
A-level HISTORY

International Relations and Global Conflict, c1890–1941

Paper 2K

Specimen 2014

Morning Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 12-page answer book.

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is **2K**.
- Answer **three** questions.
In **Section A** answer Question 01.
In **Section B** answer **two** questions.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Advice

- You are advised to spend about:
 - 60 minutes on Question 01
 - 45 minutes on each of the two questions in Section B.
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Section AAnswer Question 01.

Source A

Adapted from a letter sent by the leader of the German Peace Delegation, Count Brockdorff-Rantzau, to the Peace Conference President, Georges Clemenceau, May 1919.

We came to Versailles in the expectation of receiving a peace proposal based on the agreed principles. We were firmly resolved to do everything in our power to fulfil the grave obligations we have undertaken. We hoped for the peace of justice that had been promised to us. We were aghast when we read in documents the demands made upon us, the victorious violence of our enemies. The exactions of this treaty are more than the German people can bear. Cut to pieces and weakened, Germany must declare herself ready to bear all the war expenses of her enemies, which would exceed many times over the total amount of German economic assets, both state and private. At the same time, the reconstruction of our economic life is made impossible. Even in internal affairs we are to give up self-determination. The international Reparations Commission is to have dictatorial powers over the whole life of our people. In other spheres also, German sovereignty is abolished. The German people are excluded from the League of Nations. Thus must a whole people sign its own death sentence.

Source B

Adapted from Georges Clemenceau's 'Letter of Reply to the Objections of the German Peace Delegation', May 1919. This was written on behalf of the Allies.

The protest of the German delegation shows that they utterly fail to understand the position in which Germany stands today. The Allied and Associated Powers therefore feel it necessary to begin their reply by a clear statement of the judgement passed on the war by practically the whole of civilised mankind. The war which began on August 1st 1914, the greatest crime against humanity and the freedom of peoples that any nation has ever committed. Germany has despoiled her neighbours of everything she could make use of or carry away. Germany has destroyed the shipping of all nations on the high seas, leaving no chance of rescue for passengers or crews. It is only justice that restitution should be made and that those wronged peoples should be safeguarded for a time from the competition of a nation, Germany, whose industries are still intact and have even been strengthened by machinery stolen from other countries. If these things are hardships for Germany, they are hardships Germany has brought upon herself. Somebody must suffer for the consequences of the war. Is it to be Germany, or only the peoples Germany has wronged?

Source C

Adapted from an article by a leading socialist, Karl Kautsky in 'Die Freiheit' (Freedom), the party newspaper of the German Independent Socialists, 14 May 1919.

What now? Shall we sign this treaty even if it is not made less severe? Doubtless, acceptance would be suicide, if the treaty were indeed a peace of destruction or a time-limited death sentence. But, hard as the terms are, they cannot destroy the German people, even though they may make life very difficult. On the other hand, it would mean the abrupt physical destruction of Germany if the peace were rejected and the state of war continued. The consequence would simply be a worse set of peace terms, because fear of Germany is the principal reason for the harshness of the treaty. If any improvement of its terms is possible, it can be achieved only by an appeal to reason, not to fear: not by demanding sympathy with specifically German interests but by pointing out that the whole world's interests will be endangered by the conditions compelled upon Germany.

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With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying the treatment of Germany in the Treaty of Versailles.

[30 marks]

Section B

Answer **two** questions.

0 2

'The descent into a general European war in 1914 had very little to do with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

0 3

'The deterioration in the prospects for peace in the years 1924 to 1935 was mainly due to the Great Depression.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

0 4

'The western democracies failed to avoid the outbreak of a general war in Europe in 1939 because of their fear of Communism.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

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