

[PRELIMS 2018] J2 H2 HISTORY ABBREVIATED EXAMINERS' COMMENTS

Section A - End of Cold War

Source A (Challenge)

The **process of renovating this country and bringing about drastic change in the international community has proven to be much more complicated than anyone could imagine.** However, let us give its due to what has been done so far. This society has acquired freedom. It has been freed politically and spiritually, and this is the most important achievement that we have yet fully come to grips with. And we haven't, because we haven't learned to use freedom yet. However, an effort of historical importance has been carried out. The totalitarian system has been eliminated, which prevented this country from becoming a prosperous and well-to-do country a long time ago. A breakthrough has been effected on the road of democratic change. Once again, I would like to stress that during this transitional period, I did everything that needed to be done...

I'm aware that there is popular resentment as a result of today's grace situation. I note that authority at all levels, and myself are being subject to harsh criticisms. I would like to stress once again, though, that the cardinal change in so vast a country, given its heritage, could not have been carried out without difficulties, shock and pain.

Gorbachev's Farewell Address to Soviet Citizens, 25 December 1991.

Source B (Challenge)

Gorbachev's policy of glasnost came under heavy attack at the Soviet Communist Party conference today, signaling that curbs on editors and official publications spearheading the movement for greater openness in the Soviet Union could soon be imposed...

During today's session a number of speakers complained vigorously of abuses of glasnost, according to Yuri Sklyarov, the head of the propaganda department of the party's policy-making Central Committee, who briefed reporters on the conference. Korotich, whose official weekly *Ogonyok* has been at the forefront of the glasnost movement with exposes and virulent attacks on former leader Joseph Stalin, was criticized by name, Sklyarov said. At one point catcalls of "Ogonyok, Ogonyok," came from the floor, according to delegates who asked not to be named...The complaints against periodicals ranged from inaccuracy to failing to give criticized officials a chance to defend themselves. One criticism, voiced by several speakers, was that some journals had gone too far in their criticism of Soviet history...

At least a quarter of today's speakers took issue with the way glasnost is being interpreted and enforced, according to Sklyarov's account. These speakers included Yuri Bondarev, an official of the Writers' Union and a leading spokesman for the conservatives' view that Soviet history is being defamed."

Article, "Soviet delegates attack Glasnost", 1988

Source C (Support)



A picture of mass demonstration in East Germany in 1989. Some of the banners read: "Free elections! Resignation of the government!" and "Abolition of the privilege of the party and the state functionaries! Dissolution of the Stasi!"

<https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2009/11/bsa1-n05.html>

Source D (Support)

As events unfolded in the late spring, summer, and early fall of 1989, a good deal of uncertainty persisted at all levels in Eastern Europe about how the Soviet Union would respond in an emergency. Memories of past Soviet military interventions in Eastern Europe, especially in 1953, 1956, and 1968, were still vivid for most people in the region. Amid this uncertainty, drastic change in the Soviet bloc could not just occur on its own. Instead, **millions of ordinary people had to overcome lingering concerns and fears to make it happen**. The vast number of Poles who voted for Solidarnosc* in Poland's June 1989 legislative elections, the hundreds of thousands of Hungarians who gathered for the ceremonial reburial of Imre Nagy in Budapest less than two weeks later, the huge crowds of East Germans who took part in protest demonstrations in cities throughout the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in October and November 1989, and the millions of Czechs and Slovaks who participated in the Velvet Revolution against the hardline Czechoslovak Communist regime in November 1989, all played crucial roles.

*Solidarnosc – Solidarity

From an article by a professor of Cold War studies in an American university, 2012.

Source E (Challenge)

Nuclear disarmament is to make strategic defence real for all the citizens of planet Earth. Let us speak of our deepest longing for the future: to leave our children a land that is free and just and a world at peace. It is my hope that our fireside summit in Geneva and Mr. Gorbachev's upcoming visit to America can lead to a more stable relationship. But we cannot stroll into the future with childlike faith. Our differences with the Soviet system that openly proclaims and practices an alleged right to command people's lives and to export its ideology by force are deep and abiding. However, logic and history compel us to attempt to ease these tensions for the sake of humanity. Our negotiators in Geneva have proposed a radical cut in offensive forces by each side with no cheating. They have made clear that Soviet compliance with the letter and spirit of agreements is essential. If the Soviet Government wants an agreement that truly reduces nuclear arms, there will be such an agreement.

Extracted from Ronald Reagan's speech to Congress in 1986.

**(a) Compare and contrast Sources A and B on the perceptions of Glasnost.
[10 marks]**

Similarity - that Glasnost had led to negative impacts

Difference – the extent of negativity of Glasnost
the perception on the impacts Source A - there is positive impact / Source B - negative

Explanation of difference:

Source A - Gorbachev - seeking to justify himself, calls from the Soviet conservatives for his removal given the perceived inappropriateness of his policies -> seeking to justify that his policies were vital necessary reforms, and not failures

Source B – the title shows that it is intended to be criticism on Glasnost and hence would only write about negative impacts; 1988 – breakaway in EE

**(b) How far do Sources A to F support the assertion that it was the people's power that ended the Cold War?
[30 marks]**

GENERAL EXAMINERS' COMMENTS

SUPPORT	CHALLENGE
C, D	A, B, E

SECTION B: ESSAY QUESTIONS

THEME II

EITHER

- 2** Assess the role of politics in the development of superpower relations with China from 1950 to 1979. [30]

GENERAL EXAMINERS' COMMENTS

- What is the significance of politics in the development of superpower relations with China?
- BOTH Sino-Soviet and Sino-American relations
Development can both in terms of improvement or deterioration

OR

- 3** To what extent did Cold War explain the involvement of external players in Southeast Asia from 1945 to 1991? [30]

GENERAL EXAMINERS' COMMENTS

- What were the reasons for the involvement of external players?
- External players – USA, USSR, China

THEME III

EITHER

- 4** “The lack of political will by member states created the most difficulties for the success of UN peacekeeping operations during the Cold War.” How far do you agree with the statement? [30]

GENERAL EXAMINERS' COMMENTS

- What led to the most difficulties for success of UN peacekeeping?
- Lack of political will is not just that of the superpowers
- Internal vs. external factors

OR

- 5** “The weaknesses of the UN have been exaggerated.” Discuss the validity of this statement. [30]

GENERAL EXAMINERS' COMMENTS

- “...exaggerated” = some successes
- UN organisation as a whole - GA/SC/SG, NOT just about UN peacekeeping

- End of Paper-