involvement in the war in Vietnam. Explain your choice.

Tactics and technology in the Vietnam War

With hindsight it is easy to see that the American decision to get fully involved in the war was a huge gamble. But political leaders did not have the benefit of hindsight. They made their decision on the basis of what they knew and believed at the time. They knew their technology and firepower was superior to the Viet Cong and they believed that would allow them to win the war.

However they were soon proved wrong. As time wore on it became clear that the USA needed more than money and technology to win this kind of war. On the next four pages you will find out why by comparing Viet Cong and US tactics. Focus Task B will direct your reading.

Focus Task B

Why couldn't the Americans win?

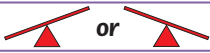
Stage 1 – Understand the tactics

1 Work in pairs. Take either the Viet Cong or the Americans. Use page 114 or 115 to find out about the your side's tactics. Create a diagram by following these steps:

- ◆ In the inner circle record the tactics.
 - ◆ In the outer circle the reason for using those tactics.
 - ◆ Draw lines to show how the tactics and reasons are connected.
- Compare your diagram with your partner's.

Stage 2 – Thinking it through

2 Make your own table like this, then using your research from stage 1 record in columns 2 and 4 how far each side had these qualities. You can add further rows if you think of other important qualities.

| Qualities | The US army |  | Viet Cong |
|--|-------------|--|-----------|
| Well-trained soldiers | | | |
| The right technology | | | |
| Reliable supplies and equipment | | | |
| Effective tactics | | | |
| Support from the Vietnamese population | | | |
| Motivated and committed soldiers | | | |
| Other | | | |

3 Next, in each row of column 3, draw some scales to show which way the balance falls for this quality. Did the USA or the Viet Cong have the advantage?

4 Now think about the overall picture – how the strengths and weaknesses work together.

- a) Were the armies finely balanced? Or was the balance strongly weighted to one side or the other?
- b) Which quality was most important in determining who won the war? Was one so important that being ahead in that area meant that other advantages or disadvantages did not matter?

Stage 3 – Explaining your conclusions

5 Now write up your answer. You could use this structure:

- a) Describe how the failure of the US army was a combination of its own weaknesses and Viet Cong strengths.
- b) Give balanced examples of US successes and failures.
- c) Give balanced examples of Viet Cong successes and failures.
- d) Choose one American weakness and one Viet Cong strength that you think were absolutely vital in preventing the USA from beating the Viet Cong and explain the significance of the points you have chosen.

Revision Tip

Find five reasons why the USA could not defeat the Viet Cong. Make sure you can recall:

- ◆ two or three strengths of the Viet Cong (with examples)
- ◆ two or three weaknesses of the USA (with examples).

Viet Cong tactics

In early 1965 the Viet Cong had about 170,000 soldiers. They were heavily outnumbered and outgunned. They were no match for the US and South Vietnamese forces in open warfare. In November 1965 in the La Dreng Valley, US forces killed 2,000 Viet Cong for the loss of 300 troops. However, this did not daunt Ho Chi Minh.

Guerilla warfare

Ho had been in China and seen Mao Tse-tung use guerrilla warfare to achieve a Communist victory. The principles of guerrilla warfare were simple: retreat when the enemy attacks; raid when the enemy camps; attack when the enemy tires; pursue when the enemy retreats. Ho had successfully used these guerrilla tactics himself to drive out the French.

Guerrilla warfare was a nightmare for the US army. Guerrillas did not wear uniform. They were hard to tell apart from the peasants in the villages. They had no known base camp or headquarters. They worked in small groups with limited weapons. They attacked then disappeared into the jungle, into the villages or into tunnels (see Source 32).

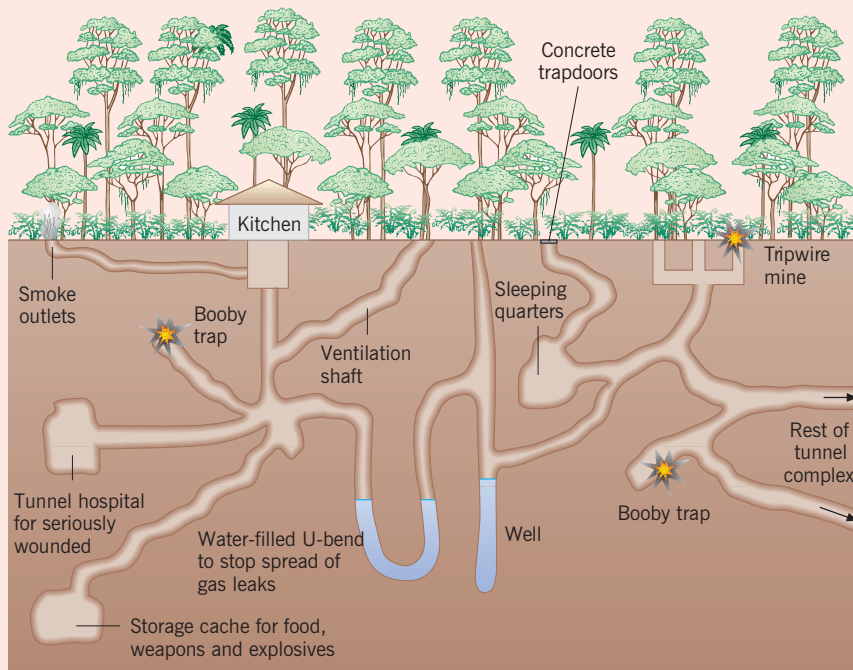
Guerrilla attacks aimed to wear down enemy soldiers and wreck their morale. US soldiers lived in constant fear of ambushes or booby traps such as pits filled with sharpened bamboo stakes. One of the least popular duties for US soldiers was going 'on point', which meant leading the patrol checking for booby traps – 11 per cent of US casualties were caused by booby traps. Another 51 per cent were from ambushes or hand-to-hand combat. The Viet Cong favoured close-quarter fighting because it knew that the Americans would not use their superior guns for fear of hitting their own troops. This was known as 'hanging on to the American belts'.

SOURCE 31

I remember sitting at this wretched little outpost one day with a couple of my sergeants. We'd been manning this thing for three weeks and running patrols off it. We were grungy and sore with jungle rot and we'd suffered about nine or ten casualties on a recent patrol. This one sergeant of mine said, 'You know, Lieutenant, I don't see how we're ever going to win this.' And I said, 'Well, Sarge, I'm not supposed to say this to you as your officer – but I don't either.' So there was this sense that we just couldn't see what could be done to defeat these people.

Philip Caputo, a lieutenant in the Marine Corps in Vietnam in 1965–66, speaking in 1997.

SOURCE 32



A Viet Cong tunnel complex. To avoid the worst effects of American air power, the Viet Cong built a vast network of underground tunnels, probably around 240 km of them.

Civilians

Ho knew how important it was to keep the population on his side. The Viet Cong fighters were expected to be courteous and respectful to the Vietnamese peasants. They helped the peasants in the fields during busy periods. However, the Viet Cong could be ruthless – they were quite prepared to kill peasants who opposed them or who co-operated with their enemies. They also conducted a campaign of terror against the police, tax collectors, teachers and any other employees of the South Vietnamese government. Between 1966 and 1971 the Viet Cong killed an estimated 27,000 civilians.

Supplies

The Viet Cong depended on supplies from North Vietnam that came along the Ho Chi Minh trail. US and South Vietnamese planes bombed this constantly, but 40,000 Vietnamese worked to keep it open whatever the cost.

Commitment

The total of Viet Cong and North Vietnamese dead in the war has been estimated at 1 million – far higher than US losses. However, this was a price that Ho Chi Minh was prepared to pay. Whatever the casualties, there were replacement troops available. The greatest strength of the Viet Cong fighters was that they simply refused to give in.

Think!

- 1 One Viet Cong leader said: 'The people are the water. Our armies are the fish.' What do you think he meant?
- 2 Find evidence on pages 114–115 to support the view that:
 - ◆ the Viet Cong had the support of the people
 - ◆ they did not.

US tactics

Bombing

The main US tactic was bombing. For seven years from 1965–72 the USA bombed military and industrial targets in North Vietnam; they bombed towns and cities in North and South Vietnam; they bombed the Ho Chi Minh trail; they bombed Vietnam's neighbours Laos and Cambodia (who were sympathetic to the Viet Cong).

To some extent bombing worked.

- It damaged North Vietnam's war effort and it disrupted supply routes.
- From 1970 to 1972, intense bombing of North Vietnam forced them to negotiate for peace.

However, air power could not defeat the Communists. It could only slow them down. Even after major air raids on North Vietnam in 1972, the Communists were still able to launch a major assault on the South. Even more important, civilian casualties helped turn the Vietnamese people against the Americans.

Search and destroy

To combat guerrilla warfare the US commander General Westmoreland developed a policy of search and destroy. He set up heavily defended US bases in South Vietnam near to the coasts. From here helicopters full of troops would descend on a village and search out and destroy any Viet Cong forces they found. Soldiers had to send back reports of body counts.

Search-and-destroy missions did kill Viet Cong soldiers, but there were problems.

- The raids were often based on inadequate information.
- Inexperienced US troops often walked into traps.
- Innocent villages were mistaken for Viet Cong strongholds. For every Viet Cong weapon captured by search and destroy, there was a body count of six. Many of these were innocent civilians.
- Search-and-destroy tactics made the US and South Vietnamese forces very unpopular with the peasants. It pushed them towards supporting the Viet Cong.

SOURCE 33

You would go out, you would secure a piece of terrain during the daylight hours, [but at night] you'd surrender that – and I mean literally surrender ... you'd give it up, because ... the helicopters would come in and pick you up at night and fly you back to the security of your base camp.

Lieutenant Colonel George Forrest, US Army.

Chemical weapons

The US also used chemical weapons to combat the Viet Cong.

- **Agent Orange** was a highly toxic 'weedkiller' sprayed from planes to destroy the jungle where the Viet Cong hid. The Americans used 82 million litres of Agent Orange to spray thousands of square kilometres of jungle.
- **Napalm** was another widely used chemical weapon. It destroyed jungles where guerrillas might hide. It also burned through skin to the bone.
- Many civilians and soldiers were also killed or harmed by these chemical weapons.

US troops

In the early stages of the war most US troops were professional soldiers. Morale was good and they performed well. However, as the war intensified the US needed more soldiers so they introduced the draft (conscription). As soon as young men left school or college they could be called up into the US army. So from 1967:

- Many soldiers were young men who had never been in the military before. The average age of US troops was only 19.
- In theory American troops came from all walks of life. In reality the majority of combat troops were from poor and immigrant backgrounds.
- The conscripts knew little about Vietnam – and some cared little about democracy or communism. They just wanted to get home alive. In contrast the Viet Cong were fighting for their own country, and a cause many of them believed in.
- Morale among the US conscripts was often very low. To tackle this problem the generals introduced a policy of giving troops just a one-year term of service. This backfired because as soon as the soldiers gained experience they were sent home.

SOURCE 34



A ten-year-old Vietnamese girl, Phan Thi Kim, runs naked after tearing her burning clothes from her body following a napalm attack in 1972. This photograph became one of the most enduring images of the war.

SOURCE 35

In the end anybody who was still in that country was the enemy. The same village you'd gone in to give them medical treatment ... you could go through that village later and get shot at by a sniper. Go back in and you would not find anybody. Nobody knew anything. We were trying to work with these people, they were basically doing a number on us. You didn't trust them anymore. You didn't trust anybody.

Fred Widmer, an American soldier, speaking in 1969.

The Tet Offensive

Despite these problems the official American view of the war from 1965 to 1967 was that it was going reasonably well. The US and South Vietnamese forces were killing large numbers of Viet Cong. Although they were struggling against guerrilla tactics they were confident that the enemy was being worn down. The press reports reflected this positive view.

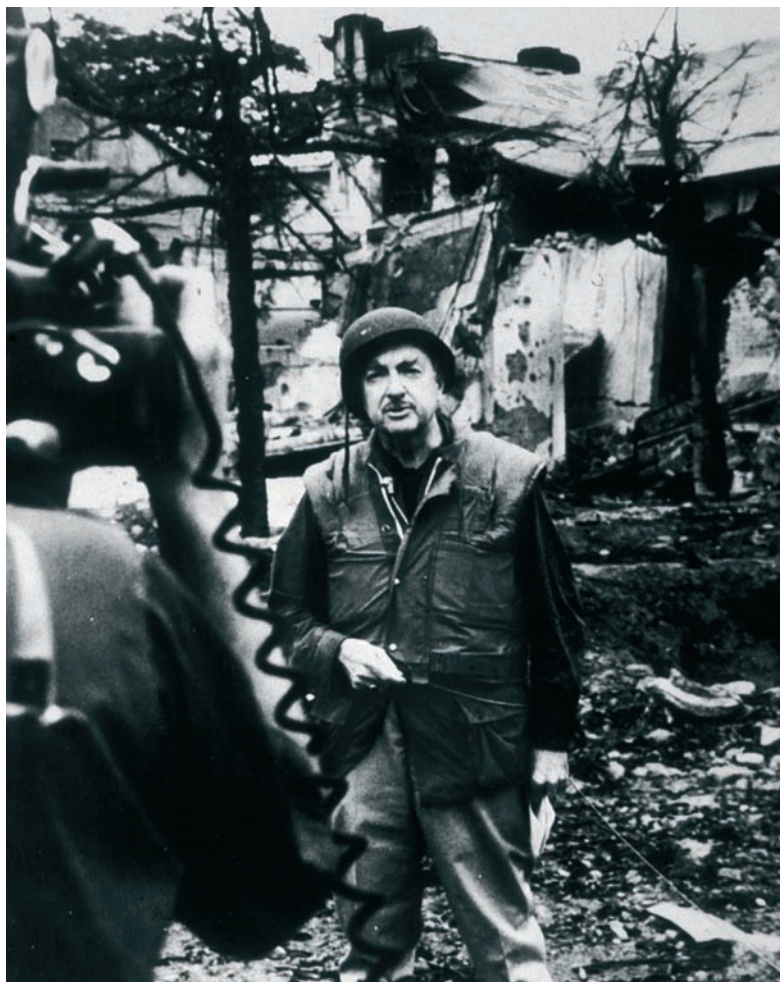
This confidence was shattered early in 1968. During the New Year holiday, Viet Cong fighters attacked over 100 cities and other military targets. One Viet Cong commando unit tried to capture the US embassy in Saigon. US forces had to fight to regain control room by room. Around 4,500 Viet Cong fighters tied down a much larger US and South Vietnamese force in Saigon for two days.

In many ways the Tet Offensive was a disaster for the Communists. They had hoped that the people of South Vietnam would rise up and join them. They didn't. The Viet Cong lost around 10,000 experienced fighters and were badly weakened by it.

However, the Tet Offensive proved to be a turning point in the war because it raised hard questions in the USA about the war.

- There were nearly 500,000 troops in Vietnam and the USA was spending \$20 billion a year on the war. So why had the Communists been able to launch a major offensive that took US forces completely by surprise?
- US and South Vietnamese forces quickly retook the towns captured in the offensive, but in the process they used enormous amounts of artillery and air power. Many civilians were killed. The ancient city of Hue was destroyed. Was this right?

SOURCE 36



CBS News journalist Walter Cronkite reporting in Vietnam in February 1968. He was regarded as the most trusted man in America.

The media

Until this point media coverage of the war was generally positive, although some journalists were beginning to ask difficult questions in 1967. During the Tet Offensive the gloves came off. CBS journalist Walter Cronkite (see Source 36) asked 'What the hell is going on? I thought we were winning this war'. Don Oberdorfer of *The Washington Post* later wrote (in 1971) that as a result of the Tet Offensive 'the American people and most of their leaders reached the conclusion that the Vietnam War would require greater effort over a far longer period of time than it was worth'.

SOURCE 37

The Tet Offensive was the decisive battle of the Vietnam War because of its profound impact on American attitudes about involvement in Southeast Asia. In the aftermath of Tet, many Americans became disillusioned ... To the American public and even to members of the administration, the offensive demonstrated that US intervention ... had produced a negligible effect on the will and capability of the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese.

Extract from *The Tet Offensive: Intelligence Failure in War*
by James Wirtz.

SOURCE 38

One does not use napalm on villages and hamlets sheltering civilians if one is attempting to persuade these people of the rightness of one's cause. One does not defoliate [destroy the vegetation of] the country and deform its people with chemicals if one is attempting to persuade them of the foe's evil nature.

An American comments on US policy failure in Vietnam.

Source Analysis

- 1 Who or what is the cartoonist criticising in Source 39?
- 2 Which do you think is more effective as a criticism of the Vietnam War – Source 38, 39 or 40? Give reasons based on the source and your knowledge of the USA at this time.

SOURCE 39

"There's Money Enough To Support Both Of You — Now, Doesn't That Make You Feel Better?"



---from The Herblock Gallery (Simon & Schuster, 1968)

An American cartoon from 1967.

The peace movement in the USA

For a war on such a scale the government had to have the support of the American people. With deaths and injuries to so many young Americans, public opinion had been turning against the war even before the Tet Offensive. After it the trickle of anti-war feeling became a flood.

- The war was draining money that could be used to better purposes at home (see Sources 39 and 40). Yet despite all that spending the USA did not seem to be any closer to winning the war.
- The draft exposed racial inequality in the USA: 30 per cent of African Americans were drafted compared to only 19 per cent of white Americans; 22 per cent of US casualties were black Americans, even though this group made up only 11 per cent of the total US force. World champion boxer Muhammad Ali refused to join the army on the grounds of his Muslim faith. He was stripped of his world title and his passport was removed. Ali was a follower of the radical Black Power group called Nation of Islam. They argued: How could they fight for a country which discriminated against them at home? As some of them pointed out, 'the Viet Cong never called us nigger'.
- Most damaging of all, an increasing number of Americans felt deeply uncomfortable about what was going on in Vietnam.

The Vietnam War was a media war. Thousands of television, radio and newspaper reporters, and a vast army of photographers sent back to the USA and Europe reports and pictures of the fighting. The newspapers showed crying children burned by American napalm bombs (see Source 34). Television showed prisoners being tortured or executed, or women and children watching with horror as their house was set on fire. To see such casual violence beamed into the living rooms of the USA was deeply shocking to the average American. Was this why 900,000 young Americans had been drafted? Instead of Vietnam being a symbol of a US crusade against Communism, Vietnam had become a symbol of defeat, confusion and moral corruption. The most powerful illustration of this was the My Lai massacre (see page 118).

The anti-war protests reached their height during 1968–70 led by students and civil rights campaigners.

- In the first half of 1968, there were over 100 demonstrations against the Vietnam War involving 40,000 students. Frequently, the protest would involve burning the American flag – a criminal offence in the USA and a powerful symbol of the students' rejection of American values. Students taunted the American President Lyndon B Johnson with the chant 'Hey, Hey LBJ; how many kids did you kill today?'
- In November 1969, almost 700,000 anti-war protesters demonstrated in Washington DC. It was the largest political protest in American history.

SOURCE 40

This confused war has played havoc with our domestic destinies.

The promises of the great society have been shot down on the battlefields of Vietnam. The pursuit of this widened war has narrowed the promised dimensions of the domestic welfare programs, making the poor – white and Negro – bear the heaviest burdens both at the front and at home.

The war has put us in the position of protecting a corrupt government that is stacked against the poor. We are spending \$500,000 to kill every Viet Cong soldier while we spend only \$53 for every person considered to be in poverty in the USA. It has put us in a position of appearing to the world as an arrogant nation. Here we are 10,000 miles away from home fighting for the so-called freedom of the Vietnamese people when we have so much to do in our own country.

Civil rights leader Martin Luther King speaking in the USA in April 1968.

SOURCE 41

Most of the soldiers had never been away from home before they went into service. And they end up in Vietnam going there many of them because they thought they were going to do something courageous on behalf of their country, something which they thought was in the American ideal.

But it didn't mean slaughtering whole villages of women and children. One of my friends, when he told me about it, said: 'You know it was a Nazi kind of thing.' We didn't go there to be Nazis. At least none of the people I knew went there to be Nazis.

Written by Ronald Ridenhour, a US soldier in Vietnam. He was not at My Lai, but interviewed many witnesses and started a campaign to pressure the US authorities to investigate properly.

SOURCE 42



A photograph taken at My Lai on 16 March 1968 by Ron Haeberle (see Source 43).

Think!

- 1 Why do you think it took twelve months for anyone to do anything about the massacre?
- 2 Why was the massacre so shocking to the American public?

Source Analysis ►

- 1 Source 43 was written by someone who worked for the US Army. Does that make it a trustworthy source?

The My Lai massacre

In March 1968, a unit of young American soldiers called Charlie Company started a search-and-destroy mission. They had been told that in the My Lai area there was a Viet Cong headquarters, and 200 Viet Cong guerrillas. They had been ordered to destroy all houses, dwellings and livestock. They had been told that all the villagers would have left for market because it was a Saturday. Most of them were under the impression that they had been ordered to kill everyone they found in the village.

Early in the morning of 16 March, Charlie Company arrived in My Lai. In the next four hours, between 300 and 400 civilians were killed. They were mostly women, children and old men. Some were killed while they worked in their fields. Many of them were mown down by machine-gun fire as they were herded into an irrigation ditch. Others were shot in their homes. No Viet Cong were found in the village. Only three weapons were recovered.

'Something dark and bloody'

At the time, the army treated the operation as a success. The commanding officer's report said that 20 non-combatants had been killed by accident in the attack, but the rest of the dead were recorded as being Viet Cong. The officers and men involved were praised.

However, twelve months later, a letter arrived in the offices of 30 leading politicians and government officials in Washington. It was written by Ronald Ridenhour, an American soldier who had served in Vietnam and who personally knew many of the soldiers who took part in the massacre. He had evidence, he said, of 'something rather dark and bloody' that had occurred in My Lai – or Pinkville as the American soldiers called it. He recounted in detail the stories he had been told about what had taken place and asked Congress to investigate.

Investigation

Soon after, *Life* magazine, one of the most influential magazines in the USA, published photographs of the massacre at My Lai (see Source 42) that had been taken by an official army photographer. This triggered an investigation that ended in the trial for mass murder of Lieutenant William Calley. He was an officer in Charlie Company. He had personally shot many of the people in the irrigation ditch at My Lai. In September 1969 he was formally charged with murdering 109 people. Ten other members of the company and the commanding officers were also charged.

Aftermath

The revelations were deeply shocking to the American people. The charges were also too much for the army. They placed responsibility on Calley. They denied that Calley was acting under orders. His senior officers were acquitted. After a long court case surrounded by massive media attention and publicity, Calley was found guilty of the murder of 22 civilians. In August 1971 he was sentenced to 20 years' hard labour. In November 1974 he was released.

SOURCE 43

I think I was in a kind of daze from seeing all these shootings and not seeing any returning fire. Yet the killing kept going on. The Americans were rounding up the people and shooting them, not taking any prisoners ... I was part of it, everyone who was there was part of it and that includes the General and the Colonel flying above in their helicopters ... Just as soon as I turned away I heard firing. I saw people drop. They started falling on top of each other, one on top of the other. I just kept on walking. I did not pay any attention to who did it. By that time I knew what the score was. It was an atrocity ... I notice this one small boy had been shot in the foot ... he was walking toward the group of bodies looking for his mother ... then suddenly I heard a crack and ... I saw this child flip on top of the pile of bodies. The GI just stood and walked away. No remorse. Nothing.

Ron Haeberle, the US Army official photographer. His black and white pictures for the Army and his colour photographs taken with his own private camera had a dramatic public impact.

Ending the war in Vietnam

After the Tet Offensive President Johnson concluded that the war could not be won militarily. He reduced the bombing campaign against North Vietnam and instructed his officials to begin negotiating for peace with the Communists.

Johnson also announced that he would not be seeking re-election as President. It was an admission of failure. In the election campaign both candidates campaigned to end US involvement in Vietnam. The anti-war feeling was so strong that if they had supported continuing the war they would have had no chance of being elected anyway. It was no longer a question of 'could the USA win the war?' but 'how can the USA get out of Vietnam without it looking like a defeat?'

A new President

In November 1968 Richard Nixon was elected President. From 1969 to 1973 he and his National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger worked to end US involvement in Vietnam. This was not easy because the bigger question of how to contain world Communism – the one that had got the USA into Vietnam in the first place – had not gone away. They did not want to appear simply to hand Vietnam to the Communists. They used a range of strategies.

| | |
|---|---|
| Improved relations with USSR and China In 1969 the USSR and China fell out. It seemed possible that there would even be a war between these two powerful Communist countries. As a result, both the USSR and China tried to improve relations with the USA. | Peace negotiations with North Vietnam From early 1969, Kissinger had regular meetings with the chief Vietnamese peace negotiator, Le Duc Tho. |
| 'Vietnamisation' of the war effort In Vietnam Nixon began handing responsibility for the war to South Vietnamese forces and withdrawing US troops. Between April 1969 and the end of 1971 almost 400,000 US troops left Vietnam. | Increased bombing At the same time Nixon increased bombing campaigns against North Vietnam to show he was not weak. US and South Vietnamese troops also invaded Viet Cong bases in Cambodia, causing outrage across the world, and even in the USA. |

'Peace with honour'

In Paris in January 1973 all parties signed a peace agreement. Nixon described it as 'peace with honour'. Others disagreed (see Source 44), but the door was now open for Nixon to pull out all US troops. By 29 March 1973, the last American forces had left Vietnam.

It is not clear whether Nixon really believed he had secured a lasting peace settlement. But within two years, without the support of the USA, South Vietnam had fallen to the Communists. One of the bleakest symbols of American failure in Vietnam was the televised news images of desperate Vietnamese men, women and children trying to clamber aboard American helicopters taking off from the US embassy. All around them Communist forces swarmed through Saigon. After 30 years of constant conflict, the struggle for control of Vietnam had finally been settled and the Communists had won.

Source Analysis ►

- 1 Describe the attitude of Source 44 to the agreement of January 1973.
- 2 Are you surprised by this source?

SOURCE 44

FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

... the nation began at last to extricate itself from a quicksandy war that had plagued four Presidents and driven one from office, that had sundered the country more deeply than any event since the Civil War, that in the end came to be seen by a great majority of Americans as having been a tragic mistake.

... but its more grievous toll was paid at home – a wound to the spirit so sore that news of peace stirred only the relief that comes with an end to pain. A war that produced no famous victories, no national heroes and no strong patriotic songs, produced no memorable armistice day celebrations either. America was too exhausted by the war and too chary of peace to celebrate.

Reaction to the agreement of January 1973 in the influential American news magazine *Newsweek*, 5 February 1973.

Focus Task A

Why did US policy fail in Vietnam?

Despite all the money they spent and the effort they put in, the US failed to contain the spread of Communism to South Vietnam. You are now going to consider the reasons for this.

- 1 Make cards like these. On each card write an explanation or paste a source which shows the importance of the reason, i.e. how it damaged the policy of containment. Add other cards if you think there are reasons you should consider.
- 2 Lay your cards out on a large sheet of paper and add lines to show connections between the reasons. Write an explanation of the connection.

US military tactics in Vietnam

The unpopularity of the South Vietnamese regime

The experience of the Viet Cong and the inexperience of the American soldiers

Opposition in the USA

Other countries' support for the Viet Cong

Revision Tip

Use these cards for your revision. Take a photo of your completed layout showing and annotating the connections. This will be a good essay plan if you have to write on this topic for an assignment. Make sure you can remember one piece of evidence to go with each point.

How did the Vietnam War affect the policy of containment?

The American policy of containment was in tatters.

- It had failed **militarily**. The war had shown that even the USA's vast military strength could not stem the spread of Communism.
- It had also failed **strategically**. Not only did the USA fail to stop South Vietnam going Communist, but the heavy bombing of Vietnam's neighbours, Laos and Cambodia, actually helped the Communist forces in those countries to win support. By 1975 both Laos and Cambodia had Communist governments. Instead of slowing down the domino effect in the region, American policies actually speeded it up.
- It was also a **propaganda disaster**. The Americans had always presented their campaign against Communism as a moral crusade. But atrocities committed by American soldiers and the use of chemical weapons damaged the USA's reputation. In terms of a crusade for 'democracy' the Americans were seen to be propping up a government that did not have the support of its own people.

These failures greatly affected the USA's future policies towards Communist states. After the war, the Americans tried to improve their relations with China. They ended their block on China's membership of the UN. The President made visits to China. The USA also entered into a period of greater understanding with the Soviet Union. In fact, during the 1970s both the Soviet Union and China got on better with the USA than they did with each other.

The Americans also became very suspicious of involving their troops in any other conflict that they could not easily and overwhelmingly win. This was an attitude that continued to affect American foreign policy into the twenty-first century.

Focus Task B

How successful was the USA's policy of containment in Vietnam?

- 1 Look back at your chart from page 109. Complete it for the Vietnam War.
- 2 You have now looked at three very different case studies of the USA's attempts to contain Communism. Using the work you have done for the Focus Tasks on pages 99, 109 and this page, explain:
 - ◆ how far did the policy of containment succeed
 - ◆ what the main reasons for its success or failure were.

Revision Tip

All these case studies are important because they each show different aspects of containment in action. Make sure you are equally confident about each one and can explain in your own words whether it was a success or failure for containment.

Keywords

Make sure you know what these terms mean and be able to define them confidently.

- ◆ Agent Orange
- ◆ Armistice
- ◆ Arms race
- ◆ Atomic bomb/H bomb
- ◆ Bay of Pigs
- ◆ Blockade
- ◆ Capitalism
- ◆ CENTO
- ◆ Cold War
- ◆ Cominform
- ◆ Communism
- ◆ Containment
- ◆ Conventional weapons
- ◆ Democracy
- ◆ Dictator
- ◆ Diplomatic relations
- ◆ Domino theory
- ◆ Draft
- ◆ Guerrilla warfare
- ◆ Ho Chi Minh Trail
- ◆ ICBM
- ◆ Indochina
- ◆ Intelligence (as in CIA)
- ◆ Landlord/peasant
- ◆ MAD
- ◆ Missile gap
- ◆ Napalm
- ◆ Nuclear deterrent
- ◆ Operation Rolling Thunder
- ◆ Satellite state
- ◆ Search and destroy
- ◆ SEATO
- ◆ Surveillance
- ◆ Tet Offensive
- ◆ United Nations
- ◆ US sphere of influence
- ◆ Viet Cong
- ◆ Viet Minh
- ◆ Vietnamisation
- ◆ Warsaw Pact

Chapter Summary

Containment

- 1 The USA was anti-Communist and wanted to limit the spread of Communism around the world – this policy was called containment.

Korea

- 2 When a Communist government tried to take over in Korea in 1950 the USA sent troops to help prevent Korea falling to the Communists.
- 3 The result was a stalemate and in 1953 Korea was divided into a Communist north (friendly towards China) and a capitalist south (friendly towards the USA).

Cuba

- 4 Cuba turned Communist in 1959. Cuba is a large island very close to the USA.
- 5 In the 1960s there was a nuclear arms race between the USA and USSR with ever more dangerous nuclear weapons being developed and tested by both sides.
- 6 The Soviet leader Khrushchev sent nuclear weapons to Cuba. The USA and much of the world were worried that this might lead to the first nuclear war with dreadful consequences.
- 7 The US President Kennedy ordered a blockade of Cuba to prevent the weapons arriving and the crisis was averted. Better relations between the two leaders followed.

Vietnam

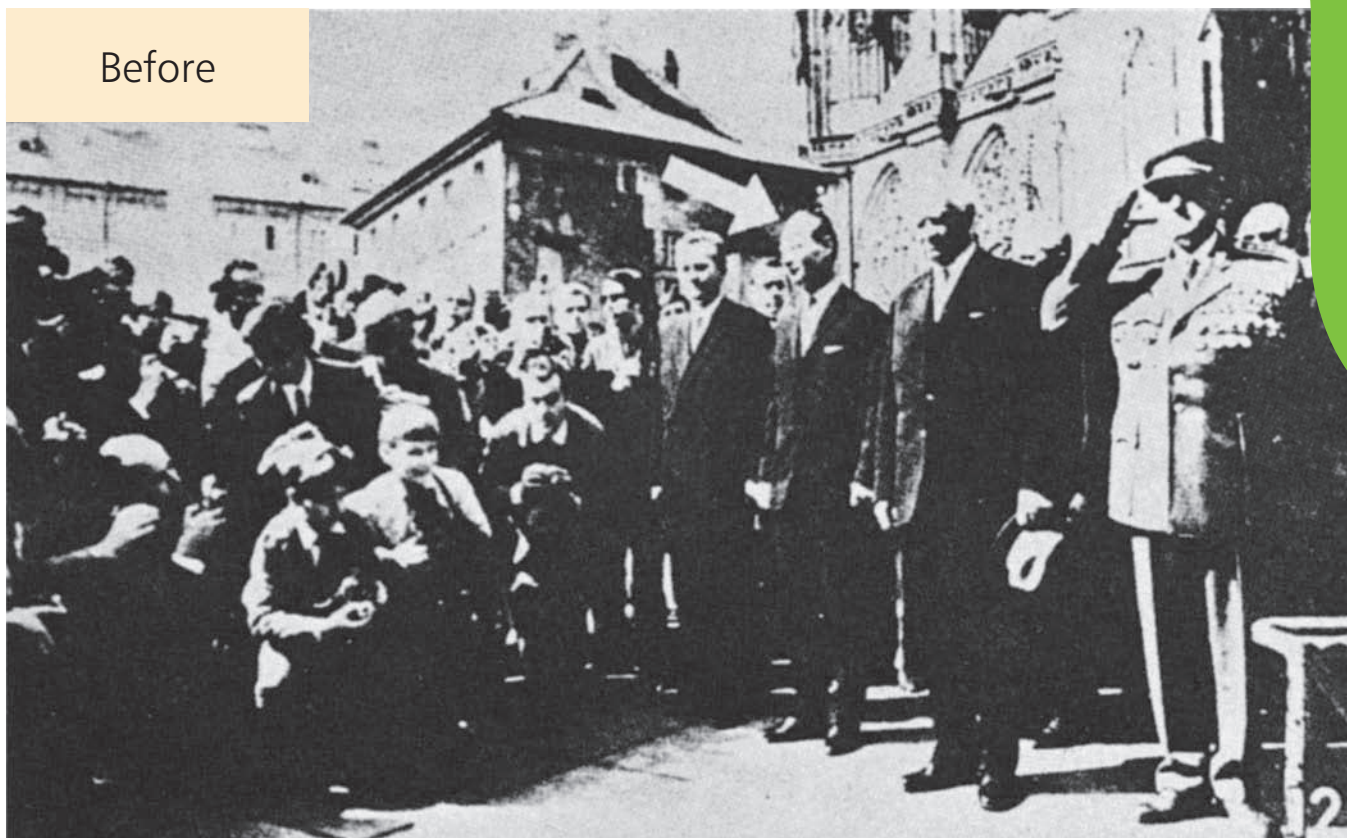
- 8 The next area of worry was South-east Asia where Communism was very strong. The USA believed in the domino theory – if one country turned Communist then the neighbouring countries would follow so they wanted to stop any country turning Communist.
- 9 In 1954 following a civil war Vietnam was divided into a Communist north and a capitalist south but the north, with the help of Communist China, tried to take over the south too.
- 10 The USA decided to help the south to resist the threat of the Communist north by first sending money and advisers then combat troops.
- 11 They got more and more involved, to the point where hundreds of thousands of US troops were fighting in Vietnam (the US introduced conscription to provide enough soldiers), and thousands were being killed each year.
- 12 Despite all this investment the US was not winning this war. The war lost support at home and the USA decided to withdraw from Vietnam and leave South Vietnam to its fate. It finally fell to the Communists in 1975.

Exam Practice

See pages 168–175 and pages 316–319 for advice on the different types of questions you might face.

- 1 (a) Describe the Domino Theory. [4]
 (b) Explain why the USA sent troops to Vietnam in the mid 1960s. [6]
 (c) 'The Americans failed in Vietnam because they used the wrong tactics.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer. [10]
- 2 Study Source 15 on page 103. How reliable is this source? Use the source and your knowledge to explain your answer. [7]
- 3 Study Sources 19 and 20 on page 106. How similar are these two sources? Use the source and your knowledge to explain your answer. [8]

Before



After



6

How secure was the USSR's control over eastern Europe, 1948–c.1989?

FOCUS POINTS

- Why was there opposition to Soviet control in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968, and how did the USSR react to this opposition?
- How similar were events in Hungary in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968?
- Why was the Berlin Wall built in 1961?
- What was the significance of 'Solidarity' in Poland for the decline of Soviet influence in eastern Europe?
- How far was Gorbachev personally responsible for the collapse of Soviet control over eastern Europe?

In Chapter 4 you saw how the Soviet Union took control of eastern Europe. You are now going to return to that story and see how far the Soviet Union was able to maintain that control.

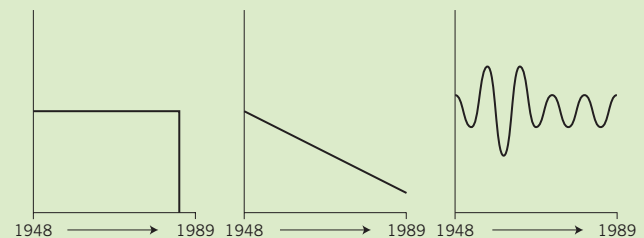
You will investigate:

- ♦ how the Soviet Union took control in eastern Europe and how it tried to maintain control
- ♦ why and how some people challenged Soviet control and what happened to them when they did
- ♦ how, finally, changes in the Soviet Union led to the collapse of all the Communist regimes in eastern Europe and indeed the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The key question you will consider is 'how secure' was this control.

The Soviet Union almost certainly did not feel it was secure. It kept up constant pressure on the governments and people of eastern Europe. It was really only the threat of sending in the Red Army that propped up some of the Communist regimes in the region long after their people had lost faith in their government. In the end it was Mikhail Gorbachev's unwillingness to prop them up any longer with Soviet troops that signalled the end of Soviet domination.

So which of these graphs do you think is the best representation of Soviet control through this period?



And remember...

This chapter overlaps with Chapter 5 (see timeline on pages 74–75). So you will get a more rounded view of the period if you remember that both chapters take their place within the tense Cold War environment. For example:

- ♦ while the USA was fighting the Korean War to push back Communism in the early 1950s, the USSR was sending troops to East Germany to keep Communism in place
- ♦ in 1968 when the USA was facing fierce criticism at home against its policy of containment and the Vietnam War in particular, the Soviet Union was trying to keep the lid on the anti-Soviet ideas that were developing in Czechoslovakia in the Prague Spring.

◀ Here are two version of the same photo. The first shows the leader of Czechoslovakia, Alexander Dubček. The second is the same photo used by the Communist-controlled media after Dubček had been ousted from power by Soviet troops in 1968.

- 1 How has the photo been changed?
- 2 Why might the photo have been changed?
- 3 What does this tell you about Communist control of Czechoslovakia in 1968?

Factfile

Cominform

- Cominform stands for the Communist Information Bureau.
- Stalin set up the Cominform in 1947 as an organisation to co-ordinate the various Communist governments in eastern Europe.
- The office was originally based in Belgrade in Yugoslavia but moved to Bucharest in Romania in 1948 after Yugoslavia was expelled by Stalin because it would not do what the Soviet Union told it to do.
- Cominform ran meetings and sent out instructions to Communist governments about what the Soviet Union wanted them to do.

Factfile

Comecon

- Comecon stands for the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance.
- It was set up in 1949 to co-ordinate the industries and trade of the eastern European countries.
- The idea was that members of Comecon traded mostly with one another rather than trading with the West.
- Comecon favoured the USSR far more than any of its other members. It provided the USSR with a market to sell its goods. It also guaranteed it a cheap supply of raw materials. For example, Poland was forced to sell its coal to the USSR at one-tenth of the price that it could have got selling it on the open market.
- It set up a bank for socialist countries in 1964.

Think!

Stalin used a 'carrot and stick' approach to control eastern Europe. Explain what this means and refer to the information on this page in your answer.

Source Analysis ▶

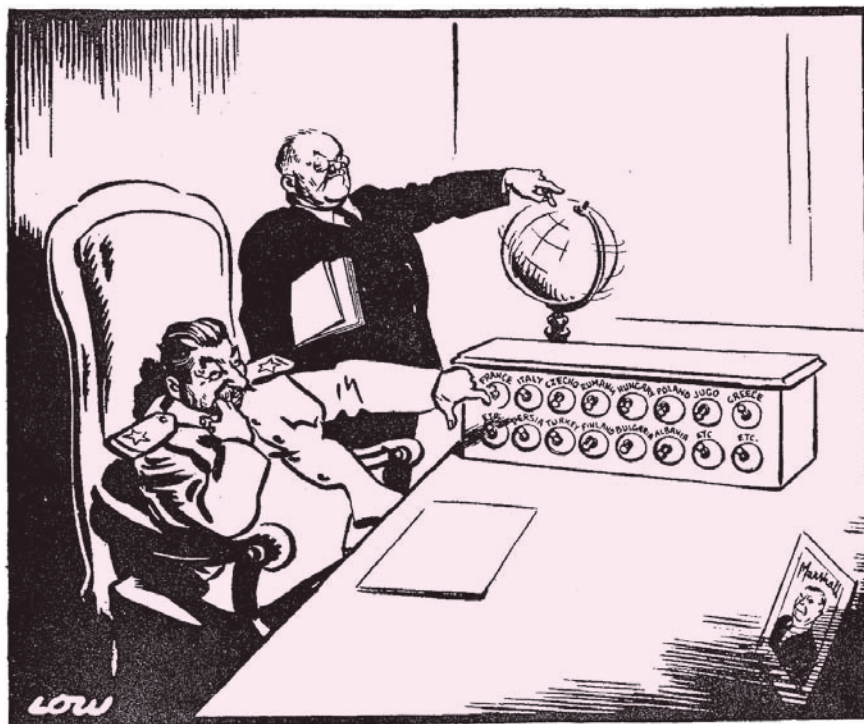
The cartoonist who drew Source 1 was a critic of Stalin. How is he criticising Stalin in this cartoon?

How did the Soviet Union seize control in eastern Europe?

As you saw in Chapter 4, after the Second World War the Communists quickly gained control of eastern Europe (see Source 17, page 84). The chaotic situation in many of the countries helped them.

- After the war there was a **political vacuum** in many countries in eastern Europe. The Soviet leader Stalin helped the Communist parties in them to win power. Through Cominform (see Factfile) he made sure that these eastern European countries followed the same policies as the Soviet Union. They became one-party states. The Communist Party was the only legal party. Secret police arrested the Communists' opponents.
- There was also a need to **restore law and order**. This provided a good excuse to station Soviet troops in each country.
- The **economies** of eastern Europe were shattered. To rebuild them, the governments followed the economic policies of the Soviet Union. They took over all industry. Workers and farmers were told what to produce. Through Comecon (see Factfile) Stalin made sure that the countries of eastern Europe traded with the USSR. He promised aid to countries that co-operated with the Soviet Union.
- Stalin's public reason for wanting to control eastern Europe was to defend the Soviet Union from invasion from the west. However his subsequent policies showed that he also wanted to benefit from the wealth and resources of eastern Europe.

SOURCE 1



"WHO'S NEXT TO BE LIBERATED FROM FREEDOM, COMRADE?"

David Low comments on Stalin's control of eastern Europe, 2 March 1948. The person spinning the globe is Molotov, Stalin's foreign minister. On the desk is a photo of General Marshall (see page 86 to see what he proposed for Europe).

SOURCE 2

Twenty years ago we jumped head first into politics as though we were jumping into uncharted waters . . . There was a lot of enthusiasm . . . You're like this when you are young and we had an opportunity, which had long been denied, to be there while something new was being created.

Jiří Ruml, a Czech Communist, writing in 1968.

How did Soviet control affect the people of eastern Europe?

For some people of eastern Europe to start with the Communists brought hope. The Soviet Union had achieved amazing industrial growth before the Second World War. Maybe, by following Soviet methods, they could do the same. Soviet-style Communism also offered them stable government and security because they were backed by one of the world's superpowers. Faced by shortages and poverty after the war, many people hoped for great things from Communism (see Source 2).

However, the reality of Soviet control of eastern Europe was very different from what people had hoped for.

- **Freedom** Countries that had a long tradition of free speech and democratic government suddenly lost the right to criticise the government. Newspapers were censored. Non-Communists were put in prison for criticising the government. People were forbidden to travel to countries in western Europe.
- **Wealth** Such repression and loss of freedom might have been more accepted if Communism had made people better off. Between 1945 and 1955 eastern European economies did recover. Wages in eastern Europe fell behind the wages in other countries. They even fell behind the wages in the Soviet Union. Eastern Europe was forbidden by Stalin to apply for Marshall Aid from the USA (see page 87) which could have helped it in its economic recovery.
- **Consumer goods** Long after economic recovery had ended the wartime shortages in western Europe, people in eastern Europe were short of coal to heat their houses, short of milk and meat. Clothing and shoes were very expensive. People could not get consumer goods like radios, electric kettles or televisions which were becoming common in the West. Factories did not produce what ordinary people wanted. They actually produced what the Soviet Union wanted.

In addition, they had little chance to protest. In June 1953 there were huge demonstrations across East Germany protesting about Communist policies. Soviet tanks rolled in and Soviet troops killed 40 protesters and wounded over 400. Thousands were arrested and the protests were crushed. Similar protests in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Romania were dealt with in the same way.

SOURCE 3



A 1949 Soviet cartoon. Marshal Tito, leader of Yugoslavia, is shown accepting money from the Americans. His cloak is labelled 'Judas' – 'the betrayer'. Yugoslavia was the only Communist state to resist domination by Stalin. The Soviet Union kept up a propaganda battle against Tito. Despite the Cold War, there were more cartoons in the official Communist newspapers attacking Tito than cartoons criticising the USA.

Think!

- 1 Study Source 3. Why do you think Tito wished to remain independent of the Soviet Union?
- 2 Why do you think the Soviet Union was worried about Tito's independence?
- 3 Look at Source 17 on page 84. Does this help to explain why the Soviet Union allowed Tito to remain independent?
- 4 On a scale of 0–10, how secure do you think Soviet control was in 1953?

Revision Tip

Make sure you can explain in your own words:

- ◆ the role of Cominform
- ◆ the role of the Red Army in keeping control of eastern Europe.

Profile

Nikita Khrushchev



- ◆ Born 1894, the son of a coal miner.
- ◆ Fought in the Red Army during the Civil War, 1922–23.
- ◆ Afterwards worked for the Communist Party in Moscow. Was awarded the Order of Lenin for his work building the Moscow underground railway.
- ◆ In 1949 he was appointed by the Communist Party to run Soviet agriculture.
- ◆ There was a power struggle after Stalin's death over who would succeed him. Khrushchev had come out on top by 1955 and by 1956 he felt secure enough in his position to attack Stalin's reputation.
- ◆ Became Prime Minister in 1958.
- ◆ Took his country close to nuclear war with the USA during the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 (see pages 102–109).
- ◆ Was forced into retirement in 1964.
- ◆ Died in 1971.

The rise of Khrushchev

Stalin was a hero to millions of people in the USSR. He had defeated Hitler and given the USSR an empire in eastern Europe. He made the USSR a nuclear superpower. When he died in 1953, amid the grief and mourning, many minds turned to the question of who would succeed Stalin as Soviet leader. The man who emerged by 1955 was Nikita Khrushchev. Khrushchev seemed very different from Stalin. He

- ended the USSR's long feuds with China and with Yugoslavia
- talked of peaceful co-existence with the West
- made plans to reduce expenditure on arms
- attended the first post-war summit between the USSR, the USA, France and Britain in July 1955
- said he wanted to improve the living standards of ordinary citizens.

De-Stalinisation

At the Communist Party International in 1956, Khrushchev made an astonishing attack on Stalin. He dredged up the gory evidence of Stalin's purges (see page 220) and denounced him as a wicked tyrant who was an enemy of the people and kept all power to himself. Khrushchev went on to say much worse things about Stalin and began a programme of de-Stalinisation.

- He closed down Cominform.
- He released thousands of political prisoners.
- He agreed to pull Soviet troops out of Austria (they had been posted there since the end of the Second World War).
- He invited Marshall Tito to Moscow.
- He dismissed Stalin's former Foreign Minister Molotov.
- He seemed to be signalling to the countries of eastern Europe that they would be allowed much greater independence to control their own affairs.

Those in eastern Europe who wanted greater freedom from the Soviet Union saw hopeful times ahead.

SOURCE 4

We must produce more grain. The more grain there is, the more meat, lard and fruit there will be. Our tables will be better covered. Marxist theory helped us win power and consolidate it. Having done this we must help the people eat well, dress well and live well. If after forty years of Communism, a person cannot have a glass of milk or a pair of shoes, he will not believe Communism is a good thing, whatever you tell him.

Nikita Khrushchev speaking in 1955.

Revision Tip

Khrushchev

Make sure you know two ways in which Khrushchev appeared to be different from Stalin in 1955.

De-Stalinisation

Write your own definition of 'de-Stalinisation'. Make sure you include:

- ◆ at least two examples
- ◆ an explanation of why it was radical.

SOURCE 5

Stalin used extreme methods and mass repressions at a time when the revolution was already victorious . . . Stalin showed in a whole series of cases his intolerance, his brutality and his abuse of power . . . He often chose the path of repression and physical annihilation, not only against actual enemies, but also against individuals who had not committed any crimes against the Party and the Soviet government.

Khrushchev denounces Stalin in 1956. For citizens of eastern Europe who had been bombarded with propaganda praising Stalin, this was a shocking change of direction.

Think!

Look at Source 6.

- 1 Make a list of the features of the cartoon that show Khrushchev as a new type of leader.
- 2 Design another cartoon that shows him relaxing the Soviet grip on eastern Europe. Think about:
 - ◆ how you would show Khrushchev
 - ◆ how you would represent the states of eastern Europe (as maps? as people?)
 - ◆ how you would represent Soviet control (as a rope? getting looser? tighter?).

You could either draw the cartoon or write instructions for an artist to do so.

Focus Task

How secure was Soviet control?

On page 123 we showed you three graphs. At the end of this chapter you will decide which is the most accurate way to represent Soviet control 1945–90.

Through the rest of this chapter you are going to examine a number of different case studies of Soviet control. Each is to be studied in its own right but you are also going to use them to build your understanding of the bigger picture. Here are some features of the Polish uprising of 1956:

- ◆ workers go on strike for more wages
 - ◆ 53 rioters killed by Polish army
 - ◆ Polish army loses control
 - ◆ Khrushchev moves troops to the Polish border
 - ◆ a new leader is appointed who is more acceptable to the Polish people
 - ◆ Communists agreed to stop persecuting the Catholic Church.
- For each feature decide whether it suggests that Soviet control was strong or weak. There may be some events that could be used to support either view. Make sure you can explain your decisions.

SOURCE 6



A 1959 Soviet cartoon. The writing on the snowman's hat reads 'cold war'. Khrushchev is drilling through the cold war using what the caption calls 'miners' methods'. The cartoon uses very strong visual images like Khrushchev's modern style of clothing to emphasise his new ideas. And of course he is breaking up the Cold War!

The Warsaw Pact

One aspect of Stalin's policy did not change, however. His aim in eastern Europe had always been to create a buffer against attack from the West. Khrushchev continued this policy. In 1955 he created the Warsaw Pact. This was a military alliance similar to NATO (see page 91). The members would defend each other if one was attacked. The Warsaw Pact included all the Communist countries of eastern Europe except Yugoslavia, but it was dominated by the Soviet Union (see Source 17, page 84).

Challenges to Soviet control in eastern Europe

Khrushchev's criticism of Stalin sent a strong signal to opposition groups in eastern Europe that they could now press for changes. The question was: how far would Khrushchev let them go? The first opposition Khrushchev had to deal with as leader was in Poland.

In the summer of 1956 demonstrators attacked the Polish police, protesting about the fact that the government had increased food prices but not wages. Fifty-three workers were killed by the Polish army in riots in Poznan. The Polish government itself was unable to control the demonstrators. Alarmed, Khrushchev moved troops to the Polish border.

By October 1956 Poland was becoming more stabilised. A new leader, Wladyslaw Gomulka, took charge on 20 October. During the Nazi occupation Gomulka had been a popular leader of Communist resistance. However, he was also a nationalist. He had not seen eye to eye with many Polish Communists, who were totally loyal to Stalin. Khrushchev accepted Gomulka's appointment – a popular move in Poland for the next couple of years.

There was also an agreement that the Communists would stop persecuting members of the Catholic Church. The Red Army moved away from the Polish border and left the Polish army and government to sort things out.

Khrushchev was soon put to the test again in Hungary in October 1956.

Case study 1: Hungary, 1956

From 1949 to 1956 Hungary was led by a hard-line Communist called Mátyás Rákosi. Hungarians hated the restrictions which Rákosi's Communism imposed on them. Most Hungarians felt bitter about losing their freedom of speech. They lived in fear of the secret police. They resented the presence of thousands of Soviet troops and officials in their country. Some areas of Hungary even had Russian street signs, Russian schools and shops. Worst of all, Hungarians had to pay for Soviet forces to be in Hungary.

SOURCE 7

Living standards were declining and yet the papers and radio kept saying that we had never had it so good. Why? Why these lies? Everybody knew the state was spending the money on armaments. Why could they not admit that we were worse off because of the war effort and the need to build new factories? . . . I finally arrived at the realisation that the system was wrong and stupid.

A Hungarian student describes the mood in 1953.

SOURCE 8

. . . wearing clothes patterned after Western styles, showing interest in Jazz, expressing liberalism in the arts – was considered dangerous in the eyes of the people's democracy. To cite a small example, let us take the case of my university colleague, John. He showed up at lectures one day several weeks before the revolution in a new suit and a striped shirt and necktie, all of which he had received from an uncle in the United States through gift-parcel channels. His shoes were smooth suede and would have cost one month's wages in Hungary. After classes John was summoned by the party officer. He received a tongue-lashing and was expelled.

Written by László Beke, a student who helped lead the Hungarian uprising in 1956, in *A Student's Diary: Budapest October 16–November 1, 1956*.

Focus Task

Why was there opposition to Soviet control in Hungary?

- 1 Use the text and Sources 7 and 8 to list reasons why some Hungarians were opposed to Communist control – for example, they resented the presence of Soviet troops.
- 2 List the changes proposed by Nagy's government.
- 3 Which of these proposed changes do you think would be most threatening of the USSR? Give reasons.

Revision Tip

Test yourself to see if you can remember:

- ◆ two important reasons that the Hungarians rebelled against Soviet control in 1956
- ◆ two changes brought about by Nagy
- ◆ how Khrushchev reacted at first, then changed his mind, then changed it again.

What happened?

In June 1956 a group within the Communist Party in Hungary opposed Rákosi. He appealed to Moscow for help. He wanted to arrest 400 leading opponents. Moscow would not back him. The Kremlin ordered Rákosi to be retired 'for health reasons'.

The new leader, Ernő Gerő, was no more acceptable to the Hungarian people. Discontent came to a head with a huge student demonstration **on 23 October**, when the giant statue of Stalin in Budapest was pulled down.

The USSR allowed a new government to be formed under the well-respected Imre Nagy on 24 October. Soviet troops and tanks stationed in Hungary since the Second World War began to withdraw. Hungarians created thousands of local councils to replace Soviet power. Several thousand Hungarian soldiers defected from the army to the rebel cause, taking their weapons with them.

Nagy's government began to make plans. It would hold free elections, create impartial courts, restore farmland to private ownership. It wanted the total withdrawal of the Soviet army from Hungary. It also planned to leave the Warsaw Pact and declare Hungary neutral in the Cold War struggle between East and West. There was widespread optimism that the new American President Eisenhower, who had been the wartime supreme commander of all Allied Forces in western Europe, would support the new independent Hungary with armed troops if necessary.

How did the Soviet Union respond?

Khrushchev at first seemed ready to accept some of the reforms. However, he could not accept Hungary's leaving the Warsaw Pact. In November 1956 thousands of Soviet troops and tanks moved into Budapest. The Hungarians did not give in. Two weeks of bitter fighting followed. Some estimates put the number of Hungarians killed at 30,000. However, the latest research suggests about 3,000 Hungarians and 7,000–8,000 Russians were killed. Another 200,000 Hungarians fled across the border into Austria to escape the Communist forces.

SOURCE 9

In Hungary thousands of people have obtained arms by disarming soldiers and militia men . . . Soldiers have been making friends with the embittered and dissatisfied masses . . . The authorities are paralysed, unable to stop the bloody events.

From a report in a Yugoslav newspaper. Yugoslavia, although Communist, did not approve of Soviet policies.

Source Analysis

- 1 How do Sources 9 and 10 differ in the impression they give of the Hungarian uprising?
- 2 Why do you think they differ?
- 3 Does the photo in Source 12 give the same impression as either Source 9 or Source 10?
- 4 Work in pairs. Study Sources 9–12 and choose one source. Try to convince your partner that your source is the most useful source for studying events in Hungary in 1956.

Think!

- 1 Look back at Source 17 in Chapter 4. Why do you think Hungary's membership of the Warsaw Pact was so important to the Soviet Union?
- 2 Why do you think the Hungarians received no support from the West?
- 3 Explain which of these statements you most agree with:

The speed at which the Red Army crushed resistance in Hungary shows how completely the Soviet Union controlled Hungary.

The severity of the Red Army in dealing with Hungary in 1956 shows how fragile the Soviet hold on Hungary really was.

SOURCE 10

We have almost no weapons, no heavy guns of any kind. People are running up to the tanks, throwing in hand grenades and closing the drivers' windows. The Hungarian people are not afraid of death. It is only a pity that we cannot last longer. Now the firing is starting again. The tanks are coming nearer and nearer. You can't let people attack tanks with their bare hands. What is the United Nations doing?

A telex message sent by the Hungarian rebels fighting the Communists. Quoted in George Mikes, *The Hungarian Revolution*, 1957.

SOURCE 11

October 27, 1956. On my way home I saw a little girl propped up against the doorway of a building with a machine gun clutched in her hands. When I tried to move her, I saw she was dead. She couldn't have been more than eleven or twelve years old. There was a neatly folded note in her pocket she had evidently meant to pass on through someone to her parents. In childish scrawl it read: 'Dear Mama, Brother is dead. He asked me to take care of his gun. I am all right, and I'm going with friends now. I kiss you. Kati.'

Written by László Beke, a Hungarian student.

SOURCE 12



An armed fifteen-year-old girl in Budapest during the Hungarian rising of 1956.

The Western powers protested to the USSR but sent no help; they were too preoccupied with a crisis of their own (the Suez crisis in the Middle East)!

Outcomes

Khrushchev put János Kádár in place as leader. Kádár took several months to crush all resistance. Around 35,000 anti-Communist activists were arrested and 300 were executed. Kádár cautiously introduced some of the reforms being demanded by the Hungarian people. However, he did not waver on the central issue – membership of the Warsaw Pact.

Case study 2: Czechoslovakia and the Prague Spring, 1968

SOURCE 13

In Czechoslovakia the people who were trusted [by the Communist government] were the obedient ones, those who did not cause any trouble, who didn't ask questions. It was the mediocre man who came off best.

In twenty years not one human problem has been solved in our country, from primary needs like flats, schools, to the more subtle needs such as fulfilling oneself . . . the need for people to trust one another . . . development of education.

I feel that our Republic has lost its good reputation.

From a speech given by Ludvik Vaculik, a leading figure in the reform movement, in March 1968.

SOURCE 14

The Director told them they would produce 400 locomotives a year. They are making seventy.

And go look at the scrapyard, at all the work that has been thrown out. They built a railway and then took it down again. Who's responsible for all this? The Communist Party set up the system.

We were robbed of our output, our wages . . . How can I believe that in few years' time it won't be worse?

Ludvik Vaculik quotes from an interview he had with the workers in a locomotive factory run by the Communists.

Focus Task

Why was there opposition to Soviet control in Czechoslovakia?

Use the text and Sources 13–15 to list the reasons for opposition to soviet control in Czechoslovakia.

Twelve years after the brutal suppression of the Hungarians, Czechoslovakia posed a similar challenge to Soviet domination of eastern Europe. Khrushchev had by now been ousted from power in the USSR. A new leader, Leonid Brezhnev, had replaced him.

What happened?

In the 1960s a new mood developed in Czechoslovakia. People examined what had been happening in twenty years of Communist control and they did not like what they saw. In 1967 the old Stalinist leader was replaced by Alexander Dubček. He proposed a policy of 'socialism with a human face': less censorship, more freedom of speech and a reduction in the activities of the secret police. Dubček was a committed Communist, but he believed that Communism did not have to be as restrictive as it had been before he came to power. He had learned the lessons of the Hungarian uprising and reassured Brezhnev that Czechoslovakia had no plans to pull out of the Warsaw Pact or Comecon.

The Czech opposition was led by intellectuals who felt that the Communists had failed to lead the country forward. As censorship had been eased, they were able to launch attacks on the Communist leadership, pointing out how corrupt and useless they were. Communist government ministers were 'grilled' on live television and radio about how they were running the country and about events before 1968. This period became known as 'The Prague Spring' because of all the new ideas that seemed to be appearing everywhere.

By the summer even more radical ideas were emerging. There was even talk of allowing another political party, the Social Democratic Party, to be set up as a rival to the Communist Party.

SOURCE 15

All the different kinds of state in which the Communist Party has taken power have gone through rigged trials . . . There must be a fault other than just the wrong people were chosen. There must be a fault in the theory [of Communism] itself.

Written by Luboš Dubrovsky, a Czech writer, in May 1968.

How did the Soviet Union respond?

The Soviet Union was very suspicious of the changes taking place in Czechoslovakia. Czechoslovakia was one of the most important countries in the Warsaw Pact. It was centrally placed, and had the strongest industry. The Soviets were worried that the new ideas in Czechoslovakia might spread to other countries in eastern Europe. Brezhnev came under pressure from the East German leader, Walter Ulbricht, and the Polish leader, Gomulka, to restrain reform in Czechoslovakia.

The USSR tried various methods in response. To start with, it tried to slow Dubček down. It argued with him. Soviet, Polish and East German troops performed very public training exercises right on the Czech border. It thought about imposing economic sanctions – for example, cancelling wheat exports to Czechoslovakia – but didn't because it thought that the Czechs would ask for help from the West.

In July the USSR had a summit conference with the Czechs. Dubček agreed not to allow a new Social Democratic Party. However, he insisted on keeping most of his reforms. The tension seemed to ease. Early in August, a conference of all the other Warsaw Pact countries produced a vague declaration simply calling on Czechoslovakia to maintain political stability.

Then seventeen days later, on 20 August 1968, to the stunned amazement of the Czechs and the outside world, Soviet tanks moved into Czechoslovakia.

There was little violent resistance, although many Czechs refused to co-operate with the Soviet troops. Dubček was removed from power. His experiment in socialism with a human face had not failed; it had simply proved unacceptable to the other Communist countries.

SOURCE 16

Yesterday troops from the Soviet Union, Poland, East Germany, Hungary and Bulgaria crossed the frontier of Czechoslovakia . . . The Czechoslovak Communist Party Central Committee regard this act as contrary to the basic principles of good relations between socialist states.

A Prague radio report, 21 August 1968.

SOURCE 17

The party and government leaders of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic have asked the Soviet Union and other allies to give the Czechoslovak people urgent assistance, including assistance with armed forces. This request was brought about . . . by the threat from counter revolutionary forces . . . working with foreign forces hostile to socialism.

A Soviet news agency report, 21 August 1968.

SOURCE 18

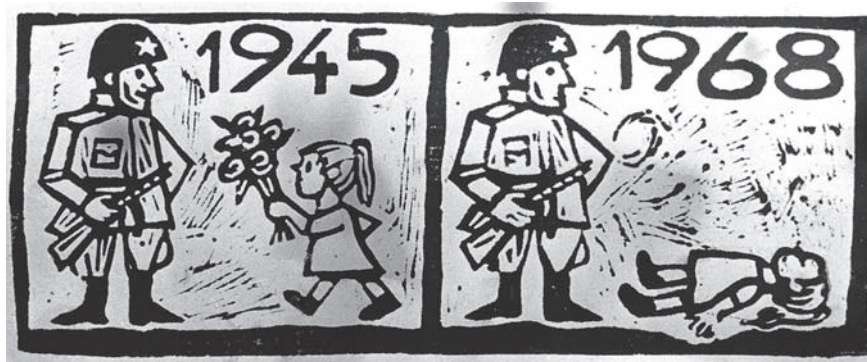


Czechs burning Soviet tanks in Prague, August 1968.

Source Analysis

- 1 Explain how and why Sources 16 and 17 differ in their interpretation of the Soviet intervention.
- 2 What is the message of Source 19?

SOURCE 19



A street cartoon in Prague.

SOURCE 20

When internal and external forces hostile to socialism attempt to turn the development of any socialist country in the direction of the capitalist system, when a threat arises to the cause of socialism in that country, a threat to the socialist commonwealth as a whole – it becomes not only a problem for the people of that country but also a general problem, the concern of all socialist countries.

The Brezhnev Doctrine.

Outcomes

Unlike Nagy in Hungary, Dubček was not executed. But he was gradually downgraded. First he was sent to be ambassador to Turkey, then expelled from the Communist Party altogether. Photographs showing him as leader were 'censored' (see page 122).

Before the Soviet invasion, Czechoslovakia's mood had been one of optimism. After, it was despair. A country that had been pro-Soviet now became resentful of the Soviet connection. Ideas that could have reformed Communism were silenced.

Dubček always expressed loyalty to Communism and the Warsaw Pact, but Brezhnev was very worried that the new ideas coming out of Czechoslovakia would spread. He was under pressure from the leaders of other Communist countries in eastern Europe, particularly Ulbricht in East Germany. These leaders feared that their own people would demand the same freedom that Dubček had allowed in Czechoslovakia.

The Brezhnev Doctrine

The Czechoslovak episode gave rise to the Brezhnev Doctrine. The essentials of Communism were defined as:

- a one-party system
- to remain a member of the Warsaw Pact.

Focus Task A

How similar were the uprisings of 1956 and 1968?

One question which historians often consider is how similar the uprisings of 1956 in Hungary and 1968 in Czechoslovakia actually were. The table below gives you a number of ways to compare the two events. Work through pages 128–31, make your own copy then complete the table.

| Issue | Hungary, 1956 | Czechoslovakia, 1968 | How similar? Give reasons |
|--------------------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Aims of rebels | | | |
| Attitude towards Communism | | | |
| Attitude towards democracy | | | |
| Attitude towards the USSR | | | |
| Attitude towards the West | | | |
| Why the USSR intervened | | | |
| How the USSR intervened | | | |
| Response of the rebels | | | |
| Casualties | | | |
| Eventual outcome | | | |

Here are a few points to help you get the table started, but you will have to decide where they fit and add your own as well.

- ◆ Abolish secret police
- ◆ Around 200,000 fled the country
- ◆ Because of the threat to leave Warsaw Pact
- ◆ Dubček downgraded
- ◆ Fear that other states would demand the same freedoms
- ◆ Less censorship
- ◆ Pitched battles in the streets
- ◆ Wanted a more human form of Communism
- ◆ Wanted free elections with more than one party
- ◆ Withdraw Soviet troops

Revision Tip

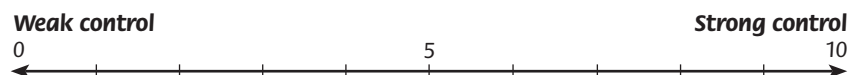
You don't need to learn this whole table but be sure you can explain:

- ◆ two ways in which the Hungarian and Czech uprisings were similar
- ◆ two ways in which they were different.

Focus Task B

How secure was Soviet control of Hungary and Czechoslovakia?

Here are various events from the two invasions. For each event decide where it should go on this line. Does it suggest that Soviet control was weak, strong or somewhere in between?



There may be some events that you think could be used to support either view. Whatever you decide you must include notes to explain your decision.

Hungary

- ◆ Imre Nagy forms new government
- ◆ Khrushchev sends in troops
- ◆ Nagy imprisoned and executed
- ◆ Nagy's plans
- ◆ Opposition to Rákosi
- ◆ Rákosi not supported by Moscow
- ◆ Rákosi removed
- ◆ Rebellion
- ◆ Soviet tanks move in and then withdraw
- ◆ Two weeks of fierce street fighting

Czechoslovakia

- ◆ Censorship eased in Czechoslovakia
- ◆ Czech Communist leaders were heavily criticised for corrupt and incompetent rule
- ◆ Plans to set up Social Democratic Party
- ◆ USSR argued with Dubček to slow down the pace of reform
- ◆ Troops carried out training exercises on the border of Czechoslovakia
- ◆ The USSR considered sanctions against Czechoslovakia but feared they would not work
- ◆ Tanks moved into Prague on 20 August 1968
- ◆ There was little violent resistance in Czechoslovakia
- ◆ Dubček was removed
- ◆ The Brezhnev Doctrine

Case study 3: The Berlin Wall

SOURCE 21



A 1959 Soviet cartoon – the caption was: 'The socialist stallion far outclasses the capitalist donkey'.

Source Analysis

- 1 Look at Source 21. What is the aim of this cartoon?
- 2 How might someone living in a Communist country react to it?

SOURCE 22

West Berlin . . . has many roles. It is more than a showcase of liberty, an island of freedom in a Communist sea. It is more than a link with the free world, a beacon of hope behind the iron curtain, an escape hatch for refugees. Above all, it has become the resting place of Western courage and will . . . We cannot and will not permit the Communists to drive us out of Berlin.

President Kennedy speaking in 1960, before he became President.

You have already seen how Berlin was a battleground of the Cold War (see Source 22). In 1961 it also became the focus of the Soviet Union's latest attempt to maintain control of its east European satellites.

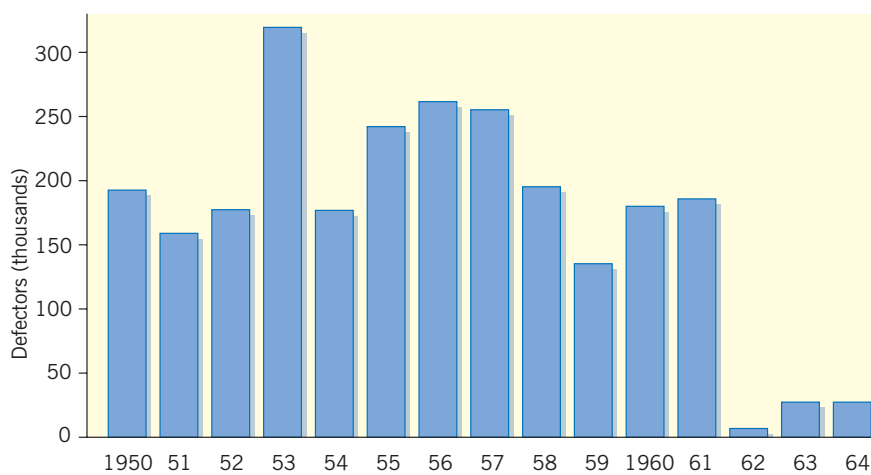
The problem

The crushing of the Hungarian uprising (see page 128) had confirmed for many people in eastern Europe that it was impossible to fight the Communists. For many, it seemed that the only way of escaping the repression was to leave altogether. Some wished to leave eastern Europe for political reasons – they hated the Communists – while many more wished to leave for economic reasons. As standards of living in eastern Europe fell further and further behind the West, the attraction of going to live in a capitalist state was very great.

The contrast was particularly great in the divided city of Berlin. Living standards were tolerable in the East, but just a few hundred metres away in West Berlin, East Germans could see some of the prize exhibits of capitalist West Germany – shops full of goods, great freedom, great wealth and great variety. This had been deliberately done by the Western powers. They had poured massive investment into Berlin. East Germans could also watch West German television.

In the 1950s East Germans were still able to travel freely into West Berlin. From there they could travel on into West Germany. It was very tempting to leave East Germany, with its harsh Communist regime and its hardline leader, Walter Ulbricht. By the late 1950s thousands were leaving and never coming back (see Source 23).

SOURCE 23



Number of people crossing from East to West Germany, 1950–64.

Those who were defecting were very often highly skilled workers or well-qualified managers. The Communist government could not afford to lose these high-quality people. More importantly, from Khrushchev's point of view, the sight of thousands of Germans fleeing Communist rule for a better life under capitalism undermined Communism generally.

The solution

In 1961 the USA had a new President, the young and inexperienced John F Kennedy. Khrushchev thought he could bully Kennedy and chose to pick a fight over Berlin. He insisted that Kennedy withdraw US troops from the city. He was certain that Kennedy would back down. Kennedy refused. However, all eyes were now on Berlin. What would happen next?

At two o'clock in the morning on Sunday 13 August 1961, East German soldiers erected a barbed-wire barrier along the entire frontier between East and West Berlin, ending all free movement from East to West. It was quickly replaced by a concrete wall. All the crossing points from East to West Berlin were sealed, except for one. This became known as Checkpoint Charlie.

Families were divided. Berliners were unable to go to work; chaos and confusion followed. Border guards kept a constant look-out for anyone trying to cross the wall. They had orders to shoot people trying to defect. Hundreds were killed over the next three decades.

SOURCE **24**

A



B



Stages in the building of the Berlin Wall.

SOURCE **25**



East German security guards recover the body of a man shot attempting to cross the wall in 1962.

SOURCE **26**

The Western powers in Berlin use it as a centre of subversive activity against the GDR [the initial letters of the German name for East Germany]. In no other part of the world are so many espionage centres to be found. These centres smuggle their agents into the GDR for all kinds of subversion: recruiting spies; sabotage; provoking disturbances.

The government presents all working people of the GDR with a proposal that will securely block subversive activity so that reliable safeguards and effective control will be established around West Berlin, including its border with democratic Berlin.

A Soviet explanation for the building of the wall, 1961.

Outcomes

For a while, the wall created a major crisis. Access to East Berlin had been guaranteed to the Allies since 1945. In October 1961 US diplomats and troops crossed regularly into East Berlin to find out how the Soviets would react.

On 27 October Soviet tanks pulled up to Checkpoint Charlie and refused to allow any further access to the East. All day, US and Soviet tanks, fully armed, faced each other in a tense stand-off. Then, after eighteen hours, one by one, five metres at a time, the tanks pulled back. Another crisis, another retreat.

The international reaction was relief. Khrushchev ordered Ulbricht to avoid any actions that would increase tension. Kennedy said, 'It's not a very nice solution, but a wall is a hell of a lot better than a war.' So the wall stayed, and over the following years became the symbol of division – the division of Germany, the division of Europe, the division of Communist East and democratic West. The Communists presented the wall as a protective shell around East Berlin. The West presented it as a prison wall.

SOURCE 27

There are some who say, in Europe and elsewhere, we can work with the Communists. Let them come to Berlin.

President Kennedy speaking in 1963 after the building of the Berlin Wall.

SOURCE 28



A Soviet cartoon from the 1960s. The sign reads: 'The border of the GDR (East Germany) is closed to all enemies.' Notice the shape of the dog's tail.

Revision Tip

You need to be able to give:

- ◆ two reasons that the Soviet Union built the Berlin Wall
- ◆ a full explanation of each reason.

Focus Task

Why was the Berlin Wall built in 1961?

Stage 1

Work in pairs.

Make a poster or notice to be stuck on the Berlin Wall explaining the purpose of the wall. One of you do a poster for the East German side and the other do a poster for the West German side. You can use pictures and quotations from the sources in this chapter or use your own research.

Make sure you explain in your poster the reasons why the wall was built and what the results of building the wall will be.

Stage 2

Discuss with your partner: Do you think the building of the Berlin Wall shows that Communist control of East Germany was weak or that it was strong?

Choose pieces of evidence from the past three pages that could be used to support either viewpoint and explain how it could be used that way.

Case study 4: Solidarity in Poland, 1980–81

SOURCE 29

- *More pay*
- *End to censorship*
- *Same welfare benefits as police and party workers*
- *Broadcasting of Catholic church services*
- *Election of factory managers*

Some of Solidarity's 21 demands.

Profile

Lech Walesa



- Pronounced Lek Fowensa.
- Born 1943. His father was a farmer.
- He went to work in the shipyards at Gdansk.
- In 1976 he was sacked from the shipyard for making 'malicious' statements about the organisation and working climate.
- In 1978 he helped organise a union at another factory. He was dismissed.
- In 1979 he worked for Eltromontage. He was said to be the best automotive electrician. He was sacked.
- With others, he set up Solidarity in August 1980 and became its leader.
- He was a committed Catholic.
- In 1989 he became the leader of Poland's first non-Communist government since the Second World War.

Revision Tip

Make sure you know:

- ◆ two demands made by Solidarity in 1980
- ◆ one reason why Solidarity was crushed in 1981
- ◆ one reason why you think the rise and fall of Solidarity is a significant event in history.

Throughout the years of Communist control of Poland there were regular protests. However, they were generally more about living standards and prices than attempts to overthrow Communist government.

During the first half of the 1970s Polish industry performed well so the country was relatively calm. But in the late 1970s the Polish economy hit a crisis and 1979 was the worst year for Polish industry since Communism had been introduced. This is what happened next.

July 1980

The government announced increases in the price of meat.

August 1980

Workers at the Gdansk shipyard, led by Lech Walesa, put forward 21 demands to the government, including free trade unions and the right to strike (see Source 29). They also started a free trade union called Solidarity. Poland had trade unions but they were ineffective in challenging government policies.

30 August 1980

The government agreed to all 21 of Solidarity's demands.

September 1980

Solidarity's membership grew to 3.5 million.

October 1980

Solidarity's membership was 7 million. Solidarity was officially recognised by the government.

January 1981

Membership of Solidarity reached its peak at 9.4 million – more than a third of all the workers in Poland.

Reasons for Solidarity's success

You might be surprised that the government gave in to Solidarity in 1980. There are many different reasons for this.

- **The union was strongest in those industries that were most important to the government** – shipbuilding and heavy industry. A general strike in these industries would have devastated Poland's economy.
- **In the early stages the union was not seen by its members as an alternative to the Communist Party.** More than 1 million members (30 per cent) of the Communist Party joined Solidarity.
- **Lech Walesa was very careful** in his negotiations with the government and worked to avoid provoking a dispute that might bring in the Soviet Union.
- **The union was immensely popular.** Almost half of all workers belonged. Lech Walesa was a kind of folk hero.
- **Solidarity had the support of the Catholic Church** which was still very strong in Poland.
- **The government was playing for time.** It hoped Solidarity would break into rival factions. The government also drew up plans for martial law (rule by the army).
- **Finally, the Soviet Union had half an eye on the West.** Solidarity had gained support in the West in a way that neither the Hungarian nor the Czech rising had. Walesa was well known on Western media and people in the West bought Solidarity badges to show their support. The scale of the movement ensured that the Soviet Union treated the Polish crisis cautiously.

Following this success membership of Solidarity increased quickly.

SOURCE 30

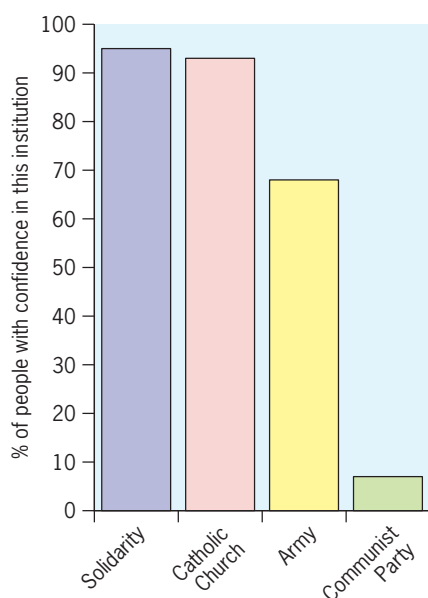
Inequality and injustice are everywhere. There are hospitals that are so poorly supplied that they do not even have cotton, and our relatives die in the corridors; but other hospitals are equipped with private rooms and full medical care for each room. We pay fines for traffic violations, but some people commit highway manslaughter while drunk and are let off . . . In some places there are better shops and superior vacation houses, with huge fenced-in grounds that ordinary people cannot enter.

Extract from 'Experience and the Future', a report drawn up in 1981 by Polish writers and thinkers who were not members of the Communist Party. They are describing the inequality in Poland between Communist Party members and ordinary people.

Think!

Between August 1980 and December 1981, Solidarity went through some rapid changes. Choose two moments in this period that you think were particularly important in the rise and fall of Solidarity and explain why they were important.

SOURCE 31



The results of an opinion poll in Poland, November 1981. The people polled were asked whether they had confidence in key institutions in Poland. It is known that 11 per cent of those polled were Communist Party members.

In February 1981 the civilian Prime Minister 'resigned' and the leader of the army, General Jaruzelski, took over. From the moment he took office, people in Poland, and observers outside Poland, expected the Soviet Union to 'send in the tanks' at any time, especially when the Solidarity Congress produced an 'open letter' saying that they were campaigning not only for their own rights but for the rights of workers throughout the Communist bloc. It proclaimed that the Poles were fighting 'For Your Freedom and For Ours'.

Jaruzelski and Walesa negotiated to form a government of national understanding but when that broke down in December, after nine months of tense relationships, the Communist government acted. Brezhnev ordered the Red Army to carry out 'training manoeuvres' on the Polish border. Jaruzelski introduced martial law. He put Walesa and almost 10,000 other Solidarity leaders in prison. He suspended Solidarity.

Reasons for the crushing of Solidarity

Military dictators are not required to give reasons for their actions. But if they did what might Jaruzelski have to say?

- **Solidarity was acting as a political party.** The government declared that it had secret tapes of a Solidarity meeting setting up a new provisional government – without the Communist Party.
- **Poland was sinking into chaos.** Almost all Poles felt the impact of food shortages. Rationing had been introduced in April 1981. Wages had increased by less than inflation. Unemployment was rising.
- **Solidarity itself was also tumbling into chaos.** There were many different factions. Some felt that the only way to make progress was to push the Communists harder until they cracked under the pressure. Strikes were continuing long after the Solidarity leadership had ordered them to stop.

The Soviet Union had seen enough. It thought the situation in Poland had gone too far. If Poland's leaders would not restore Communist control in Poland, then it would. This was something the Polish leaders wanted to avoid.

The Communist government had regained control of Poland but in December 1981, looking back on the past eighteen months, two things were obvious:

- The Polish people no longer trusted the Communists leadership.
- The only thing that kept the Communists in power was force or the threat of force backed by the USSR. When Jaruzelski finally decided to use force, Solidarity was easily crushed. The lesson was clear. If military force was not used, then Communist control seemed very shaky indeed.

The significance of Solidarity

In the story of Soviet control of eastern Europe Solidarity was significant for a number of reasons:

- It highlighted the failure of Communism to provide good living standards and this undermined Communism's claim to be a system which benefited ordinary people.
- It highlighted inefficiency and corruption (see Source 30 for example).
- It showed that there were organisations which were capable of resisting a Communist government.
- It showed that Communist governments could be threatened by 'people power'.

If Soviet policy were to change Communist control would not survive.

What do you expect to happen next?

Focus Task

What was the significance of Solidarity for the decline of Soviet influence in eastern Europe?

'Solidarity died as quickly as it started, having achieved nothing.'

How far do you agree with this statement? Support your answer with evidence from pages 136 and 137.

Profile

Mikhail Gorbachev



- Born 1931. One grandfather was a kulak – a landowning peasant – who had been sent to a prison camp by Stalin because he resisted Stalin's policy of collectivisation. The other grandfather was a loyal Communist Party member.
- His elder brother was killed in the Second World War.
- Studied law at Moscow University in the 1950s. Became a persuasive speaker.
- Worked as a local Communist Party official in his home area. By 1978 he was a member of the Central Committee of the party and in charge of agriculture.
- In 1980 he joined the Politburo.
- He was a close friend of Andropov, who became Soviet leader in 1983. He shared many of Andropov's ideas about reforming the USSR. When Andropov was leader, he was effectively second in command.
- In 1985 he became leader of the USSR.
- In October 1990 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Think!

Why do you think the Warsaw Pact leaders did not believe Gorbachev when he told them the Soviet Union would no longer interfere in the internal affairs of other communist countries?

Revision Tip

Identify two problems in the USSR that led to Gorbachev's new policy towards eastern Europe.

Enter Mikhail Gorbachev

Gorbachev became leader of the Soviet Union in 1985. He was an unusual mix of idealist, optimist and realist.

- The realist in him could see that the USSR was in a terrible state. Its economy was very weak. It was spending far too much money on the arms race. It was locked into an unwinnable war in Afghanistan.
- The idealist in Gorbachev believed that Communist rule should make life better for the people of the USSR and other Communist states. As a loyal Communist and a proud Russian, he was offended by the fact that goods made in Soviet factories were shoddy, living standards were higher in the West and that many Soviet citizens had no loyalty to the government.
- The optimist in Gorbachev believed that a reformed Communist system of government could give people pride and belief in their country. He definitely did not intend to dismantle Communism in the USSR and eastern Europe, but he did want to reform it radically.

Gorbachev's policies in eastern Europe

Gorbachev also had a very different attitude to eastern Europe from Brezhnev. In March he called the leaders of the Warsaw Pact countries together. This meeting should have been a turning point in the history of eastern Europe. He had two messages.

'We won't intervene'

SOURCE 32

The time is ripe for abandoning views on foreign policy which are influenced by an imperial standpoint. Neither the Soviet Union nor the USA is able to force its will on others. It is possible to suppress, compel, bribe, break or blast, but only for a certain period. From the point of view of long-term big time politics, no one will be able to subordinate others. That is why only one thing – relations of equality – remains. All of us must realise this . . .

Gorbachev speaking in 1987.

Gorbachev made it very clear to the countries of eastern Europe that they were responsible for their own fates. However, most of the Warsaw Pact leaders were old style, hardline Communists. To them, Gorbachev's ideas were insane and they simply did not believe he meant what he said.

'You have to reform'

Gorbachev also made it clear that they needed to reform their own countries. He did not think Communism was doomed. In fact he felt the opposite was true. Gorbachev believed the Communist system could provide better healthcare, education and transport. The task in the USSR and eastern Europe was to renew Communism so as to match capitalism in other areas of public life. However, they did not believe him on this count either.

In the next few years these leaders would realise they had made a serious error of judgement.

Gorbachev's reforms

He had to be cautious, because he faced great opposition from hardliners in his own government, but gradually he declared his policies. The two key ideas were glasnost (openness) and perestroika (restructuring).

- **Glasnost:** He called for open debate on government policy and honesty in facing up to problems. It was not a detailed set of policies but it did mean radical change.
- In 1987 his **perestroika** programme allowed market forces to be introduced into the Soviet economy. For the first time in 60 years it was no longer illegal to buy and sell for profit.

SOURCE 33

A

Polish, Hungarian and Romanian dogs get to talking. 'What's life like in your country?' the Polish dog asks the Hungarian dog.

'Well, we have meat to eat but we can't bark. What are things like where you are from?' says the Hungarian dog to the Polish dog.

'With us, there's no meat, but at least we can bark,' says the Polish dog.

'What's meat? What's barking?' asks the Romanian dog.

B

East German leader Erich Honecker is touring East German towns. He is shown a run-down kindergarten. The staff ask for funds to renovate the institution. Honecker refuses. Next he visits a hospital, where the doctors petition him for a grant to buy new surgical equipment. Honecker refuses. The third place on Honecker's itinerary is a prison. This is pretty dilapidated, and here too the governor asks for money to refurbish. This time Honecker immediately pulls out his cheque book and insists that not only should the cells be repainted but that they should be fitted with new mattresses, colour televisions and sofas. Afterwards an aide asks him why he said no to a school and a hospital, but yes to a prison. Honecker says, 'Where do you think we will be living in a few months' time?'

Examples of anti-Communist jokes collected by researchers in eastern Europe in the 1980s.

Defence spending

He also began to cut spending on defence. The nuclear arms race was an enormous drain on the Soviet economy at a time when it was in trouble anyway.

After almost 50 years on a constant war footing, the **Red Army** began to shrink.

International relations

At the same time, Gorbachev brought a new attitude to the USSR's relations with the wider world.

- He withdrew Soviet troops from Afghanistan, which had become such a costly yet unwinnable war.
- In speech after speech, he talked about international trust and co-operation as the way forward for the USSR, rather than confrontation.

Gorbachev and President Reagan

Ronald Reagan became US President in January 1981. He was President until 1988. He had only one policy towards the USSR – get tough. He criticised its control over eastern Europe and increased US military spending.

In a way, Reagan's toughness helped Gorbachev.

- It was clear by the late 1980s that the USSR could not compete with American military spending. This helped Gorbachev to push through his military spending cuts.
- Reagan got on quite well with Gorbachev himself. As superpower relations improved, the USSR felt less threatened by the USA. This meant there was less need for the USSR to control eastern Europe.

SOURCE 34

A

The Soviet Union would remain a one party state even if the Communists allowed an opposition party to exist. Everyone would join the opposition party.

B

When American college students are asked what they want to do after graduation, they reply: 'I don't know, I haven't decided'. Russian students answer the same question by saying: 'I don't know, they haven't told me'.

Anti-Communist jokes told by US President Reagan to Mikhail Gorbachev at their summit meetings in the late 1980s.

Implications for eastern Europe

As Gorbachev introduced his reforms in the USSR the demand rose for similar reforms in eastern European states as well. Most people in these states were sick of the poor economic conditions and the harsh restrictions that Communism imposed. Gorbachev's policies gave people some hope for reform.

'Listen to your people'

In July 1988 Gorbachev made a speech to the leaders of the Warsaw Pact countries. He planned to withdraw large numbers of troops, tanks and aircraft from eastern Europe. Hungary was particularly eager to get rid of Soviet troops and, when pressed, Gorbachev seemed to accept this. In March 1989 he made clear again that the Red Army would not intervene to prop up Communist regimes in eastern Europe. What followed was staggering.

Source Analysis

- 1 Why do you think President Reagan was so fond of jokes like those in Source 34A and B?
- 2 Do you think it is strange that Gorbachev was upset by these jokes? Explain your answer.
- 3 Can jokes really be useful historical sources? Explain your answer.
- 4 If you think jokes are useful sources, do you think the jokes in Source 33 are more or less useful than the jokes in Source 34? Explain your answer.

The collapse of Communism in eastern Europe



People power

The western media came up with a phrase to explain these events – people power. Communist control was toppled because ordinary people were not prepared to accept it any longer. They took control of events. It was not political leaders guiding the future of eastern Europe in 1989 but ordinary people.

SOURCE 35

Source Analysis ►

Study Source 35. We are going to study the story **in** the source.

- 1 What is the man in the foreground doing?
- 2 Would this have been possible at an earlier date? Why?
- 3 Who are the men watching from above? Why is it significant that they are just watching?
- 4 How would you summarise this scene: joyful? sad? powerful? other words?

Now let's think about the story **of** the source:

- 5 What is significant about the fact that the photographer was even able to take this picture?
- 6 The photographer was probably a freelance photographer who hoped to sell this picture to as many different newspapers as he could. Do you think he would have been successful? Why?
- 7 Which countries would have been most likely to publish this photograph? Why?

SOURCE 36

For most west Europeans now alive, the world has always ended at the East German border and the Wall; beyond lay darkness . . . The opening of the frontiers declares that the world has no edge any more. Europe is becoming once more round and whole.

The Independent, November 1989.



A demonstrator pounds away at the Berlin Wall as East German border guards look on from above, 4 November 1989. The wall was dismantled five days later.

Revision Tip

Remember two examples of 'people power' weakening Communist control of eastern Europe in 1989–90.

Reunification of Germany

With the Berlin Wall down, West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl proposed a speedy reunification of Germany. Germans in both countries embraced the idea enthusiastically.

Despite his idealism, Gorbachev was less enthusiastic. He expected that a new united Germany would be more friendly to the West than to the East. But after many months of hard negotiations, not all of them friendly, Gorbachev accepted German reunification and even accepted that the new Germany could become a member of NATO. This was no small thing for Gorbachev to accept. Like all Russians, he lived with the memory that it was German aggression in the Second World War that had cost the lives of 20 million Soviet citizens.

On 3 October 1990, Germany became a united country once again.

The collapse of the USSR

Even more dramatic events were to follow in the Soviet Union itself.

| 1990 | |
|----------|--|
| MARCH | <p>Gorbachev visited the Baltic state of Lithuania — part of the Soviet Union. Its leaders put their views to him. They were very clear. They wanted independence. They did not want to be part of the USSR. Gorbachev was for once uncompromising. He would not allow this. But in March they did it anyway.</p> <p>Almost as soon as he returned to Moscow from Lithuania, Gorbachev received a similar demand from the Muslim Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan. What should Gorbachev do now? He sent troops to Azerbaijan to end rioting there. He sent troops to Lithuania. But as the summer approached, the crisis situation got worse.</p> |
| MAY | <p>The Russian Republic, the largest within the USSR, elected Boris Yeltsin as its President. Yeltsin made it clear that he saw no future in a Soviet Union. He said that the many republics that made up the USSR should become independent states.</p> |
| JULY | <p>Ukraine declared its independence. Other republics followed.</p> <p>By the end of 1990 nobody was quite sure what the USSR meant any longer. Meanwhile Gorbachev was an international superstar. In October 1990 Gorbachev received the Nobel Peace Prize for his contribution to ending the Cold War.</p> |
| 1991 | |
| APRIL | <p>The Republic of Georgia declared its independence.</p> |
| AUGUST | <p>The USSR was disintegrating. Reformers within the USSR itself demanded an end to the Communist Party's domination of government. Gorbachev was struggling to hold it together, but members of the Communist elite had had enough.</p> <p>Hardline Communist Party members and leading military officers attempted a coup to take over the USSR. The plotters included Gorbachev's Prime Minister, Pavlov, and the head of the armed forces, Dmitry Yazov. They held Gorbachev prisoner in his holiday home in the Crimea. They sent tanks and troops on to the streets of Moscow. This was the old Soviet way to keep control. Would it work this time?</p> <p>Huge crowds gathered in Moscow. They strongly opposed this military coup. The Russian President, Boris Yeltsin, emerged as the leader of the popular opposition. Faced by this resistance, the conspirators lost faith in themselves and the coup collapsed.</p> <p>This last-ditch attempt by the Communist Party to save the USSR had failed. A few days later, Gorbachev returned to Moscow.</p> |
| DECEMBER | <p>Gorbachev might have survived the coup, but it had not strengthened his position as Soviet leader. He had to admit that the USSR was finished and he with it.</p> <p>In a televised speech on 25 December 1991, Gorbachev announced his own resignation and the end of the Soviet Union (see Source 37).</p> |

Think!

Think of a suitable headline for each of the six episodes in the collapse of the USSR summarised in the table.

The end of the Cold War

Think!

Read Source 37 carefully. Three statements are in bold.

Do you agree or disagree with each statement? For each statement, write a short paragraph to:

- explain what it means, and
- express your own view on it.

SOURCE 37

A sense of failure and regret came through his [Gorbachev's] Christmas Day abdication speech – especially in his sorrow over his people 'ceasing to be citizens of a great power'. Certainly, if man-in-the-street interviews can be believed, **the former Soviet peoples consider him a failure.**

History will be kinder. The Nobel Prize he received for ending the Cold War was well deserved. Every man, woman and child in this country should be eternally grateful.

His statue should stand in the centre of every east European capital; for it was Gorbachev who allowed them their independence. The same is true for the newly independent countries further east and in Central Asia. No Russian has done more to free his people from bondage since Alexander II who freed the serfs.

SOURCE 38

He had no grand plan and no predetermined policies; but if Gorbachev had not been Party General Secretary, the decisions of the late 1980s would have been different. The USSR's long-lasting order would have endured for many more years, and almost certainly the eventual collapse of the order would have been much bloodier than it was to be in 1991. The irony was that Gorbachev, in trying to prevent the descent of the system into general crisis, proved instrumental in bringing forward that crisis and destroying the USSR.

Extract from *History of Modern Russia* by historian Robert Service, published 2003. In this extract he is commenting on the meeting in March 1985.

From a report on Gorbachev's abdication speech, 25 December 1991, in the US newspaper the *Boston Globe*.

SOURCE 39

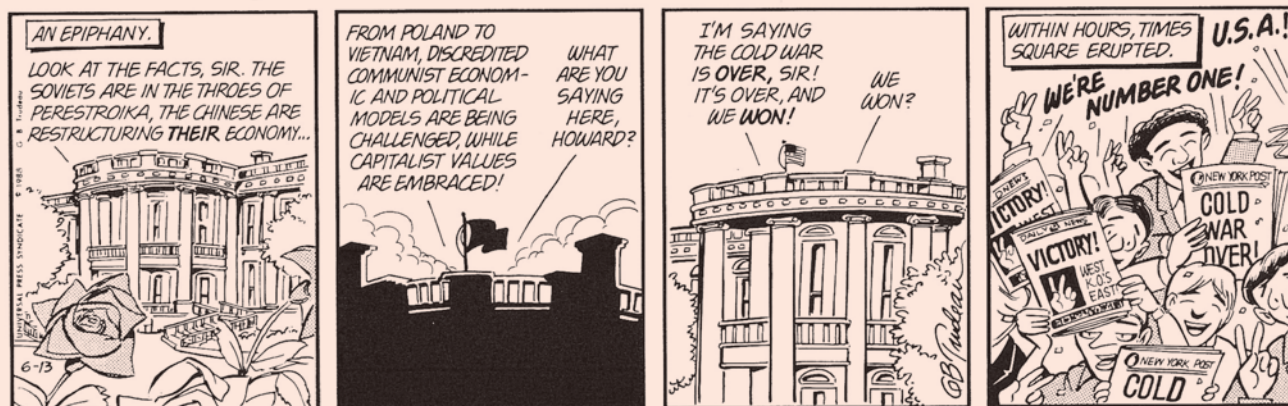


Mikhail Gorbachev after receiving the Nobel Peace Prize, 15 October 1990.

SOURCE 40

Doonesbury

BY GARRY TRUDEAU



A cartoon by Doonesbury which appeared in the *Guardian* on 13 June 1988.

Focus Task A

How far was Gorbachev personally responsible for the collapse of control over eastern Europe?

You are making a documentary film called 'The Collapse of the Red Empire' to explain the how and why of Soviet control of eastern Europe. The film will be 60 minutes long.

- 1 Decide what proportion of this time should concentrate on:
 - a) people power
 - b) problems in the USSR
 - c) Actions by Western leaders such as Reagan
 - d) Actions of political leaders in eastern Europe
 - e) Mikhail Gorbachev.
- 2 Choose one of these aspects and summarise the important points, stories, pictures or sources that your film should cover under that heading.

Focus Task B

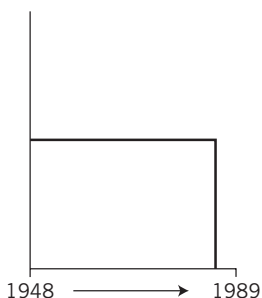
How secure was Soviet control of eastern Europe?

You now know a lot about Soviet control of eastern Europe:

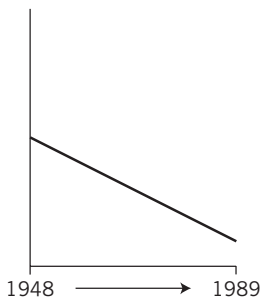
- ◆ how and why Communists seized control of each country in the 1940s (Chapter 4)
- ◆ how the Soviet Union successfully crushed opposition and threats to control from the 1950s to the 1980s
- ◆ how the Communist regimes of eastern Europe and the USSR collapsed so suddenly in 1989–90.

Here are the three graphs from page 123. Which do you think best represents the story of Soviet control of eastern Europe?

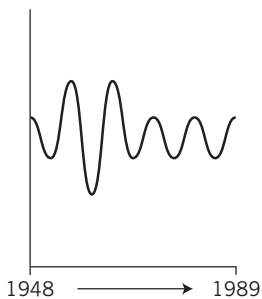
If you pick this graph, you think Soviet control stayed steady for years, then collapsed in 1989.



If you pick this graph, you think Soviet control gradually decreased over time.



If you pick this graph, you think Soviet control fluctuated in response to various crises.



If you think none of them is right then draw your own. Explain your graph using evidence from this chapter. You could refer back to your work for the Focus Tasks on pages 127, 132 and 137.

Keywords

Make sure you know what these terms mean and are able to define them confidently.

- ◆ Berlin Wall
- ◆ Brezhnev Doctrine
- ◆ Censorship
- ◆ Checkpoint Charlie
- ◆ Co-existence
- ◆ Comecon
- ◆ Cominform
- ◆ Communism
- ◆ Communist bloc
- ◆ De-Stalinisation
- ◆ Freedom of speech
- ◆ Glasnost
- ◆ Iron curtain
- ◆ Martial law
- ◆ NATO
- ◆ Nobel Peace Prize
- ◆ One-party state
- ◆ People power
- ◆ Perestroika
- ◆ Politburo
- ◆ Red Army
- ◆ Reunification
- ◆ Secret police
- ◆ Socialism
- ◆ Solidarity
- ◆ Soviet republics
- ◆ Summit meeting
- ◆ Superpower
- ◆ The Prague Spring
- ◆ Trade union
- ◆ Warsaw Pact

Chapter Summary

The USSR and eastern Europe

- 1** After the Second World War, Communist governments were elected or forced on most countries of eastern Europe.
- 2** They were not directly ruled by the USSR but their Communist governments did what the USSR wanted and when they did not the USSR sent troops and tanks (the Red Army) to force them to follow the USSR's wishes.
- 3** Life in these countries was tightly controlled with censorship, a secret police and all industry directed to meeting the needs of the Soviet Union rather than making goods for ordinary people.
- 4** The countries formed a military alliance called the Warsaw Pact – the members would defend each other if any member was attacked.
- 5** In Hungary in 1956 the Communist government was very unpopular and the people resented the lack of freedom. There were demonstrations and protests. A new leader was chosen (with Soviet approval) who promised greater freedom but when he also decided to leave the Warsaw Pact the USSR changed and sent the Red Army to crush the rising.
- 6** In 1961 an increasing number of people in Communist East Germany were leaving by crossing into capitalist West Germany. The USSR responded by building the Berlin Wall – and stopping all movement from East to West Berlin. It stayed in place for 28 years and became a symbol of Cold War tension.
- 7** In Czechoslovakia in 1968 after mass protests the Communist government tried to introduce more freedom for its people. Again, the Soviet Union sent the Red Army to crush the protests.
- 8** In 1980 a trade union in Poland called Solidarity led a protest movement against Communist control that was tolerated to start with until the army took over in Poland and Solidarity was crushed.
- 9** In 1985 Gorbachev became leader of the USSR. He believed the USSR needed to change and he introduced two key ideas: glasnost (openness) and perestroika (restructuring).
- 10** He also told the Communist governments of eastern Europe that the USSR was no longer going to intervene to prop them up. They were on their own. In 1988 he began to withdraw Soviet troops from eastern Europe.
- 11** The impact of this was not immediately clear but by 1989 people in eastern Europe began to test what this meant in practice. First of all Hungarians began to dismantle the barbed-wire fence between Hungary and the west. Over the rest of the summer of 1989 people acted similarly throughout eastern Europe, culminating with the dismantling of the Berlin Wall (while troops looked on) in November.
- 12** Gorbachev was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for helping to end the Cold War between the USA and the USSR but he was not popular in the USSR. The USSR fragmented and he resigned as leader on Christmas Day 1991.

Exam Practice

See pages 168–175 and pages 316–319 for advice on the different types of questions you might face.

- 1(a)** What were glasnost and perestroika? **[4]**
- (b)** Explain why Mikhail Gorbachev changed Soviet policy towards eastern Europe. **[6]**
- (c)** 'Gorbachev almost singlehandedly ended Communist control of eastern Europe.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer. **[10]**
- 2** Study Source 26 on page 134. How far do you think Source 26 is a reliable source? Explain your answer using the source and your own knowledge. **[7]**
- 3** Study Source 28 on page 135. Why was this source published at this time? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge. **[7]**

FUNNY, INTELLIGENT, SADDAM ALL

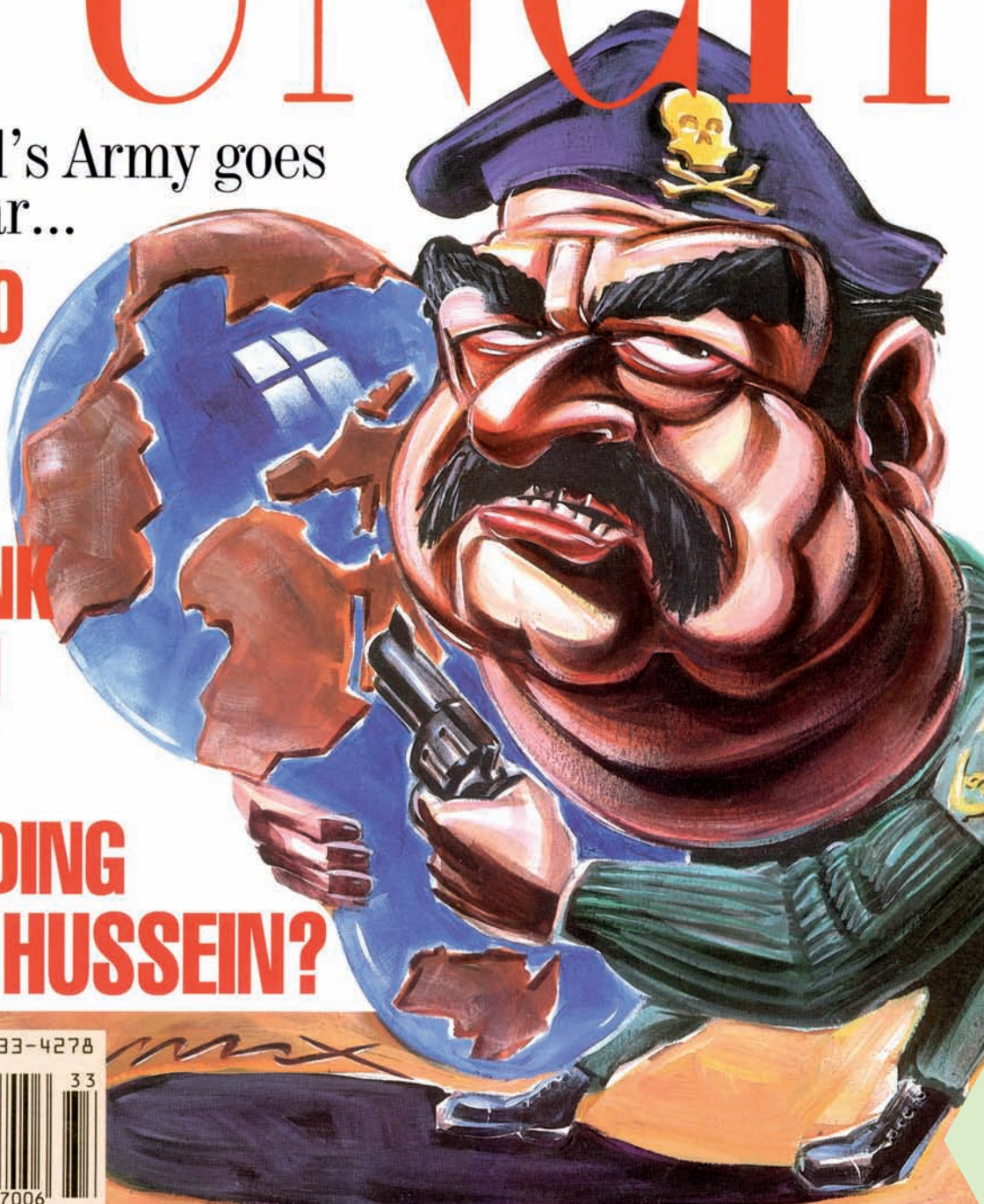
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