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Preliminary Examination Secondary 4 (O-Level Programme)

HISTORY

2174/02

Paper 2: Developments in the post-WWII world: The Cold War and decolonisation in Southeast Asia, 1940s-1991

1 September 2025

1 hr 50 mins

Additional Materials: Answer Booklets

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name, index number and class on all the work you hand in.

Write in dark blue or black pen.

You may use a soft pencil for any rough working.

Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

DO NOT WRITE ON THE MARGINS.

Section A

Answer **all parts** of Question 1.

Section B

Answer **two** questions.

Write all answers on the Answer Booklets provided.

For examiner's use only:

Section A	/ 30 m
Section B	/ 20 m
Total	/ 50 marks

At the end of the examination, submit Section A and B separately.

The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question or part question.

Section A: Source-Based Case Study

Question 1 is **compulsory** for all candidates.

Study the Background Information and the sources carefully, and then answer **all** the questions.

You may use any of the sources to help you to answer the questions, in addition to those sources you are told to use. In answering the questions, you should use your knowledge of the topic to help you interpret and evaluate the sources.

1 (a) Study Source A.

Why was the cartoon published? Explain your answer. [5]

(b) Study Source B.

How far can you trust what the Soviets are saying about the Berlin Crisis? Explain your answer. [6]

(c) Study Sources C and D.

How far does Source C make you surprised by Source D? Explain your answer. [6]

(d) Study Source E.

What is the message of the source? Explain your answer. [5]

(e) Study **all** the sources.

'USSR's actions in the Berlin Crisis deepened Cold War tensions.' How far do the sources support this view? Use the sources and your knowledge to explain your answer. [8]

Was the USSR responsible for deepening Cold War tensions surrounding the Berlin Crisis?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Read this carefully. It may help you to answer some of the questions.

The Berlin Crisis on 28 June 1948, was the first major crisis of the Cold War, setting the stage for decades of tensions that were to follow. The USSR had already disagreed with Britain and the USA at Potsdam (July 1945) about what should be done with Germany. The Western Allies and USSR had different aims for what they wanted to do to Germany. Stalin wanted to destroy Germany. On the other side, Britain, France, and the USA wanted to rebuild Germany's industries through economic reforms and not repeat the mistake of Versailles. These highlighted the stark differences between USA and USSR's policies towards Germany.

Was the USSR's actions in the Berlin Crisis responsible for deepening Cold War tensions?

Source A: A cartoon titled "The Bird Watcher" by British cartoonist E.H. Shepard, published in *Punch* magazine on 14 July, 1948.



Source B: *A Soviet commentary on the Berlin crisis, published in an international newspaper on 12 May 1949.*

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 to strengthen the West German economy risked bloody incidents. However, in the Spring of 1949, the USA was forced to yield as their war plans had come to nothing because of the conduct of the USSR.

Source C: *An extract from a memo written by Alexander Paniushkin, Soviet Ambassador to the USA, to George Marshall, 14 July 1948.*

The interests of the Berlin population do not permit a situation where the introduction of the Marshall Plan would have similar benefits or validity in the Soviet zone just like in Eastern Europe. Moreover, the introduction of a separate monetary reform in West Germany, has placed Berlin and the whole Soviet zone of occupation in a predicament as it threatens to pour into Berlin and the Soviet zones of occupation. Hence, the Soviet Command has been therefore forced to adopt certain urgent measures for the protection of the interests of the German population and of the economy of the Soviet zone of occupation.

Source D: *President Truman, speaking to the American media in 1949.*

When we combined our zones with Britain and France into a single economic unit and introduced the Marshall Plan and, a new currency in order to rebuild Germany, Stalin could not stop us. Nevertheless, he thought he could make a point by forcing us out of Berlin. However, 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 close to us. The Berlin blockade was a move to test our ability and our will to resist.

Source E: *A historian writing in 1984.*

The Berlin airlift 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.

Source F: *A US Government report, June 1948.*

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 fuel was the reason given for this measure.

**barge: A long flat-bottomed boat for carrying freight on canals and rivers, either under its own power or towed by another.*

Section B: Essays

Answer **two** questions.

- 2** 'The main reason the Malayan Union failed was because the Malays feared that they would be marginalised.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer. [10]
- 3** 'The main aftermath of the Vietnam War in 1975 was that it led to the reduction of Cold War tensions.' How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer. [10]
- 4** 'Gorbachev's reforms were a failure'. How far do you agree with this statement? Explain your answer. [10]

~ End of Paper ~

Copyright Acknowledgements:

Source A: <https://asaphistory.com/tag/berlin-blockade/>

Source B: Ben Welsh GCSE Modern World History, second edition (London: John Murray Publishers Ltd 2002).

Source C: <https://www.cia.gov/resources/csi/static/b25274f2d807c2a6e7aef7579a022335/On-the-Front-Lines-of-the-Cold-War-2-Part2-web.pdf>

Source D: Ben Welsh GCSE Modern World History, second edition (London: John Murray Publishers Ltd 2002).

Source E: Berlin 1948-9 & NATO Johnndclare [https://www.johndclare.net › cold_war9](https://www.johndclare.net/cold_war9)

Source F: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Berlin_Blockade

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