

SECTION A

Read the two passages and then answer Question 1.

- 1 Evaluate the interpretations in **both** of the two passages and explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of the motives and intentions of the main countries involved in the Suez Crisis of 1956. [30]

Passage A

Anxious to protect the new state from such changes in policy, Ben-Gurion sought to establish an alliance with France. In the autumn of 1956, Ben-Gurion, together with the army chief, Moshe Dayan, and an administrator from the Defence Ministry, Shimon Peres, flew to a military airfield south-west of Paris for a meeting with the French Prime Minister, Guy Mollet. Later in the afternoon the British Foreign Secretary, Selwyn Lloyd, joined the conference. At this meeting the governments of France, Britain and Israel agreed to a plan of action to wrest the Suez Canal and the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt. On 29 October, Israel launched an attack with a paratroop drop deep inside Sinai. Under the command of Moshe Dayan, Israel's attack resulted in the expulsion of Egyptian forces from all of Sinai. On the political front, however, the Israeli offensive gave rise to hostile reactions from Israel's allies. President Eisenhower sent Ben-Gurion a message asking that Israel withdraw its forces after liquidating the Fedayeen bases and return to its borders. When Ben-Gurion delayed responding to this request, Eisenhower proposed to the Security Council of the United Nations that an immediate cease-fire come into effect and that Israel withdraw its troops behind armistice lines. This resolution was firmly rejected by Britain and France, since they had jointly expressed their own ultimatum addressed to both Israel and Egypt, threatening direct action. Angered by Britain's and France's failure to consult the United States before embarking on a joint operation in Suez, Eisenhower brought the matter before the General Assembly where the Suez adventure was vehemently criticized. However, on 6 November the French and British landed in the Canal Zone determined to separate the combatants.

Adapted from D. Cohn-Sherbok, *The Palestine-Israeli Conflict*, published in 2015.

Passage B

By October 1956 the French were already in an informal alliance with Israel, having armed the country and agreed to help it become a nuclear power. They proposed extending this alliance to include the British. At this time relations between the Eden government and Israel were poor, with the British concerned that the Israelis were planning an attack on Jordan to seize the West Bank. Despite considerable reservations Eden entered into secret discussions with the French that eventually resulted in the Sevres protocol of 24 October 1956. Under the terms of this illegal conspiracy, Israel would attack Egypt, whereupon Britain and France, posing as peacemakers, would demand that both sides withdraw from the Suez Canal area. Israel would agree but the Egyptians could not possibly accept this infringement of their sovereignty, especially as they were victims of aggression. In response to the Egyptian refusal, an Anglo-French force would invade, ostensibly to separate the two sides but in reality to overthrow Nasser. The Israelis insisted that the British and French should act quickly because they counted on the British destroying the Egyptian air force. The British were absolutely insistent that the collusion remained secret, something which the Israelis, who were quite open about their expansionist aims, regarded as typical 'British hypocrisy'. The Israelis launched their surprise attack on Egyptian positions in Sinai on 29 October. The Anglo-French ultimatum was presented to both sides the following day. The Egyptians rejected the ultimatum and the British bombers began their attacks. Eisenhower reacted to the invasion with fury. The Americans were not prepared to tolerate independent action on this scale on the part of the British. Not only did they not want any revival of British power and influence in the Middle East, but they were afraid that Britain's old-fashioned imperialism would play into the hands of the Russians.

Adapted from J. Newsinger, *The Blood Never Dried: A People's History of the British Empire*, published in 2006.

SECTION B

Answer **TWO** of the following three questions.

- 2*** 'Zionism was the most important influence on attempts to resolve the Palestinian issue from 1908 to 2011.' How far do you agree? **[25]**
- 3*** To what extent did Syrian policies influence Pan-Arabism in the period from 1908 to 2011? **[25]**
- 4*** 'The biggest challenge to achieving stability in the Middle East from 1908 to 2011 was meeting the needs of religious groups.' How far do you agree? **[25]**

END OF QUESTION PAPER

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