**Y10 Exam 2023 – Model Answers**

1a – Describe two features of the Schlieffen Plan - [6] thank you Finn!

One feature of the Schlieffen Plan was the incorrect assumptions about how long Russia would take to fully mobilise their army. The Schlieffen Plan Originally assumed Russia would take six weeks to mobilise their forces, whereas in reality Russia was fully mobilised in just 12 days.

Another feature of the Schlieffen Plan was the unexpected resistance from the Belgian and British forces. For example, the Battle of Liège took 11 days, which gave the British and French time to fully prepare for and stop the German offensive at the First Battle of the Marne. The Schlieffen Plan had not anticipated such strong resistance in Belgium.

1aii – Describe two features of the sinking of the Lusitania – [6] thank you Miss Samuels!

One feature of the sinking of the Lusitania was the impact on American involvement in the war. Out of the 1198 passengers who drowned when the ocean liner was hit by a German torpedo on 7 May 1915, 128 were Americans. This created shock and outrage in the US and contributed to them joining the war later in 1917.

A second feature of the sinking of the Lusitania was the speed at which the ship sunk. The ship took just 18 minutes to sink after being hit by the torpedo due to a second internal exploding. The speed contributed to the high death toll; many of the lifeboats could not be launched successfully as the ship was listing so much.

1b – How far does Source A support the evidence of Source B about the British offensive at Amiens in August 1918? - [8] thank you Sophia!

Source A supports the evidence of Source B about the British offensive at Amiens as they both agree that there was very little German resistance against the British. For example, Source B states that ‘no counter-attack had been attempted’, which is supported by Source A when it states that ‘the counter-attack could not be carried out’. The sources also support each other when describing the magnitude of the situation. Source B states that it was an ‘extraordinary collapse’ for the Germans, supported by Source A which says that what was happening was very ‘serious’.

However, the sources disagree about why the Germans were so ineffective. Source B states that the Germans were ‘confused’, whereas Source A gives no indication that this was the case, instead stating that the soldiers were ‘sick of the hardships of war’, showing that they were not so much ‘confused’ but instead had a clear reason for the lack of morale. The sources also disagree with each other when Source B describes it as a ‘humiliating defeat’ for Germany, which is not mentioned by Source A. Source A mentions that the British had ‘penetrated [their] positions to a surprising depth’ but does not indicate an overall victor.

Although Sources A and B have some minor details of disagreement, overall Source A supports the evidence of Source B to a large extent about the British offensive at Amiens. Both sources strongly agree that it was a disaster for the German army and that their soldiers had very low morale.

1c – Extract C suggests that Germany signed the Armistice in November 1918 mainly because it had been defeated on the battlefield. How far do you agree with this interpretation? Use Extract C, Sources A and B and your own knowledge to explain your answer. - [16] thank you Aadi!

Overall, I agree with Extract C’s interpretation that the Germans signed the Armistice because of defeat on the battlefield. Despite the famine, flu and political turmoil in Germany, the German High Command admitted that the war must be ended when the Allies broke the Hindenburg Line on 8 October 1918.

As Extract C suggests, defeat on the battlefield was indeed the main cause of the German capitulation and the signing of the Armistice on 11 November 1918. After the failure of the Ludendorff ‘Spring’ Offensive of 1918, in which Germany lost one million men between March and July, the German capacity to fight on had been severely depleted. The British counterattack at Amiens on 8 August made clear, as Extract C notes, ‘that the German army could no longer win the war’. The Battle of Amiens was described by Ludendorff as a ‘Black Day’ for the German army, and the loss of 48,000 German troops was a crucial turning point that contributed to German defeat in WWI. The significance of this is amplified by Source A, which describes the incoming reports as ‘serious’ and that they had a ‘demoralising effect’. This loss in men and morale was a key reason why the German army capitulated, and the Armistice had to be signed. Battle after battle followed in the Hundred Days Offensive, with the recapturing of the Somme, Ypres and Passchendaele. By 4 October, the Allies had broken through the Hindenburg Line. It was this breakthrough that led directly to the German High Command immediately demanding an armistice, and therefore Extract C’s interpretation is convincing as the defeat of the battlefield directly led to the armistice.

However, there were other contributing factors to Germany’s signing of the Armistice, although less significant than Extract C’s emphasis on the defeat on the battlefield. In Germany, famine was spreading due to the British naval blockade and the conscription of farmers; approximately 500,000 civilians died from hunger and malnutrition. The Spanish Flu had also spread, killing over 1700 Berliners in one day and claiming the lives of over 400,000 civilians in Germany. Trust in Kaiser Wilhelm II and his government was therefore rapidly disappearing. This was made worse by the discovery of good quality food by advancing German troops during the Ludendorff Offensive, when they had been told that the Allies were starving. Political turmoil and mutinies such as the Kiel Mutiny led to the Kaiser fleeing to Holland on 9 November; Extract C supports this by commenting on the ‘major unrest at home’. The fleeing of the Kaiser was crucial in the signing of the Armistice as the US refused to sign the Armistice until the Kaiser was no longer in power. Source A also mentions the ‘problems at home in Germany’, contributing to resistance to the war from German citizens. However, despite this, as Source B highlights, the ‘humiliating defeat’ suffered on the battlefield was the major cause of German capitulation. Many of the domestic problems Germany was facing were direct results of military failures, and so Extract C’s interpretation is still convincing overall.

To conclude, Extract C’s interpretation that military defeat was the main cause of Germany signing the Armistice is convincing. Defeat on the battlefield forced the German army to accept it could no longer fight on and led to German High Command realising an armistice had to be signed. That is why, despite the effect on morale of famine, government mistrust and the Kaiser's abdication, overall, I agree with Extract C that defeat on the battlefield was the main reason the Germans signed the Armistice.

2a – What impression does the author give about the impact of the race riots? You must use Extract G to explain your answer – [6] thank you Mr Prunty!

The author’s impression is that the race riots were widespread throughout the US and resulted in the destruction of property and cities, culminating in reduced support from white Americans for the civil rights movement. This impression is conveyed through references to ‘300 race riots’ across the ‘North, Midwest and West’ along with the ‘damage’ that ‘frightened’ white Americans. The author states that it took ‘34,000 National Guardsmen to restore order’ which reinforces the impression of widespread destruction and societal turmoil.

The author employs a bleak tone, which highlights the impression of chaos and disorder that the race riots caused. The author uses pessimistic language to create this impression, noting that ‘cities had effectively become no-go areas’ and resulted in ‘46 dead, 3,000 injured and 27,000 arrested’. However, the author omits any reference to the broader positive implications of these race riots. In reality, the riots did allow civil rights campaigners to gain a greater awareness of the socio-economic problems faced by Black Americans in their everyday lives and to try to address these issues. Widespread rioting across the US resulted in more extensive civil rights campaigns beyond the South, where it was initially focused. Ultimately, the author chooses to overstate the negative consequences of the race riots, and does not acknowledge the broader long-term positive implications on civil rights campaigning.

2b – Explain two effects of the Montgomery Bus Boycott on civil rights in the 1950s. - [8] thank you Sanjana!

One effect of the Montgomery Bus Boycott on civil rights was that it introduced people to the work of Martin Luther King Jr. When the boycott lasted longer than the initial expectation of one day due to the overwhelming amount of support from the Black community, the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) was set up to fight for the desegregation of the buses in Montgomery. At the time, Martin Luther King Jr was only 26 years old and was a young pastor. However, he was chosen as leader as he was a new face and a charismatic speaker to whom people would listen. This was effective and the MIA was successful under his leadership, eventually managing to achieve the legal desegregation of the buses after 381 days. After this, King continued to work with the civil rights movement, becoming one of its most influential leaders.

Another effect of the Montgomery Bus Boycott on civil rights was the increase in violence against African Americans within Alabama. After the *Browder v Gayle* District Court case was confirmed by the Supreme Court, ruling in favour of the desegregation of the buses due to the success of the boycott, many White residents were angry. They therefore took violent action in response. Hooded patrols of the KKK drove around Montgomery aiming to intimidate and attack Black residents. Members of the KKK also bombed Black churches and the houses of influential Black civil rights leaders such as E.D. Nixon and Martin Luther King Jr. This violence continued after the boycott. Therefore, despite positive change to the *de jure* situation in Montgomery due to the boycott, Black Americans still weren’t treated equally and were subject to violent attacks.

2ci – ‘Hyperinflation was the main reason why the Weimar Republic was weak in the years 1919-23.' How far do you agree? - [16] thank you Miss Samuels!

While hyperinflation was detrimental to the German economy in 1923, it was not the main reason why the Weimar Republic was weak in the years 1919-23. The Weimar Constitution contributed to the weakness of the Weimar Republic in this period but was also not the main reason. Instead, the main reason for the weakness of the Weimar Republic in the years 1919-23 was the Treaty of Versailles because it had a widespread political and economic impact, as well as lasting throughout the period 1919-23.

Hyperinflation did contribute to the weakness of the Weimar Republic in the years 1919-23, although was not the main reason for the weakness overall. Hyperinflation occurred in the aftermath of the French and Belgian invasion of the Ruhr; the German government printed more money to pay the striking workers, resulting in the value of the currency collapsing. A loaf of bread that had cost 250 marks in January 1923 cost an astonishing 200,000 million marks by November 1923. This clearly had a major economic impact on Germany, with many citizens falling immediately into poverty as their savings were wiped out overnight; people with savings were particularly badly affected. Hyperinflation did lead to some mistrust of government, but this was resolved after just a few months by Stresemann’s introduction of the Rentenmark as a new currency. Therefore, while hyperinflation did weaken the Weimar Republic, its fairly quick resolution and timing towards the end of the period 1919-23 means it was not the main reason for the weakness overall.

The Weimar Constitution also contributed to the weakness of the Weimar Republic, but similarly to hyperinflation it was not the main reason for the weakness overall. The Weimar Constitution had several built-in weaknesses; the system of proportional representation led to many coalition governments which could not make decisions effectively. This caused weak and unstable government, as evidenced by the fact that there were seven different Chancellors in the period of just four years. In addition, the Weimar Constitution included Article 48, giving the President the power to make laws without the Reichstag in an emergency, undermining the democratic system. However, this was largely used to resolve national crises such as the hyperinflation crisis, and therefore was not a crucial reason for the weakness of the Weimar Republic *in this period*, although did later contribute to the emergence of the Nazi dictatorship. Overall, while the coalition governments were politically weak, the Weimar Constitution did not have a direct economic impact and so was not the main reason for the weakness of the Weimar Republic in the years 1919-23.

The main reason why the Weimar Republic was weak in the years 1919-23, rather than hyperinflation, was the Treaty of Versailles. The Treaty of Versailles, signed on 28 June 1919, included the removal of 13 percent of Germany’s land and all of her overseas colonies, reducing her army to just 100,000 men and enforcing Article 231 or the ‘war guilt clause’ in which Germany accepted blame for the First World War. The treaty was seen by many Germans as a *diktat* or ‘dictated peace’ and created much political turmoil as those who signed it were mocked as being ‘November Criminals’. The treaty also had a major economic impact on Germany as it included the payment of enormous reparations to the Allies (although the final amount was not confirmed until 1921). The failure to pay reparations by December 1922 directly led to the French invasion of the Ruhr and hyperinflation, making the Treaty of Versailles a more important underlying cause of weakness for the Weimar Republic. The Treaty of Versailles affected Germany throughout this time period and evidently had both a political and economic impact.

To conclude, hyperinflation was not the main reason why the Weimar Republic was weak in the years 1919-23. While hyperinflation did have a disastrous impact on many German people, it was caused instead by the Treaty of Versailles and the harsh reparations payments. Moreover, the Treaty of Versailles had a long-lasting impact both politically and economically, making it the main reason for the weakness of the Weimar Republic in this period overall.

2cii – The main impact of the Great Depression on Germany, in the years 1929-33, was economic problems.’ How far do you agree? - [16] thank you Miss Samuels!

The main impact of the Great Depression on Germany in the years 1929-33 was indeed economic problems, because these affected the largest number of people and *led* to other political problems. Other impacts of the Great Depression included the rise in support for the Communist Party and the rise in support for the NSDAP, although neither was as important as the economic problems.

The main impact of the Great Depression was the economic problems. The Wall Street Crash of 1929 led to the US recalling their loans from German banks, which caused many banks to become bankrupt as people rushed to withdraw their cash and banks subsequently ran out of cash. This led to a huge increase in unemployment in Germany, going from 1.3 million unemployed in 1929 up to 6 million by 1932. This clearly affected a large number of people, as well as any of their dependent family members. This led to an increase in poverty. In addition, the Great Depression made it difficult to borrow money from within and outside Germany, and there was consequently a fall in industrial production of 40 percent by 1933. Many businesses closed, further worsening the economic problems. Crucially, these economic problems also *caused* many of the political problems, by showing the Weimar Republic to be weak and ineffective. The economic problems faced by many German families made extremist parties like the KPD and the NSDAP seem more appealing as they offered economic solutions. Therefore, economic problems were the main impact due to the scale of people affected, the obvious economic effect and the subsequent political effects.

The Great Depression also led to an increase in support for the Communist Party, although this was less significant than the economic problems. The Communist Party became more appealing as they emphasised a different economic approach in which the means of production would be collectively owned and there would be no class system. As people were facing high unemployment, this ideology appeared to offer solutions that the Weimar Republic could not. Chancellor Brüning had implemented an increase in taxation and had reduced unemployment benefits, relying on presidential decrees to pass laws. The KPD therefore offered a clear contrast in their economic system, and so as the Great Depression worsened, their support increased. This can be seen by the number of seats in the Reichstag; the Communist Party went from 77 seats in 1930 to 100 seats in 1932. However, this was not the main impact of the Great Depression for several reasons. The Communist Party did not become the largest party in the Reichstag (both the SPD and NSDAP had more seats), showing that this impact had a smaller scale. In addition, the support for the Communist Party was to a large extent *caused* by the economic problems of the Great Depression, making the economic problems themselves a more important underlying impact.

A final effect of the Great Depression in the years 1929-33 was the increase in support for the NSDAP. Although this was evidently extremely significant for Germany in the long-term, in the years 1929-33 it was less significant than economic problems because the Nazi success was *based on* the economic problems the Weimar Republic was facing. As in the case of the Communist Party (although from the opposite end of the political spectrum), the NSDAP seized the opportunity to demonstrate strong leadership in contrast to the Weimar politicians. Political rallies and propaganda were used effectively under the leadership of Joseph Goebbels to use the Great Depression to their advantage. The NSDAP promised ‘Arbeit und Brot’ or ‘Work and Bread’, which appealed to workers who were facing high unemployment rates. In addition, the NSDAP promised protection against Communism, which appealed to the middle classes. The impact of the Great Depression on the NSDAP can be seen in their increase of seats in the Reichstag, going from 12 in 1928 up to 230 by July 1932. However, while this was important in contributing to Hitler’s appointment as Chancellor on 30 January 1933, the NSDAP success was again *based on* the economic problems the Weimar Republic faced, which opened the door to more extremist parties. Therefore, the economic problems were still the main impact of the Great Depression.

To conclude, the main impact of the Great Depression on Germany in the years 1929-33 was indeed economic problems. While the Great Depression did lead to an increase in support for both extreme left-wing and right-wing parties (the KPD and NSDAP), this was due to their exploitation of people’s resentment *of the economic problems*. Therefore, the economic problems were more significant as they directly affected millions of Germans and also *led to* the other impacts of the Great Depression from a political perspective.