4.7 Detente and Arms Control: SALT I and the Helsinki Agreement, 1969-75: 30-minute Pack

EDEXCEL 1HI0 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. You are advised to spend about 30 minutes on this pack.

1 State four ways in which the high cost of the arms race pressured the USA and the USSR towards detente by the early 1970s.

(Total for Question 1 is 4 marks)

2 Explain two consequences of the 1972 SALT I agreements for superpower relations and international security.

(Total for Question 2 is 8 marks)

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk

3 Write a narrative account analysing how the memory of the Cuban Missile Crisis and the cost of the arms race helped push the USA and the USSR towards detente between 1969 and 1972.

You may use the following information in your answer:
- the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 and its impact on leaders perceptions of nuclear risk
- rising defence and missile development costs in the 1960s and their effect on national budgets

You should also use information of your own.

(Total for Question 3 is 8 marks)

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk

Mark scheme · 4.7 Detente and Arms Control: SALT I and the Helsinki Agreement, 1969-75: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

defence spending diverted resources from domestic priorities, creating political pressure for economies to be managed more carefully	**B1**
both superpowers faced rising costs to develop and maintain new generations of missiles and delivery systems	**B1**
economic strains made leaders more open to arms control as a means to cap spending and reduce the need for constant new investment	**B1**
costs of nuclear deterrence reduced the funds available for social programmes and economic modernisation, creating incentive to limit further escalation	**B1**

Answer: Defence spending diverted resources from domestic needs and required cuts elsewhere; the cost of developing and maintaining missiles and delivery systems was growing; these economic strains made arms control attractive to cap spending; costly nuclear deterrence reduced funds for social and economic programmes.

Question 2

Level 1 Identifies one or two general consequences of SALT I with little or no supporting detail or explanation.	**1-2**
Level 2 Identifies and begins to explain one consequence, supported by some accurate detail.	**3-4**
Level 3 Explains two consequences of SALT I, 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 relate to wider superpower relations and security.	**7-8**

Indicative content:

- A direct consequence was a reduction in the rate of growth of strategic offensive weapons, since the interim agreement froze ICBM numbers, which reduced the immediate pressure on each side to add more missiles and eased tension over sudden arms expansion.
- The ABM Treaty, limiting anti-ballistic missiles to a very small number of sites, reduced incentives to build full national missile defences, maintaining the balance of mutually assured destruction and thus stabilising deterrence in the short term.
- SALT I increased diplomatic contact and trust-building between Washington and Moscow, creating mechanisms for verification and future talks, which made cooperation on other issues more likely while detente lasted.
- However, by freezing rather than reducing arsenals SALT I also accepted the existence of large nuclear forces, so it stabilised rather than eliminated the underlying threat and left unresolved questions about qualitative improvements and new weapon types.

Question 3

Level 1 Simple, generalised statements with little organisation or sense of change over time.	**1-2**
Level 2 Some accurate knowledge is used and the answer shows limited organisation into a sequence; may be more a list of events than a narrative.	**3-4**
Level 3 Organised and mostly coherent account showing some analysis of how perceptions and costs changed policy, with accurate supporting detail.	**5-6**
Level 4 A coherent, well-organised narrative that analyses connections between events across the period and shows clearly how the Cuban crisis and the arms race costs pushed leaders towards detente, fully supported by precise and accurate detail.	**7-8**

Indicative content:

- Leaders on both sides remembered the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 as a close brush with nuclear war, which made the avoidance of direct confrontation and a reduction in the risk of nuclear accidents a high priority in later decision-making.
- The crisis made political leaders, military planners and publics more aware of the destructive potential of superpower confrontation, creating a political environment in which negotiation and arms limitation appeared sensible and necessary.
- Economic pressures in the 1960s, including expensive missile programmes and delivery systems, meant both countries had to weigh the opportunity cost of continued rapid expansion of nuclear arsenals against domestic economic needs.
- In the USA, the Vietnam War also competed for resources, increasing the attractiveness of arms control to reduce defence spending pressures; in the USSR, economic limits on consumer and investment spending made leaders cautious about open-ended military competition.
- These factors combined to create a policy window in which leaders such as Nixon and Brezhnev were willing to negotiate SALT I and related agreements as pragmatic ways to reduce risk and cap the most costly aspects of the arms race.

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk