# 4.8 The Collapse of Detente: SALT II and the Invasion of Afghanistan, 1979: 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** Give one reason why US senators decided not to ratify SALT II after it was signed.

**(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)**

**2** State two US concerns about the Soviet Union in the late 1970s that fed suspicion of Soviet intentions.

**(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)**

**3** Name one prominent US and Western diplomatic response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan that signalled a harder line, separate from SALT II ratification.

**(Total for Question 3 is 1 mark)**

**4** Name the Afghan communist party with which Hafizullah Amin was associated when he took power in 1979.

**(Total for Question 4 is 1 mark)**

**5** State one Soviet strategic concern about Afghanistan that made Moscow view a pro-Western government there as unacceptable.

**(Total for Question 5 is 1 mark)**


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**6** Give the name of the NATO policy, decided in 1979, which combined deployment of Western missiles with an offer to negotiate limits on Soviet SS-20s.

**(Total for Question 6 is 1 mark)**


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**7** Explain two consequences of the US Senate not ratifying the SALT II agreement after it was signed in 1979. You should explain the effects this decision had on the state of detente and superpower relations in the late 1970s and very early 1980s.

**(Total for Question 7 is 8 marks)**

**8** Write a narrative account analysing how the deployment of SS-20 missiles and growing US concerns about Soviet behaviour contributed to the breakdown of detente between 1977 and the end of 1979.

You may use the following information in your answer:
- the deployment of SS-20 missiles to sites able to strike Western Europe
- growing US concern over Soviet human rights abuses and other aggressive actions, including events in 1979

You should also use information of your own.

**(Total for Question 8 is 8 marks)**


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# Mark scheme · 4.8 The Collapse of Detente: SALT II and the Invasion of Afghanistan, 1979: 30-minute Pack

## Question 1

the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 **B1**

**Answer: Because of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979.**

## Question 2

deployment of SS-20 missiles in Eastern Europe **B1**

reports of Soviet human rights abuses and treatment of dissidents **B1**

**Answer: The deployment of SS-20 missiles in Eastern Europe, and concerns about Soviet human rights abuses and treatment of dissidents.**

## Question 3

the US-led boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics **B1**

**Answer: The US-led boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics**

## Question 4

the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) **B1**

**Answer: The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, the PDPA**

## Question 5

fear that a pro-Western Afghanistan would allow US influence close to Soviet Central Asian borders **B1**

**Answer: Soviet fear that a pro-Western Afghanistan would allow US influence close to Soviet Central Asian borders**

## Question 6

the dual-track decision **B1**

**Answer: The dual-track decision**

## Question 7

**Level 1** Identifies one or two simple consequences of the non-ratification, with little or no supporting detail. **1-2**

**Level 2** Identifies and begins to explain one consequence, supported by some accurate detail about detente or relations. **3-4**

**Level 3** Explains two consequences of the non-ratification, each supported by accurate and relevant detail showing effects on detente and relations. **5-6**

**Level 4** Explains two consequences in a well-developed and linked way, supported throughout by precise detail, showing how the non-ratification worsened distrust and affected subsequent policies. **7-8**

**Indicative content:**

- It undermined trust and the political basis of detente, since the failure to ratify a signed arms control treaty signalled that the United States might not honour negotiated limits, encouraging the Soviets to doubt US commitment to arms control.
- The non-ratification hardened US policy and public opinion, making administrations and Congress more willing to take a stronger stance, for example increasing defence spending and supporting NATO measures such as the dual-track decision, reducing the space for cooperative diplomacy.
- It contributed to an arms control stalemate, since a major treaty agreed at summit level was left unratified and future negotiations became more difficult in an atmosphere of mutual suspicion.
- The decision fuelled Soviet propaganda that the West was unreliable, and this helped justify to Soviet leaders a more robust security posture, including reinforcing their influence in neighbouring regions such as Afghanistan.


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## Question 8

**Level 1** Simple, generalised statements with little organisation or sequence; limited explanation of how events are connected. **1-2**

**Level 2** Some accurate knowledge presented in a basic sequence; begins to show how SS-20 deployments and US concerns affected detente. **3-4**

**Level 3** A coherent narrative that explains the sequence of events and analyses connections between deployments, US reactions and political developments, supported by accurate detail. **5-6**

**Level 4** A well-structured, detailed narrative that analyses how the SS-20 deployments and rising US concerns combined to erode trust, influenced NATO and US policy, and prepared the ground for a decisive breakdown in detente by the end of 1979. **7-8**

**Indicative content:**

- From the mid-to-late 1970s the Soviet deployment of SS-20 mobile medium-range missiles across its western areas alarmed NATO because these systems could strike western European capitals with multiple warheads, upsetting the strategic balance that arms control aimed to stabilise.
- Western concern about SS-20s fed directly into NATO debates and led to the 1979 dual-track decision that combined a threat to deploy Western intermediate-range missiles with an offer to negotiate limits, a sign that confidence in arms control had weakened.
- At the same time, US concerns about Soviet human rights abuses and the treatment of dissidents undermined public and Congressional support for close cooperation, and incidents in 1979, especially the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, crystallised the impression that Moscow was prepared to use force abroad.
- The combination of a visible Soviet military build-up in Europe and growing moral and political opposition to Soviet behaviour in the United States narrowed the room for diplomatic compromise, leading to the effective collapse of detente by the end of 1979.


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