Were the peace treaties of 1919–23 fair?

Focus Points

• What were the motives and aims of the Big Three at Versailles?
• Why did all the victors not get everything they wanted?
• What was the impact of the peace treaty on Germany up to 1923?
• Could the treaties be justified at the time?

Specified Content

• The peace treaties of 1919–23:
  o the roles of individuals such as Wilson, Clemenceau and Lloyd George in the peacemaking process
  o the impact of the treaties on the defeated countries
  o contemporary opinions about the treaties.
Who was to blame for the Cold War?

Focus Points

• Why did the USA-USSR alliance begin to break down in 1945?
• How had the USSR acquired control of Eastern Europe by 1948?
• How did the USA react to Soviet expansionism?
• What were the consequences of the Berlin Blockade?
• Who was the more to blame for starting the Cold War: the USA or the USSR?

Specified Content

• The origins of the Cold War:
  o the 1945 summit conferences and the breakdown of the USA-USSR alliance in 1945-6
  o Soviet expansion into Eastern Europe to 1948, and American reactions to it
  o the occupation of Germany and the Berlin Blockade
Response of West

Iron Curtain Speech – Churchill 1946

- Term to represent border between USSR controlled countries and the West
- Showed separation of free democratic states (West) from the communist-dominated ones (soviet)
- Denial of freedom and democracy
- Purpose – to encourage Truman to have a line against communism and not go back to isolation from EU.

Marshall Plan – Why?

2. Encourage market for US goods in Europe. Experience of depression – weak economies overseas – American had no-one to trade with. Also meant – countries owe US a favour – reflect well on future relations. However, not only self-interest – widespread poverty in Europe post-war – Need for charitable action i.e. Marshall Aid

Truman Doctrine - Significance

1. After WW1 – USA Isolationist. TD made clear not happen after WW2 – take ‘responsibility for world collaboration’/ ‘no more appeasement of dictators’. From now – all comm actions meet US reaction. [1945 – GB sent troops to Greece to support Monarchists – 1947 threatened to withdraw cos cost too much – USA offered funds.] Truman accepted EE was communist but aimed to ‘contain’ it
2. Significant cos USA prepared to send money, equip or advise to any country threatened by Comm take-over. BUT wouldn’t help any country already communist that was just fighting it
Section D

Zayn Khamisa
– seen in Hungary 1956. Had widespread consequences – was to lead to arms race & heavy involvement of US troops not only in EU, but Asia too – Korea/Vietnam

Berlin

Berlin Blockade/Airlift (June 1948-May 1949 just over 10 months)

- Stalin closed all road, rail, canal links between West Berlin/West Germany – Saw prosperous West Berlin as threat to Communism.
- US/UK had to fly supplies – 2.5mill W.Berliners – kept fed/warm through winter
- ↑2 mil tons supplies airlifted
- Flights every few mins
- Nearly 200,000 flights over 10 months

Why?

1. Political/Territorial – 1947 – GB/USA merge zones into Bizonia. 1949 – USA, British and French merged to form West Berlin. Stalin thought was against Yalta. This made West Berlin a small island of capitalism and democracy surrounded by communism. Stalin feared allies would re-unite Germany and wanted to force them to remove troops from West Berlin. USA convinced world that Stalin was plotting to take over whole of Germany and then rest of EU
2. Economic – USA poured millions of dollars into West Berlin to rebuild it. Stalin convinced that this was a plot to try and get East Berliners to become envious of what capitalism might give them that communism would not. Stalin angry that Allies were planning to introduce a new currency. Said this broke agreement as both superpowers had to agree on any decisions

Consequences

1. Division of Germany confirmed – opposite views allies/soviets – division permanent. West Germany strengthen ties with allies who made elections for new state = Federal Republic of Germany – May 1949 (same month as blockade ends). August 1949 free elections result in anti-comm govt led by Christian Democratic Party. Soviets respond by forming their state called German Democratic Republic
2. Soviets fail to take all of Berlin by blockade. West Berlin to remain an island of capitalism in Comm East Germany. ‘Window’ for prosperity and freedom of capitalism in soviet EE, route for East Germans to west
3. Big step in CW as allies recognise Soviet expansionist threat. NATO formed (USA, Canada, Belgium, Italy, France, Britain) defensive alliance (anti-soviet) in 1949. Soviet respond with Warsaw Pact (see notes on sect F)

USA vs USSR – who to blame

1. USSR – removed non-comm leaders in Pol. No free elections → imposed communist rule instead → ↑suspicions. Stalin refused to reduce size of Red Army. Intended to set up buffer

Zayn Khamisa