

Paper 2 specimen questions with sample answers

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SOURCE A

A cartoon published in the Soviet Union in 1960. The notice held by a member of the US government says to Castro, 'I forbid you to make friends with the Soviet Union.'



SOURCE B

In May 1962 Khrushchev visited Bulgaria. Walking on the beach he was acutely aware that on the opposite shore of the Black Sea, in Turkey, there were American military bases with nuclear warheads capable of wiping out Moscow in a matter of minutes. It was about then that an idea formed in Khrushchev's mind of placing missiles in a base close to the United States. 'Why not throw a hedgehog at Uncle Sam's pants?' Khrushchev asked.

Cuba provided the perfect site. Khrushchev talked with colleagues and then the Presidium in Moscow. His plan to place short-and-medium-range missiles in America's backyard would, overnight, create a parity with America's long-range weapons.

From a history book published in 1998.

SOURCE C

Cuba's geographical position has always made it very vulnerable to its enemies. We were sure that the Americans would never reconcile themselves to the existence of Castro's Cuba. Given this continual threat of American interference, what should our own policy be? This question was constantly on my mind, and I frequently discussed it with the other members of the Presidium.

Everyone agreed that America would not leave Cuba alone unless we did something. While I was on an official visit to Bulgaria, one thought kept hammering away at my brain: what will happen if we lose Cuba? The logical answer was missiles. The United States had already surrounded the Soviet Union with its own bomber bases and missiles. It was during my visit to Bulgaria that I had the idea of installing missiles with nuclear warheads in Cuba.

From Khrushchev's memoirs published in 1971.

SOURCE D

A cartoon published in Britain, 17 October 1962. President Kennedy is on the left, Khrushchev is on the right. Both men are reading books entitled 'Hints On Pruning'. (Pruning means cutting back.)



OVER THE GARDEN WALL

SOURCE E

This is my proposal. No more weapons to Cuba and those within Cuba withdrawn or destroyed, and you respond by ending your blockade and also agree not to invade Cuba.

From a letter by Khrushchev to President Kennedy during the crisis, 26 October 1962.

SOURCE F

Our purpose has been to help Cuba develop as its people desire. You want to relieve your country from danger. Your rockets are stationed on Turkey. You are worried about Cuba. You say it worries you because it lies at a distance of 90 miles from the United States. Turkey lies next to us! I make this proposal. We agree to remove the missiles from Cuba. The United States will remove its missiles from Turkey.

From a letter by Khrushchev to President Kennedy, 27 October 1962.

SOURCE G

Khrushchev read a message from President Kennedy: 'We are going to withdraw the missiles from Turkey.' When I heard that, I imagine that Khrushchev knew it was the last thing I wanted to hear. He knew how we were totally against being used as a bargaining chip. That went against the theory the missiles had been sent to defend Cuba. You do not defend Cuba by withdrawing missiles from Turkey.

Castro, in 1992, remembering a conversation with Khrushchev in 1963.

1 Study Source A.

Why was this cartoon published in the Soviet Union in 1960?

Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge. (7)

*(Cambridge IGCSE History 0470 Specimen Paper 2 Q1
For Examination from 2015)*

The cartoon was published in the Soviet Union in 1960 to highlight to the Soviet people the poor relations between Cuba and the US. The sign in the picture, which states 'I forbid you to make friends with the Soviet Union' is making reference to US involvement in Cuba which, up until 1960, had been considerable. Until Castro's takeover of Cuba the US had a controlling influence in Cuba, but since his arrival in 1960 all US businesses in Cuba had been nationalised without compensation, leading to the US breaking off diplomatic relations with Havana and imposing a trade embargo in response to Castro's reforms. Cuba and the Soviet Union, both communist states, had established relations in 1959 and then signed trade agreements in 1960. The cartoon was probably published to show how America was treating another communist country badly, and therefore generate sympathy for Cuba as well as hatred for America.

2 Study Sources B and C.

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

*(Cambridge IGCSE History 0470 Specimen Paper 2 Q2
For Examination from 2015)*

On the one hand these sources are in agreement regarding the placing of nuclear weapons in Cuba. They both agree that it was on a visit to Bulgaria that Khrushchev decided to place nuclear weapons into Cuba. They agree therefore that it was his decision, and he made it on reflection that Cuba was an ideal site for its close proximity to the US.

However there is disagreement in the sources regarding Khrushchev's main reason for putting missiles into Cuba. Source B suggests that it was the presence of US missiles in Turkey that made Khrushchev move the missiles there, wanting to create a sense of parity in terms of the presence of long range missiles possessed by the US. But Source C sees the reason as being to protect Cuba, with Khrushchev thinking the country was in danger from US attacks and only by moving weapons there would they be able to protect it.

The difference here may well be explained by considering the provenance of the sources. Source C is taken from Khrushchev's own memoirs, and he may well want to appear defensive in tone, hence why he explains the move of the missiles as protecting Cuba. Source B, written by a modern historian, sees it in a more provocative way.

3 Study Source D.

What is the message of this source? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge. (8)

*(Cambridge IGCSE History 0470 Specimen Paper 2 Q3
For Examination from 2015)*

I think that the message of the source is that both men are concerned over the spread of their rival's influence into their own sphere, but ultimately I think the cartoonist is trying to make the point that Kennedy is over-reacting to the placing of Soviet missiles in Cuba.

The influence of their rivals spreading is shown in the cartoon as the branches creeping into the gardens, and the fact that both leaders are shown reading the books on pruning portrays that both leaders were concerned over the influence that this may well have. The cartoon is painted at the height of the Cold War and is reflecting the mood at the time. The fact that Cuba is the only small branch creeping into the American side, whereas the large branches of West Germany, Japan and Turkey are going into the USSR side, supports the view that the message of the source is that Kennedy's reaction is over the top – he's reacting to one small country in the same way that the USSR is reacting to several issues.

4 Study Sources E and F.

Was Khrushchev lying in one of these sources? Explain your answer using details of the sources and your knowledge. (8)

*(Cambridge IGCSE History 0470 Specimen Paper 2 Q4
For Examination from 2015)*

No, I don't think Khrushchev is lying in one of these sources. They are similar in many respects, and he doesn't contradict himself; he just increases his demands in the second letter.

In the first letter Khrushchev agrees to remove weapons from Cuba, an offer he continues to make in the second letter, showing consistency. In the second letter he alludes to why these missiles are there, indicating he feels threatened by US weapons in Turkey. Whilst his offer to the Americans largely stays the same, it's what he wants in return that changes; but he's not necessarily lying in the first letter.

Initially he asks that America "end your blockade and also agree not to invade Cuba", but by the second letter the focus has shifted away from Cuba and instead he requests that "The United States will remove its missiles from Turkey". This change isn't a lie, it's an escalation of what he wants. It does show that Khrushchev's motive was always Turkey and not Cuba, but it doesn't show deceit. It just shows him not wanting to reveal his demands straight away.

5 Study Source G.

Are you surprised by this source? Explain your answer using details of the source and your knowledge. (8)

*(Cambridge IGCSE History 0470 Specimen Paper 2 Q5
For Examination from 2015)*

I am not surprised by this source in many respects. Firstly I am not surprised that Khrushchev knew Castro would be angry once he knew of the withdrawal of the missiles from Cuba; as the USSR and Cuba were both communist allies Castro would have expected Khrushchev to support Cuba, not abandon them, because America agreed to remove weapons from Turkey. Secondly I am not surprised Castro seems angry in the source, as he would have felt let down by Khrushchev over the Cuban Missile Crisis.

I am a little surprised that Castro was willing to criticise an ally like this. However this can be explained by the timing of the source. By 1992 the Soviet Empire had started to collapse, and the influence of Communism in Eastern Europe was declining. Furthermore Khrushchev had fallen from power shortly after the Cuban Missile Crisis, and so was no longer a world leader. Therefore I am not surprised that Castro is willing to criticise Khrushchev because the USSR was no longer so important to Cuba.

6 Study all the sources.

How far do these sources provide convincing evidence that Khrushchev put missiles into Cuba to protect Cuba from the USA? Use the sources to Explain your answer. (12)

*(Cambridge IGCSE History 0470 Specimen Paper 2 Q6
For Examination from 2015)*

In many respects, the sources do support the view that Khrushchev put missiles into Cuba to protect Cuba from the US. The strongest source to support this view comes from Khrushchev himself, who in Source C states "everyone agreed that America would not leave Cuba alone unless we did something", showing that the source strongly supports the view that he wanted to protect Cuba. As these are his memoirs though he may want to sound like he had Cuba's interests, rather than forcing America out of Turkey, as his motivation. Source E echoes this point, as Khrushchev demands that America "agree not to invade Cuba", showing that he is concerned for their safety. Source A also indicates that this view is true, as it shows a Soviet cartoon trying to generate support for Cuba against America, showing that the USSR was genuinely concerned regarding Cuba's safety.

However, some of the sources disagree with the view. Source B believes that the weapons were put there in response to US missiles in Turkey which threatened Cuba, with it declaring Khrushchev asked 'Why not throw a hedgehog at Uncle Sam's pants?' meaning he wants to stir up trouble. Source F also supports the view Turkey was the motivation, not Cuba, as Khrushchev is requesting that "The United States will remove its missiles from Turkey". This shows how they were not as concerned for Cuba and that actually they're only a bargaining chip. This view is supported by Castro in Source G, who suggests that Cuba was only being used by the USSR to force America to withdraw weapons. Castro's reliability might be doubtful though, writing once relations between the USSR and Cuba were less important and the Soviet Empire had collapsed.

Overall, whilst the sources provide evidence that Khrushchev put missiles into Cuba to protect Cuba from the US, it isn't convincing. What the sources actually seem to suggest is that Khrushchev wanted to use Cuba to force America to remove weapons from Turkey, thereby safeguarding the USSR.

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