4.5 Superpower Relations and the Cold War, 1941-91: Czechoslovakia and the Prague Spring, 1968: 30-minute Pack

EDEXCEL 1HI0 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Write in full sentences for Questions 1, 2 and 3. You are advised to spend about 30 minutes on this pack.

1 Explain two consequences of the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia (August 1968).

(Total for Question 1 is 8 marks)

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk

2 Write a narrative account analysing how the Prague Spring developed between Alexander Dubcek becoming First Secretary in January 1968 and the Warsaw Pact invasion in August 1968.

You may use the following information in your answer:
- the Action Programme of April 1968
- the Warsaw Letter of July 1968

You should also use information of your own.

(Total for Question 2 is 8 marks)

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk

3 Explain two of the following:

(a) the importance of Dubcek's reforms for relations within the Eastern Bloc

(b) the importance of the invasion of Czechoslovakia (1968) for the Brezhnev Doctrine

(c) the importance of events in Czechoslovakia in 1968 for the wider Cold War

You must answer on TWO parts.

(Total for Question 3 is 16 marks)

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk

Mark scheme · 4.5 Superpower Relations and the Cold War, 1941-91: Czechoslovakia and the Prague Spring, 1968: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

Level 1 Identifies one or two general consequences of the invasion, with little or no supporting detail or explanation. **1-2**

Level 2 Identifies and begins to explain one consequence, supported by accurate detail. **3-4**

Level 3 Explains two consequences of the invasion, each supported by accurate and relevant detail. **5-6**

Level 4 Explains two consequences in a well-developed, logically structured way, supported throughout by precise and accurate detail, showing how the consequences connect. **7-8**

Indicative content:

- Dubcek's reforms were reversed and, by April 1969, he had been replaced as party leader by the hardline Gustav Husak, who restored strict communist control and press censorship in a process known as 'normalisation', ending the Prague Spring's changes.
- The invasion led to the announcement of the Brezhnev Doctrine, which stated the USSR's right to intervene in any Warsaw Pact state where socialism was judged to be under threat, sending a clear warning to other Eastern Bloc countries not to attempt similar reforms.
- Western governments condemned the invasion but did not intervene militarily, recognising, as with Hungary in 1956, that Czechoslovakia lay within the accepted Soviet sphere of influence, showing the limits of Western willingness to challenge Soviet control of Eastern Europe directly.
- The invasion damaged the international reputation of the Soviet Union and of communism more widely, including among Western European communist parties, some of whom publicly criticised the invasion and began to distance themselves from strict Soviet-style communism.

Question 2

Level 1 Simple, generalised statements about the Prague Spring, with little organisation or sense of change over time. **1-2**

Level 2 Some accurate knowledge is deployed, with limited organisation into a sequence; the account may be more a list of events than a developed narrative. **3-4**

Level 3 The account is organised and mostly coherent, and shows some analysis of how the crisis developed, with accurate supporting detail. **5-6**

Level 4 The answer demonstrates a coherent, well-organised narrative that analyses connections between events across the crisis, showing clearly how reform led to Soviet intervention, fully supported by precise and accurate detail. **7-8**

Indicative content:

- In January 1968, Alexander Dubcek became First Secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, replacing the more hardline Antonin Novotny, and began introducing reforms intended to modernise and liberalise communist rule while remaining within the Warsaw Pact.
- In April 1968, the Action Programme formally set out Dubcek's reform plans, including relaxed censorship and moves towards economic and political change, and over the following weeks Czechoslovak public life became visibly freer, with open criticism of the government appearing in the press.
- This pace of change alarmed the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact leaders, who in July 1968 sent Dubcek the Warsaw Letter, warning him directly to reverse the reforms or face unspecified consequences.
- Direct negotiations at Cierna nad Tisou and Bratislava in late July and early August 1968 produced an apparent compromise, with Dubcek reaffirming loyalty to the Warsaw Pact, but Soviet leaders remained unconvinced that Czechoslovak communism was genuinely secure.
- On the night of 20-21 August 1968, Warsaw Pact forces (though not Romania) invaded Czechoslovakia, meeting largely peaceful civilian resistance rather than armed defence, and Dubcek was removed from power, showing how a period of gradual reform ended in direct Soviet military intervention once diplomacy failed to satisfy Moscow's concerns.

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk

Question 3

Level 1 For each part answered: identifies a general point of importance, with little or no supporting detail or explanation. **1-4**

Level 2 For each part answered: begins to explain importance, supported by some accurate detail. **5-8**

Level 3 For each part answered: explains importance clearly, supported by accurate and relevant detail, with some analysis of consequences. **9-12**

Level 4 For each part answered: explains importance in a well-developed, analytical way, fully supported by precise and accurate detail, showing clearly why the event mattered for the outcome named. **13-16**

Indicative content:

- (a) Dubcek's reforms were important for relations within the Eastern Bloc because they raised the possibility, for the first time since 1956, that a Warsaw Pact state might significantly loosen communist control and still remain within the alliance, testing how far the Soviet Union would tolerate independent action by its allies.
- (b) The invasion was important for the Brezhnev Doctrine because it provided the direct occasion for the USSR to formally state its right to intervene in any socialist state where communism was under threat, turning what had been an unstated assumption (as with Hungary in 1956) into an openly declared policy.
- (c) Events in Czechoslovakia were important for the wider Cold War because they showed the continuing limits of change within the Soviet sphere of influence even as some Western observers had hoped for gradual liberalisation, and the episode damaged the reputation of Soviet-style communism internationally without leading to any direct Western military response.
- A strong answer on any two parts explains a clear causal chain from the named development to the outcome specified, using precise dates, and may note that the invasion reaffirmed rather than changed the practical boundaries of Soviet control established since the late 1940s.

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk