

**Option B: Twentieth century topic****HOW FAR WAS THE SOVIET UNION RESPONSIBLE FOR THE WORSENING OF RELATIONS WITH THE USA AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR?**

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

**Background Information**

Despite being allies against Nazi Germany, relations between the USA and the USSR began to deteriorate before the Second World War ended. The differences in ideology between the two countries probably made this inevitable. The Americans were also concerned by increasing Soviet control over Eastern Europe, while the Soviets feared the US atom bomb. Disagreements over Germany, Churchill's claim about an 'Iron Curtain' descending across Europe and the Truman Doctrine of 1947 deepened the divisions between the two sides.

Was the USA or the USSR responsible for these worsening relations?

**SOURCE A**

The United States and the Soviet Union stepped into the vacuum left in Europe by the decline of the European great powers.

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The Iron Curtain that divided Europe gave the Soviet Union security and condemned eastern Europe to decades of Soviet domination.

*From a history book published in 2015.*

**SOURCE B**

Even if America had accepted the principle of spheres of interest, the contest could only have been delayed rather than indefinitely postponed. The Soviet Union wanted more than security. It was ideologically committed to renew the struggle against 'Western Imperialism'. Within a year of the end of the war the Soviet Union accused its former allies of fascist and imperialist aggression. On the other hand, many people in the West felt that the police states established in eastern Europe did not represent the liberated Europe they had fought for. For Stalin, the Cold War had begun the moment the Second World War ended. However, it took Truman longer to realise what was happening.

On 12 March 1947, President Truman issued his own declaration of Cold War. Presenting the Truman Doctrine to Congress, he used the American fear of Communism to convince Americans they must embark upon a Cold War foreign policy. Three months later the United States announced the Marshall Plan. The Soviets rejected it, thus demonstrating the division of Europe. It became what the Americans

had wanted it to be, a revival of the economies of Western Europe under American guidance and a move in the policy of containment. Despite the Cold War being forced on the West, it produced European unity and lasting American involvement in European affairs – developments highly undesirable from the Soviet point of view.

*From a recent history book.*

## SOURCE C

Basic features of the Soviet view of the world:

The USSR still lives in antagonistic 'capitalist encirclement' with which in the long run there can be no permanent peaceful coexistence. As stated by Stalin in 1927 to a delegation of American workers, 'In the course of further development of international revolution there will emerge two centres of world significance: a socialist centre, drawing to itself the countries which tend toward socialism, and a capitalist centre. Battle between these two centres for command of the world economy will decide the fate of capitalism and communism in the entire world.'

What deductions do they lead to about Soviet policy?

Everything must be done to advance the relative strength of USSR as a factor in international society. No opportunity must be missed to reduce the strength and influence of capitalist powers. Soviet efforts, and those of Russia's friends abroad, must be directed toward deepening and exploiting differences and conflicts between capitalist powers. If these eventually deepen into an 'imperialist' war, this war must be turned into revolutionary upheavals within the various capitalist countries. Where individual governments stand in the path of Soviet purposes, pressure will be brought for their removal.

*From George Kennan's 'Long Telegram', 22 February 1946. Kennan was an American diplomat based in Moscow. He wrote this analysis of Soviet foreign policy for the American government.*

## SOURCE D

US foreign policy has been characterised in the post-war period by a desire for world domination. This is the real meaning of repeated statements by President Truman that the US has a right to world leadership. All the forces of American diplomacy, the Army, Navy, and Air Force, industry, and science have been placed at the service of this policy.

The enormous relative importance of the USSR in European affairs, the independence of its foreign policy, and the economic and political aid which it gives neighbouring countries, is leading to a growth in the influence of the Soviet Union in these countries and a continuing strengthening in them of democratic trends. Such a situation in eastern Europe cannot fail to be viewed by the American imperialists as an obstacle in the path of an expansionist American foreign policy.

It ought to be fully realised that American preparations for a future war are being conducted with the idea of war against the Soviet Union, which in the eyes of American imperialists is the chief obstacle in the American path to world domination.

*A telegram to the Soviet leadership from the Soviet Ambassador in the USA,  
27 September 1946.*

## SOURCE E



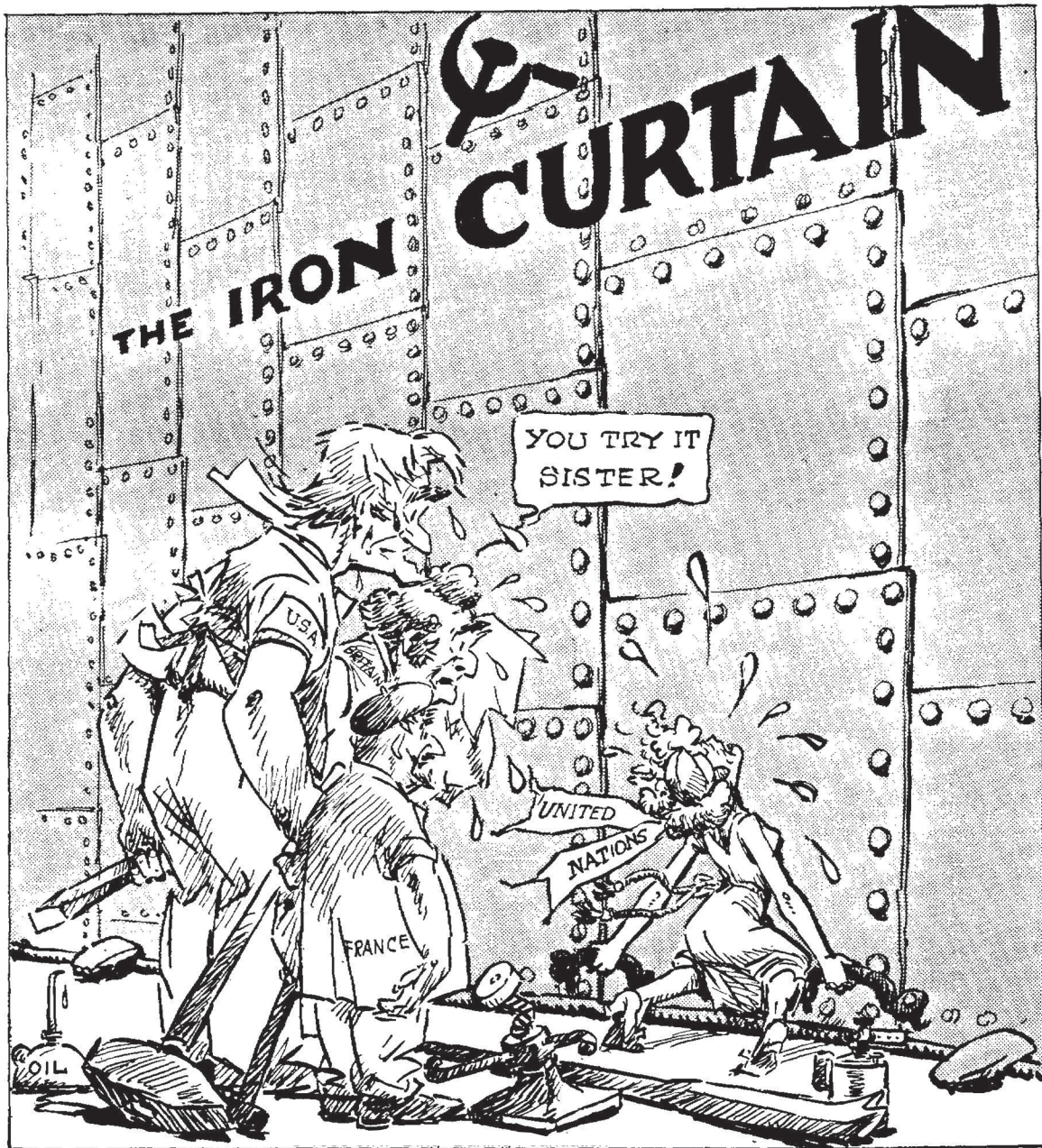
*A cartoon published in the Soviet Union in 1946. The words on the flags held by Churchill read, 'An Iron Curtain is over Europe' and 'Anglo-Saxons must rule the World'. The figures behind Churchill are Hitler and Goebbels.*

## SOURCE F

Whatever excuses are used to justify American claims to domination in Greece, they cannot be justified by a defence of the freedom and independence of the Greek people. American arguments for giving assistance to Turkey are based upon a threat to the integrity of Turkish territory, though nothing threatens Turkish integrity. It is all a smokescreen for an American plan of expansion. Justifications that the USA is called upon to 'save' Greece and Turkey from expansion by the so-called 'totalitarian' states are not new. Hitler also referred to the Communists when he wanted to open the road to conquests.

*The leading article in the Soviet newspaper 'Izvestia', 17 March 1947.*

SOURCE G



A cartoon published in the USA, 1947. The figures on the left represent the USA, Britain and France.

Now answer **all** the following questions. You may use any of the sources to help you answer the questions, in addition to those sources which 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** Study Sources A and B.

How far do these two sources agree? Explain your answer using details of the sources. [7]

**2** Study Sources C and D.

How far does Source C prove that Source D was wrong? Explain your answer using details of the sources and your knowledge. [8]

**3** Study Source E.

Do you find this source surprising? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge. [7]

**4** Study Source F.

Why was this source published in March 1947? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge. [8]

**5** Study Source G.

What is the cartoonist's message? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge. [8]

**6** Study **all** the sources.

How far do these sources provide convincing evidence that the Soviet Union was responsible for the worsening of relations with the West? Use the sources to explain your answer. [12]

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