

Sample Questions -
Section C - Conflict, Crisis and Change: The Middle East, c.1919-73

Middle East Crisis - 1

- a) What does this source tell us about the Jewish-Arab problem? (3)

Source: Extract from the Peel Commission Report, 1937.

A conflict has arisen between two national communities within the narrow bounds of one small country. About 1,000,000 Arabs are in strife with 400,000 Jews. The national hopes of these two are the greatest bar to peace. The First World War inspired the Arabs with the hope of reviving the tradition of the Arab 'golden age'. The Jews mean to show what the Jewish nation can achieve when restored to the land of its birth. National assimilation between Jews and Arabs seems to be ruled out.

- b) Describe the key features of **either** the end of the British Mandate in Palestine, 1945-47 **or** the formation of the state of Israel, 1948-50. (7)

- c) In what ways did relations between Arabs and Jews in Palestine change as a result of events in the years 1919-48?

You may use the following information to help you with your answer.

- Jewish immigration to Palestine
- The Arab Revolt

Middle East Crisis - 2

- a) What does this source tell us about the Arabs and the British Mandate? (3)

Source: From an interview in 1979 with an Arab who grew up under the British mandate to govern Palestine.

Our message was simple. During the period of the British mandate the British should have enabled us to move towards independence. That was supposed to be the goal of the Mandate. It was clear the real goal was different. It was to establish a Jewish state on Arab ruins, to uproot the Arab from his country. They were going to replace us with a Jewish state.

- b) Describe the key features of **either** Jewish immigration to Palestine between 1919-39,
or the Jewish terrorist activities against the British in the 1940s. (7)
- c) In what ways did developments in Palestine and Israel, 1945-50, lead to the establishment and consolidation of the state of Israel?
You may use the following information to help you with your answer.

- Support for the creation of a Jewish homeland from the USA
- British withdrawal from Palestine

(15)

Middle East Crisis - 3

- a) What does this source tell us about the seizure of the Suez Canal in 1956? (3)

Source: From a letter to the US President written by the British Prime Minister, September 1956.

The seizure of the Suez Canal is the opening move in a planned campaign designed by Nasser to expel all western influence and interests from Arab countries. Nasser believes his prestige in Arabia will be so great that Arab governments will have to place their oil resources under the control of a united Arabia led by Egypt. When that moment comes, Nasser can deny oil to Europe and we here shall be at his mercy.

- b) Describe the key features of **either** Nasser's control of Egypt, 1954-56 **or** the involvement of the USA in the Suez Crisis. (7)
- c) In what ways did relations between Israel and the Arab states change in the years 1967-73? (15)

You may use the following information to help you with your answer.

- The Six-Day War
- Yom Kippur War

Middle East Crisis - 4

- a) What does this source tell us about Jewish attitudes towards Palestinian refugees? (3)

Source: David Ben-Gurion, Prime Minister of Israel, speaking at a cabinet meeting, 16 June 1948 .

I do not accept that we should encourage the return of the Palestinians [who have fled]. We must prevent at all costs their return. We shall enter the empty villages and settle in them. Tens of thousands of Jews will move to less populated areas: the Negev, Galilee, and the area around Jerusalem. We shall achieve this solution for the Jewish people. In peacetime we would not be able to do what we can do in war.

- b) Describe the key features of **either** the Suez-Sinai Conflict, **or** Palestinian terrorist actions against Israel, 1954-72. (7)
- c) In what ways did relations between Israel and its Arab neighbours change in the years 1948-67? You may use the following information to help you with your answer. (15)

- Israeli successes in the 1948 War
- The Suez-Sinai Conflict

Middle East Crisis - 5

a) What does this source tell us about the role of the USSR in the Suez Crisis? (3)

Source: From an interview with a diplomat from the USSR who was in Egypt during the 1950s.

The USSR was keen to win allies wherever we could. The Middle East was important because it had oil and also the USA was allied to Israel – this meant that if we helped the Arab states against Israel we could win favour among them. We could hope to spread communism but if the USA was in the Middle East, we had to be. After the Egyptians were refused money for the Aswan Dam, it was an opportunity for us to step in and offer whatever was needed. When fighting broke out, we naturally offered help and threatened the British and French because they were bullies.

b) Describe the key features of the help given by the USA to Israel during the years 1948-55.(7)

c) In what ways did the Superpowers change the Arab-Israeli conflict in the years 1957-73? (15)

You may use the following information to help you with your answer.

- Arms and economic assistance
- The Yom Kippur War

Middle East Crisis - 6

- a) What does the source tell us about Jewish claims to form the state of Israel? (3)

Source: Part of the Israeli Declaration of Independence, issued 14th May 1948

The land of Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious and national identity was formed. Here they achieved independence and created a culture of national and universal significance. Here they wrote and gave the Bible to the world.

Exiled from Palestine, the Jewish people remained faithful to it in all the countries of their dispersion, never ceasing to pray and hope for their return and the restoration of their national freedom.

Impelled by this historic association, Jews strove throughout the centuries to go back to the land of their fathers and regain their statehood.

- b) Describe the key features of the Arab-Israeli War of 1948-49. (7)
- c) In what ways did the conflict between Israel and its Arab neighbours change between the years 1948-73?

You may use the following information to help you with your answer.

- 1956 Suez-Sinai War
- 1967 Six Day War

(15)

Middle East Crisis - 7

a) What does this source tell us about the nature of problems in Palestine in 1948? (3)

Source:

From Count Bernadotte, United Nations Mediator in Palestine in 1948. He wrote this in a report submitted to the General Assembly of the UN on 16th September 1948.

It is undeniable that no settlement of the problem can be achieved if recognition is not given to the right of the Arab refugees to return to the home from which they have been dislodged by the effects of the armed conflict between Arabs and Jews in Palestine. It would be an offence against the principle of natural justice if these innocent victims of the conflict were denied the right to return to their homes, while Jewish immigrants flow into Palestine and indeed offer the threat of permanent replacement of the Arab refugees who have been rooted in the land for centuries.

b) Describe the key features of **either**

Nasser's nationalisation of the Suez Canal, 1956, **or**

Israeli military action against Arab states in the Six Days War, 1967. (7)

c) In what ways did the superpowers play an increasing part in the Arab-Israeli conflict between 1948-73? (15)

You may use the following information to help you with your answer.

- US support for the creation of the state of Israel
- Soviet support for Egypt in its Aswan Dam project

Middle East Crisis - Miscellaneous

1 a) What does the source tell us about the relationship between the USA and Israel (3)

Source: From Simcha Dinitz, Israeli Ambassador to the USA, 1973-79

In the contest between Russia and America during the Cold War, Israel was an automatic ally of the West. After the Six Day War this automatic ally became a strategic asset in the Middle East. As a result America became Israel's principle source of arms.

2 b) Describe the key features of **either** Sadat's leadership of Egypt, 1970-73, **or**, the Arab attack on Israel in the Yom Kippur War (7)

3 a) What does this source tell us about the Egyptian attitude towards Israel? (3)

Source: From a pamphlet distributed to all Egyptian soldiers in June 1973.

We, the sons of Egypt, are determined to throw the Israelis back, to sweep through their positions, killing and destroying them, to wipe out the shame of the defeat of 1967, and to regain our honour and pride. Kill them wherever you find them, for they are treacherous people.

4a) What does Source A tell us about Arab expectations in the Yom Kippur War? (3)

Source: From a report by a British journalist based in Beirut, Lebanon, dated 20th October 1973.

Since war broke out on 6th October, I have met many joyful Arabs, but none with much hope of straight military victory from this war. But for them that is not the most important thing. Above all, this has been a war for Arab pride and in this, whatever military disaster awaits them in the coming weeks, they feel confident of victory of another sort. Honour has been served; the enemy has been made to suffer too.

5a) What does this source tell us about the results of the Suez-Sinai War? (3)

Source: In 1966 General Moshe Dayan, Defence Minister of Israel, wrote this about the Suez-Sinai War of 1956.

The military victory in Sinai brought Israel direct gains such as freedom to use the Gulf of Aqaba and the end to terrorism of the fedayeen. In addition Israel would now be welcomed as a valued friend and ally, since she had the strongest army in the Middle East.

6a) What does the source tell us about the attitude of the Soviet Union towards the Middle East conflict? (3)

Source: From Vladimir Vinogradov, the Soviet Ambassador to Egypt, 1968-72.

In 1967 our weapons turned out to be less effective than we calculated; we had thought that the Arab states would win. We felt that it was then our duty to compensate and supply the Arabs with more arms. In the wider context of the Cold War it was also vital not to let the West win.

7b) Describe the key features of Israeli gains during the Six Days War. (7)

- 8b) Describe the key features of
either Anglo-French involvement in the Suez Crisis, 1956;
or, Israeli involvement in the Suez-Sinai Crisis, 1956;
(**or**, UN involvement in the Suez-Sinai Crisis, 1956);
(**or**, Superpower involvement in the Suez Crisis, 1956).
(7)

- 9a) What does this source tell us about Jewish terrorist activity by 1947? (3)

Source: British Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, speaking to the House of Commons about the bombing of the King David Hotel in 1946.

You will have learned with horror of the brutal and murderous crime committed yesterday in Jerusalem. Of all the outrages which have occurred in Palestine, and they have been many and horrible in the last few months, this is the worst. By this insane act of terrorism 91 innocent people have been killed or are missing in the ruins.

- 10a) What does this source tell us about the Jewish attack on Deir Yassin? (3)

Source: Extract from an Arab account of the attack on Deir Yassin which took place in April 1948.

At 3.45 in the morning Zionist planes dropped 7 shells on the village; the Zionist forces, backed by 15 tanks and mortar fire, surrounded the village, killing and murdering 254 innocent and unarmed people. It was a barbaric crime.

- 11a) What does Source A tell us about the consequences of the Israeli occupation of Gaza in 1967? (3)

Source: A news item from an Arab newspaper, 2nd August 1968.

The Israelis have recently opened offices all over the occupied Gaza Strip to force the Arab people to leave for the East Bank. The Israelis are paying 250 pounds to the father of any Arab family which agrees to leave, with 150 pounds for his wife and 100 for each child. The Arab people are resisting all kinds of force and temptation.

- 12a) What does this source tell us about the Palestinian refugees after 1948? (3)

Source: A United States Senate Committee report, 1957.

The fact is that the Arab states have for ten years used Palestinian refugees as hostages in their struggle against Israel. Arab delegates at the UN have condemned the suffering of their brothers in the refugee camps, but nothing has been done to help them in case a political lever against Israel is lost.