

History route 2
Higher level and standard level
Paper 1 – the Arab–Israeli conflict 1945–1979

Thursday 14 May 2015 (morning)

1 hour

Instructions to candidates

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Answer all the questions.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[25 marks]**.

Read all the sources carefully and answer all the questions that follow.

Sources in this paper have been edited: word additions or explanations are shown in square brackets []; substantive deletions of text are indicated by ellipses ... ; minor changes are not indicated.

These sources and questions relate to the role of the United States, the USSR and the UNO in the Middle East in 1966/1967.

Source A Dr Mike Berry and Professor Gregory Philo, lecturers in social sciences, writing in an introductory book to the conflict in the Middle East, *Israel and Palestine: Competing Histories* (2006).

During the 1960s the Middle East was the site of Cold War rivalry between America and the Soviet Union, as both supplied the region's states with weapons. In spring 1967 the Soviet Union informed the Syrian government that Israel was massing troops on its northern border ready for an attack on Syria. While this is a matter of dispute among historians, the previous years had seen a number of border clashes between the two nations and tensions ran high. Israel threatened to overthrow the Syrian regime unless it stopped Palestinian attacks launched from Syria. Syria ... turned to Egypt with whom it had a mutual defence pact. Egypt then sent troops into the Sinai bordering Israel and asked the UN troops to evacuate their positions. The Egyptian troops then moved into Sharm el Sheikh and proclaimed a blockade of the Israeli port of Eilat, which was accessible only through Egyptian waters.

Source B Lyndon B Johnson, president of the US between 1963 and 1969, in a statement issued following the Egyptian blockade of the Red Sea (23 May 1967).

Tension has again arisen along the armistice lines between Israel and the Arab states. The situation there is a matter of grave concern to the international community. We support all efforts ... to reduce tensions and restore stability. The Secretary-General has gone to the Near East on his mission of peace with the hopes and prayers of men of good will everywhere ...

The US Government is deeply concerned, in particular, with three potentially explosive aspects of the present confrontation.

First, we regret that the General Armistice Agreements have failed to prevent warlike acts ...

Second, we are dismayed at the withdrawal of the United Nations Emergency Force from Gaza and Sinai after more than 10 years of steadfast and effective service in keeping the peace ...

Third, we deplore the recent build-up of military forces and believe it a matter of urgent importance to reduce troop concentrations. The status of sensitive areas ... is a particularly important aspect of the situation.

[Source: Lyndon Johnson Administration: Statement Supporting Independence and Integrity of All Nations in the Middle East (May 23, 1967), US Department of State.]

Source C

John Musgrave-Wood, a political cartoonist, depicts Prime Minister Eshkol (Israel) on the shoulders of President Johnson (US), President Nasser (Egypt) on the shoulders of Prime Minister Kosygin (Soviet Union) and between them, U Thant, UN Secretary-General, in the cartoon “Desert Song”, published in the British newspaper, the *Daily Mail* (24 May 1967).

DESERT SONG



“ONE ALONE...”

[Source: Cartoon by Emmwood [John Musgrave-Wood]: “One Alone...”
Originally published in: *Daily Mail* 24/05/1967. Courtesy of *The Daily Mail*.]

Source D

Adeed Dawisha, a professor of Political Science, writing in the chapter “Egypt” in the collection of academic essays, *The Cold War and the Middle East* (1997).

The superpowers had little to do with the immediate causes of the crisis that led to the Six Day War. The origins of the crisis were regional and could probably be traced to the rise to power of a Syrian leadership committed to the liberation of Palestine. This Syrian regime extended its support to Palestinian guerilla groups. As a result of increasing guerilla activities the level of violence on the Syrian–Israeli border rose through 1966 and early 1967. Israeli retaliation intensified: in April 1967 Israeli pilots shot down six Syrian MIGs [fighter planes] and Israel staged a victorious air parade. The political temperature continued to rise throughout May, as Israel and Syria fired accusations and threats against each other.

Source E Eugene Rostow, a professor of Law and Public Affairs who served as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs between 1966 and 1969, writing in an article in *UN Security Council Resolution 242: the Building Block of Peacemaking*, A Washington Institute Monograph (1993).

From September 1966 until the outbreak of the Six Day War the situation became progressively threatening, as attacks on Israel, largely from Syria and Jordan, increased in number and severity and Israeli responses against Syria increased. During the spring of 1967 the USSR began to spread false reports that Israel was planning to attack Syria and mobilized twelve to fourteen brigades near the Golan Heights. We knew that there was no truth in these reports ... but the Soviets kept repeating them as formal diplomatic reports to Egypt, other Arab countries and to Israel.

The Soviet program of disinformation had far-reaching effects. Arab radio and newspapers mocked President Nasser. “You claim to be the big brother of the Arab people”, the voices said, “but Israel is about to attack Syria and you do nothing”.

1. (a) What, according to Source A, were the main causes of tension in the Middle East? [3]
(b) What is the message conveyed by Source C? [2]
2. Compare and contrast the views expressed in Sources D and E about the tension in the Middle East. [6]
3. With reference to their origin and purpose, assess the value and limitations of Source B and Source E for historians studying events in the Middle East in the lead up to the Six Day War of 1967. [6]
4. “The causes of the Six Day War of 1967 had little to do with Cold War tensions.” Using the sources and your own knowledge, to what extent do you agree with this statement? [8]