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Prescribed Subject 1: Peacemaking,  
Peacekeeping – International Relations 1918–36

## INTERNATIONAL CRISES 1923–36

### Introduction

Chapter 2 analyzed the terms of the peace treaties that ended the war, their international impact and the limited results of several of the disarmament conferences that took place after World War I.

The following chapter looks at some of the different international events and crises between 1923 and 1936, and attempted solutions. While many countries expressed their disagreement with the treaties by appealing to the League of Nations, others decided to take matters into their own hands. The period 1924–29 saw an improvement of the terms of international relations in Europe, but the effects of the economic crisis that broke out in 1929 led to the rise of nationalism and challenges to the system of collective security. In this context, the weaknesses of the League of Nations became more apparent, as the Japanese invasion of Manchuria and the Italian invasion of Abyssinia were to demonstrate.

#### Timeline – 1920–36

- 1920** First meeting of the League of Nations
- 1922** Mussolini becomes Prime Minister in Italy  
Treaty of Rapallo
- 1923** French occupation of the Ruhr
- 1924** Dawes Plan
- 1925** Locarno Treaties
- 1926** Germany is admitted to the League of Nations
- 1928** Briand–Kellogg Pact
- 1929** Young Plan  
Wall Street Crash
- 1931** Japanese invasion of Manchuria
- 1932** World Disarmament Conference
- 1933** Hitler is appointed Chancellor in Germany  
Japan withdraws from the League of Nations  
Germany withdraws from the Disarmament Conference and the League of Nations
- 1934** The USSR is admitted to the League of Nations
- 1935** Stresa Conference  
Anglo-German Naval Agreement  
Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia
- 1936** German remilitarization of the Rhineland

## Section I:

## The League of Nations: effects of the absence of the major powers; the principle of collective security and early attempts at peacekeeping (1920–25)

### Background information

The formation of the League of Nations was discussed extensively at the Paris Peace Conference. President Wilson chaired the committee that gave life to the organization and produced its **Covenant** in April 1919. This document, considered the Constitution of the League of Nations, was incorporated into all the peace treaties of the Paris Settlement. Sir Eric Drummond was appointed first Secretary-General and the League's headquarters were established in Geneva.

This section analyzes the circumstances in which the League of Nations was created, its aims and methods, together with the effects of the absence of the USA, the **USSR** and Germany. It explores the successes and failures of the League in some of its early attempts at peacekeeping (1920–25).

### The creation of the League of Nations

The League was created in extremely difficult circumstances. The world was just emerging from World War I and the treaties that ended the war were drafted in an atmosphere of tension and distrust. The tasks ahead for the League were complex. Border disputes, minority problems, disarmament, the supervision of mandates and the promotion of international cooperation in social and economic matters were some of the responsibilities of the organization. Although there had been attempts at the establishment of international bodies in the past, nothing like the League of Nations had been attempted and, therefore, there was no prior experience to rely on.

#### SOURCE A

*The covenant makers in Paris in 1919 were forced to depend on their own judgments and their estimates of the probabilities of their work was done under the shadow of the peacemaking of Europe. Absorbed in that more immediate task, the Paris Conference as a whole gave little thought to the terms of the Covenant: perhaps the majority of its members did not think it worth while to bother with them. One group thought the League would prove a futility; another was so anxious to get any kind of League that they would not quibble over details. It thus happened that the Covenant was prepared in an academic way and adopted by the Conference without serious debate. In no stage of the process did it have the benefit of criticisms by a clear-headed opposition.*

From John Spencer Bassett, *The League of Nations – A Chapter in World Politics*, 1930

#### **i** Covenant of the League of Nations

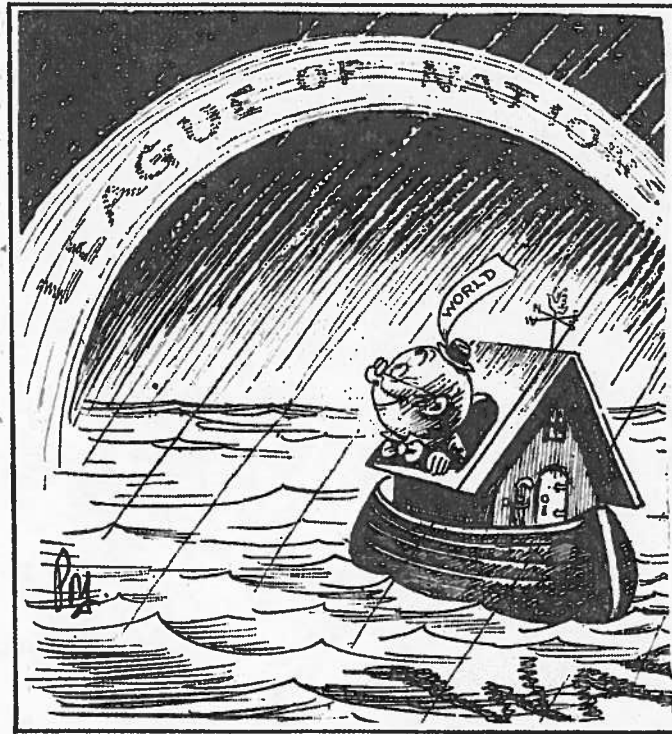
The Covenant of the League of Nations established the rules and regulations for the organization such as what issues the League was to discuss and rule on, the voting system to take decisions, and the organization and function of the different bodies which made up the League, among other issues.

#### **USSR**

In 1922 the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, a federation of Soviet republics, was formally established. It is also referred to as the USSR. Russia was the largest republic of the Union.

'The Rainbow', cartoon depicting the world on Noah's Ark, published in the *Literary Digest*, September 1919.

## SOURCE B



## STUDENT STUDY SECTION

## QUESTIONS

- What, according to Source A, were the problems facing the creation of the League of Nations?
- 'One group thought the League would prove a futility; another was so anxious to get any kind of League that they would not quibble over details' (Source A). To which countries do you think the author was referring? Explain your answer fully.
- What message is conveyed by Source B?
- Compare and contrast the views expressed about the League of Nations in Sources A and B.

### What were the aims of the League?

The main aims of the League of Nations were to promote international cooperation and to achieve international peace and security. The League aimed at promoting what became known as 'collective security', the idea that an organization of sovereign states would guarantee to take joint action in defence of one another against acts of aggression. The hope behind collective security was that its principle would help deter acts of aggression and, in that way, contribute to international peace. The principle of collective security promoted by the League of Nations was to be reaffirmed by specific international treaties.

The League of Nations was faced with several obstacles to achieving peace. Some countries were dissatisfied with the terms of the peace treaties and wanted changes to the terms. Others, who had made gains after the war, wanted to preserve the status quo. A challenge to the League of Nations arose in this context: were all members of the League prepared to commit themselves to maintain the order achieved after World War I? And a further question: was this a desirable situation for all?

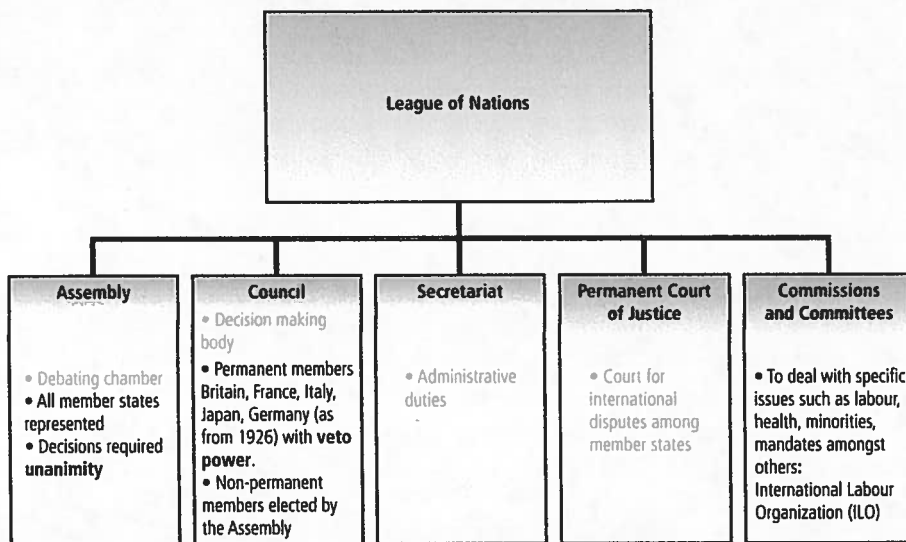
**STUDENT STUDY SECTION**

**QUESTION**

Refer back to the information in Chapter 2 and explain which countries were dissatisfied with the peace settlement and, consequently, more interested in challenging the existing order. Which were more interested in preserving it? Explain your answers fully.

### What were the instruments of the League of Nations for the fulfilment of its aims?

The Covenant of the League of Nations stated what situations were of concern to the organization, and how decisions on those issues were to be reached and implemented. In order to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the League, you should analyze both the Covenant and the structure of the organization.



**STUDENT STUDY SECTION**

**RESEARCH ACTIVITY**

In class, discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the structure of the League. Refer to the requirement of unanimity in the Assembly and to the veto power of the permanent members in the Council. Why do you think they were incorporated into the League's procedures?

Look at the list of countries that became permanent members of the Council. To what extent do you consider they were representatives of a new international order?

Many of the successes of the League of Nations are related to the work of its Commissions and Committees. Find information about any two of them and discuss their aims and achievements.



**Unanimity**

Decision that requires the consensus / support of all members.

**Veto power**

Power of the permanent members of the Council to refuse to allow something to be done.

### The Covenant of the League of Nations

The Covenant of the League of Nations detailed how the organization was to act in order to achieve and secure its aims. To understand the League's interventions in conflicts throughout the 1920s and 1930s, it's important that you become familiar with the instruments of the League as peacekeeper.

## STUDENT STUDY SECTION

The following exercise aims at familiarizing you with some of the most relevant articles of the League of Nations. Read the extracts and discuss the questions below. You may find it useful to look up the full version of the Covenant for future reference.

**Article 5:** Except where otherwise expressly provided in this Covenant or by the terms of the present Treaty, decisions at any meeting of the Assembly or of the Council shall require the agreement of all the Members of the League represented at the meeting.

**Article 8:** The Members of the League recognise that the maintenance of peace requires the reduction of national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety and the enforcement by common action of international obligations.

**Article 10:** The Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League. In case of any such aggression or in case of any threat or danger of such aggression the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled.

**Article 11:** Any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the members of the League or not, is hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations.

**Article 16:** Should any Member of the League resort to war ... it shall ipso facto be deemed to have committed an act of war against all other Members of the League, which hereby undertake immediately to subject it to the severance of all trade or financial relations ... and the prevention of all financial, commercial or personal intercourse between the nationals of the covenant-breaking State and the nationals of any other State, whether a Member of the League or not. It shall be the duty of the Council in such case to recommend to the several Governments concerned what effective military, naval or air force the Members of the League shall severally contribute to the armed forces to be used to protect the covenants of the League.

## QUESTIONS

- Explain how the Covenant reflected the aims of the League of Nations.
- President Wilson said that Article 10 was the 'heart of the matter and strikes at the taproot of war'. What do you think he meant and to what extent do you support his view?
- Discuss the significance of Article 16: What did it aim to do? What methods were proposed to achieve this? Explain your answer fully.
- Source A above claimed that 'the Paris Peace Conference gave little thought to the terms of the Covenant'. Discuss to what extent an analysis of the articles here supports this statement. Explain your answer fully.

Three major instruments of the policy of the League were moral persuasion, economic sanctions and the use of military force. These three instruments were very important and you should analyze how effectively the League used them when learning about the League's interventions during the 1920s and 1930s.

- Moral persuasion implied the identification of a country's behaviour as aggressive and led to a diplomatic appeal for a change.
- If that failed, then economic sanctions were imposed on the aggressor.
- The last resort was the use of military force, for which the League had to rely on its members as it had no army of its own.

## The absence of major powers – reasons and effects

Forty-two countries had joined the League of Nations by July 1920. For different reasons, the USA, Germany and Russia were not original members of the League. The USA never joined, although it did cooperate with several of the League's agencies and sent observers to some discussions. Germany became a member in 1926, but withdrew when Hitler came to power in 1933. Soviet Russia, which had been isolated from international affairs since the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, only joined the League in 1934. Other original members of the League left, having a significant impact on the organization. Japan left in 1933 over disagreement with the League's treatment of the Manchurian Crisis. Italy left the League in 1937 after Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia.

### The absence of the USA

Despite President Wilson's efforts, the US Congress refused to ratify the Treaty of Versailles and also rejected membership of the League of Nations and turned to isolationism. Fear of being drawn into further European conflicts was an important reason for the American decision.

The League's opportunity to succeed was significantly reduced by the absence of the USA:

- The USA emerged from the war with its territory and economy unharmed and could therefore have assisted the League economically as well as militarily in the event of crises.
- Economic sanctions with US participation would have acted as an effective deterrent for any nation wishing to break the Covenant. Sanctions imposed by a League with US membership would have been more effective, as the sanctioned country would have been deprived of the US market.
- The US absence also contributed to the view that the League was a European club dominated by Britain and France.

Without the USA, Britain and France were indeed the strongest countries in the League. However, they had different views on what the role of the League of Nations should be. France wanted the League to be an instrument to enforce the treaties and prevent any revision that could affect her security. Britain, on the other hand, considered that some revision of the treaty might be both possible and beneficial and feared the application of sanctions that could affect her economic interests directly.

In spite of the decision to keep its distance from world politics by not joining the League of Nations, the USA continued to play a significant role in international relations after World War I. Chapter 2 focused on the disarmament conferences of which the USA was a part. Also, in the next sections, you will study the ways in which the USA became involved in European financial affairs.

## SOURCE C

British cartoon 'The Gap in the Bridge', first published in *Punch*, December 1919.



## SOURCE D

*In all the League had to do during this first year of its existence it was profoundly affected by the refusal of the United States of America to become a member. It had been assumed that a project so American in origin and in its originality would, of course, be accepted in Washington. The news of its rejection in the United States created feelings of discouragement and even disgust in Europe... For a time men doubted if the League would go on without support from a great nation who was rich enough to salve [soothe] Europe's wounds and enough of a neutral to assuage [relieve] her jealousies. And then came second thought: the men of the Old World were forced to go on even though the New World's support was lessened by the absence of the most important New World nation.*

From John Spencer Bassett, *The League of Nations – A Chapter in World Politics*, 1930

## STUDENT STUDY SECTION

## QUESTION

What, according to Source C was the significance of the absence of the USA in the League of Nations?

## Student Answer – Miguel

The cartoon shows that the bridge has been designed by the USA, but is incomplete without it. The figure of Uncle Sam smoking shows that the USA is not affected by the decision.

## Examiner's comments

The candidate has clearly identified three elements in the cartoon: 1) that the bridge has been designed by the USA; 2) that it is unfinished; 3) that the USA seems at ease with the situation. However, the question asks about the 'significance of the absence of USA' and this has not been the focus of the answer. Some elements that the candidate has omitted are very relevant to the significance:

- Look at the stone on which Uncle Sam is leaning and which is labelled 'Keystone'. Why do you think the author of the cartoon called it so? How does it reflect the significance of the absence of the USA?
- What, if any, is the significance of the fact that the gap is between the stones labelled France and England?

## QUESTIONS

- a) Compare and contrast the views expressed about the absence of the USA in the League of Nations in Sources C and D.
- b) In Chapter 2, you have studied the aims of Britain and France in relation to post-war Europe. To what extent were these ambitions consistent with the views they held about what the role of the League of Nations should be?

● **Examiner's hint**

Source D mentions the effect in Europe of the US refusal to join the League. Does Source C refer to this point? When considering the contrasts between two sources, it is useful to look for any argument which is offered by one source and either omitted, or an opposing argument given by the other, but you will need to explain how the inclusions and omissions make the sources similar/different.

## The absence of Russia

The year 1917 was one of turmoil in Russia. In February the Tsar was overthrown and a Provisional Government took control. In October that year, the Bolsheviks, led by Vladimir Lenin and Leon Trotsky, seized power. One of the reasons for continued unrest was Russia's participation in World War I, which ended under the Bolsheviks. Unrest in Russia soon turned to civil war as national opposition together with foreign intervention confronted the Bolshevik Red Army.

At the time of the Paris Peace Conference, Western nations were still fighting on Russian soil to prevent the consolidation of Bolshevism. The exclusion of Russia from the League of Nations in 1919 was based on the idea that Britain and France held that it would be better to isolate the new Bolshevik state, which was instigating communist uprisings in other parts of Europe. The Bolsheviks, for their part, saw the League as a capitalist club designed to contain the expansion of communism and shared with the Germans the idea that the League was an instrument to give moral authority to an unfair treaty.

### SOURCE E

*In its drive for security and de jure [legal] recognition, Soviet diplomacy again and again came up against the League of Nations. Here, as in other areas of diplomacy, the Soviets followed a dual policy: On the one hand they denounced the League as a coalition of predatory imperialist powers; on the other, they demanded to take part in such conferences of the League as affected Russian interests. The Soviet attitude towards the League had been influenced by the fact that Soviet Russia had not been invited to become a member, by the communist idea of capitalist encirclement, by the fear of any coalition or alliance of which Russia was not a member...*

From Xenia Joukoff Eudin, *Soviet Russia and the West, 1920–1927: A Documentary Survey*, 1957

### SOURCE F



◀ Cartoon which reads in Russian 'League of Nations – Capitalists from all countries, unite!' Artist unknown, c. 1917–20.



● **Examiner's hint**

(Question a) It is useful to start by explaining the meaning of the cartoon. What is the tone of Source F towards the League of Nations?

### STUDENT STUDY SECTION

#### QUESTIONS

- Compare and contrast the views expressed about Russia's attitude to the League of Nations in Sources E and F.
- How useful do you find Source F to be in explaining the reasons why the USSR rejected the League of Nations?

## The absence of Germany

Germany, like other defeated nations, was not invited to take part in the League. This decision overlooked the fact that, despite Versailles, the German capacity to recover had not been destroyed and Germany was still a strong European nation. As discussed in Chapter 2, Germany's eastern frontiers were a source of bitterness over the territories lost, but also a source of opportunity given the relative weakness of some of the new states east of Germany. Therefore, it can be said that the League would have benefited more by making Germany part of the new international order than by making it feel an outcast. Additionally, Germany's exclusion contributed to the image of the League as an organization of victorious countries. One only had to look at the membership of the Council to agree with that view.

## German and Soviet isolation; the Treaty of Rapallo

### Background information

The diplomatic isolation suffered by Germany and Russia brought the two former enemies closer together. They both resented post-war agreements and wished to see them revised. Germany's military pride had been shattered by the terms of Versailles and the country wanted to find a way to escape the control of the Allies and to strengthen its forces. The Russians wished to focus on their domestic problems rather than on the idea of exporting the revolution, a factor that contributed to the cooperation between the two states.

### The Treaty of Rapallo (1922)

*'Beware of throwing a hungry Russia and an angry Germany into each other's arms.'*  
Lloyd George, 1922

Disguised as a trade agreement between the two countries, the Treaty of Rapallo secretly addressed military cooperation and, as such, became a way to breach the Treaty of Versailles. The treaty was met with a mixture of surprise and indignation in Britain and France. The French government never believed the Russian reassurance that the treaty contained no secret industrial and military clauses and took a much harder line on its relations with Germany, an attitude that culminated in the French invasion of the Ruhr the following year. The alarm over Rapallo also reached Poland, who now saw her two greatest enemies united.

#### SOURCE G

*In 1921 the Germans had begun a secret military collaboration with the Russians in whose land they could produce the tanks, airplanes and poison gas forbidden by Versailles and where they could train both Russians and Germans in their use. In April of the next year they signed the Treaty of Rapallo whereby Germany granted formal recognition to the Soviet Union and*

*encouraged trade by establishing mutual most-favoured-nation status. This greatly alarmed the Western powers, who feared the spread of communism and Soviet power. To some extent they had supported German territorial integrity to provide a barrier to Soviet penetration of Europe.*

From Donald Kagan, *On the Origins of War and the Preservation of Peace*, 1996

#### SOURCE H

*The partnership between Berlin and Moscow confirmed the worst nightmares; the two great powers were in a position to stifle the successor states should they so wish. The challenge to the French security system was palpable; the threat to both Versailles and France's eastern alliances could hardly have been clearer.*

*Both the Soviet Union and Germany gained strength from their relations. Germany had an ally to the East and the USSR broke its isolation. During 1925–29 the Soviet Union and Germany signed treaties of both economic and strategic importance. Germany became the largest exporter to the USSR and produced weapons on Soviet territory.*

From Zara Steiner, *The Lights that Failed*, 2005

#### STUDENT STUDY SECTION

##### QUESTIONS

- According to Source G, what were the aims of cooperation between Germany and the Soviet Union?
- Using these sources and your own knowledge, assess the view that the diplomatic isolation of Germany and the Soviet Union brought more harm than good.

#### ● Examiner's hint

The answer to Question (b) should be presented as a mini-essay that requires some initial planning on your part. You need to remember that this is not an opportunity for you to write about everything you know on the topic, but rather one to show you can integrate the sources with your own knowledge and answer a specific question. When using sources, avoid general comments such as '... as seen in Source D' and quote or paraphrase the part of the source you refer to instead.

After 1923, relations between Germany and the West improved significantly as Europe lived a period known as the 'Locarno Honeymoon' (see pages 71–75 below). A significant event in that period was Germany's admittance into the League of Nations in 1926, to which it belonged until 1933. In 1934 the USSR joined the League of Nations. The reasons why the USSR seemed to have changed its negative view of the League of Nations and why the League accepted the incorporation are related to the changes in the international scenario of the 1930s, of which you will learn in the following sections.

## Early attempts at peacekeeping (1920–25)

### Background information

The early years of the League of Nations were ones of enthusiasm and hope. Membership grew steadily and the League's agencies were successful in several areas. Many countries set up their own League of Nations unions to support the League by spreading its spirit and raising funds.

But the work ahead was by no means easy. Many issues of border disputes presented before the League were either unresolved matters prior to the peace treaties or were created by the treaties. The League had to settle issues related to the enforcement of the peace treaties. Territories that had been put under the League had to be administered; the territories also needed to hold plebiscites to decide issues of self-determination.

The League had to co-exist with the Conference of Ambassadors, formed by Britain, France, Italy and Japan. This body was meant to act only between the signing of the Treaty of Versailles and the completion of the other peace treaties and until the League of Nations was fully ready to operate. However, the Conference not only continued to exist beyond then, but, in some conflicts, it overruled the League.

## Timeline: Peacekeeping under the League of Nations

This timeline will help you identify some of the early attempts at peacekeeping by the League of Nations. It is not, however, a comprehensive catalogue of the League's work in international relations, as there were other conflicts in which the League also intervened.

- 1919** League of Nations founded  
Conflict over Teschen
- 1920** US Congress votes against membership of the League  
First session of the Council  
Conflict over Vilna
- 1920–21** Aaland Islands conflict
- 1921** Upper Silesia plebiscite
- 1923** Conflict over Memel
- 1924** Italian occupation of Corfu  
Conflict over Mosul
- 1925** Conflict between Greece and Bulgaria
- 1926** Germany becomes a member of the League
- 1931** Japanese invasion of Manchuria
- 1932** World Disarmament Conference starts  
War between Bolivia and Paraguay
- 1933** Japan withdraws from the League  
Germany withdraws from the League
- 1934** USSR becomes a member of the League
- 1935** Italian invasion of Abyssinia
- 1937** Italy withdraws from the League

### Lithuania

Poland and Lithuania were formally united in 1569. Russia, Prussia and Austria partitioned Poland in 1772, 1792 and 1795. With the 1795 partition, Lithuania was annexed by Russia, except for a small section in the south-west that was awarded to Prussia. This area was also incorporated into Russia in 1815. The Russians carried out a policy of Russification in Lithuania, enforcing Russian as the official language and repressing Lithuanian culture. Like the Poles, the Lithuanians rebelled against Russian control throughout the 19th century. Lithuania was occupied by Germany during World War I. In February 1918, Lithuanian nationalists declared Lithuania's independence, but the country soon faced the invasion of Bolshevik forces. The Lithuanian National Army forced the Bolsheviks out and in 1920 Moscow recognized Lithuanian independence. That same year conflict with Poland over Vilna broke out.

It is important to study the League's early attempts at peacekeeping. Here are some examples.

### The Aaland Islands (1920–21)

Although the Aaland Islands belonged to Finland, most Aalanders, ethnically Swedish, wanted to be ruled by Sweden. In 1921 Sweden and Finland took the issue before the League of Nations. The League decided not to make changes in the situation and recognized Finnish sovereignty, but promised it would protect the rights of the minorities. The decision, though not very popular, was accepted by all parties involved.

### Vilna (1920)

The city of Vilna had been the capital of **Lithuania** when the state was first established many centuries ago. When Lithuania was restored as an independent country, Vilna was again to become the capital of the new Lithuanian state. Poland opposed this, arguing that Vilna should go to her as more than 30 per cent of the population of Vilna was Polish. Poland invaded Vilna and although Lithuania appealed to the League, the Poles did not evacuate the city. Finally, the Conference of Ambassadors awarded Vilna to Poland.

### Upper Silesia (1921)

The rich coal area of Upper Silesia, inhabited by both Germans and Poles, was a bone of contention to both countries. The League of Nations carried out a plebiscite in March 1921 to decide to which country Upper Silesia should belong. The results favoured Germany, but were very close, leading to riots and confrontations between Poles and Germans. The

differences between Britain and France over the future of Upper Silesia also contributed to the conflict. While France refused to allow German troops to restore order and wanted Upper Silesia to go to Poland to strengthen her economy, Britain considered the result of the plebiscite should be respected and Upper Silesia incorporated into Germany. The matter was referred to the League of Nations, which split Upper Silesia between Poland and Germany, with more territory given to the former. The League's ruling was accepted by all nations involved.

### Corfu (1923)

Italian members of a delegation working on an international boundary commission to settle disputes between Greece and Albania were murdered near the Greek town of Janina. Although this act could have been carried out either by Albanians or Greeks, Mussolini, the new Italian Prime Minister, blamed Greece. He demanded that the Greek government find those responsible and execute them and claimed that Greece should pay Italy compensation. When Greece refused, he bombarded and invaded the Greek island of Corfu. Greece appealed to the League of Nations, which determined that Mussolini should leave Corfu and that, after appropriate investigations, it would be determined whether Greece had to pay Italy compensation for the incident. Mussolini rejected the proposal and threatened to abandon the League. The matter was transferred to the Conference of Ambassadors who ruled in favour of the Italians. Italy received immediate compensation from Greece and abandoned Corfu.

### Bulgaria (1925)

A clash between troops patrolling the border between Greece and Bulgaria broke out, resulting in the death of a Greek soldier. Greece invaded Bulgaria, who turned to the League for assistance. The League ordered a ceasefire and the Greek withdrawal from Bulgaria. Bulgaria was made to pay compensation for the act of aggression. The decision was accepted by both parties.

#### STUDENT STUDY SECTION

##### QUESTIONS

Study the examples above and, with your class, discuss the following questions:

- Which of the above would you consider successes for the League and which would you classify as failures? Explain your answer fully.
- Which weaknesses of the League of Nations became apparent during these crises?

##### RESEARCH ACTIVITY

From the timeline above, choose and research one conflict taking place before 1930 which has not been covered in this section. Assess the effectiveness of the League in dealing with it.

Section II:

## The Ruhr Crisis (1923); Locarno and the 'Locarno Spring' (1925)

### Background information

The enforcement of the peace treaties in the 1920s brought about confrontation in Europe, some of which was referred to the League of Nations for solution. In 1923, however, a crisis

between France and Germany over the question of payment of reparations broke out, and France and Belgium invaded the German industrial area of the Ruhr in 1923.

After the Ruhr Crisis was resolved, international relations underwent a deep change. Several international treaties were signed with the aim of solving conflicts related to German reparations and some of the frontiers established by Versailles, as well as promoting collective security and rejecting the resort to war as an instrument to resolve conflicts.

We will now analyze the causes and results of the Ruhr Crisis and of the main diplomatic events of the period 1923-29: the Dawes Plan (1924); the Locarno Treaty (1925); Germany's admission to the League of Nations (1926), the Kellogg-Briand Pact (1928) and the Young Plan (1929).

## The Ruhr Crisis (1923)

The end of World War I did not mean the end of the economic problems brought about by the war. During the early 1920s, global economic activity deteriorated as unemployment rose and productivity fell. Both victorious and defeated nations faced the effects of war and of the peace treaties. Countries that had economically benefited from the war, such as the USA and Japan, now encountered a world very much in debt and offering limited trading opportunities. New countries like Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia had to confront the challenge of surviving as economic units. In this context, defeated nations began to experience difficulties in meeting the payment of war reparations.

### Germany and reparations payments

In April 1921, the Reparations Committee announced the final figure of German reparations, 132 billion gold marks (equivalent to £6.6 billion). Germany was to pay 2 billion gold marks each year. It was not long, however, before Germany announced it found it impossible to pay such sums. Britain was prepared to accept the **moratorium** of reparations requested on several occasions by Germany. France, however, led by the former President and now Prime Minister Raymond Poincaré, rejected the proposal and began to explore ways in which they could ensure that reparation payments in kind were made.

In December 1922, Germany failed to pay and the following month French and Belgian troops invaded the industrial area of the Ruhr, adjacent to the Rhineland. The aim of the occupation was to force Germany to restart payment of reparations and to seize coal and timber as payment in kind.

### The French occupation of the Ruhr

The occupation of the Ruhr was met with intense nationalism among the Germans. The government adopted a policy of **passive resistance** in the area that halted industrial production. Civil servants and industrialists were instructed not to follow orders from the French and a general strike was declared. The German government decided to support the strike by paying workers' salaries and compensating the industrialists financially for the loss. The French responded by imposing a blockade in the area and imprisoning workers who refused to cooperate.

Passive resistance and shortage of coal and exports put the German economy under extreme pressure. The government financed the crisis by printing money, a measure that soon led to **hyperinflation**. The value of the German mark plummeted, prices went up by the hour and family savings disappeared. The impact of hyperinflation on the German population was not only economic, but also social and political. Middle-class families

#### Moratorium

An authorization to delay payment of money due, as by a bank or debtor nation.

#### Passive resistance

Opposition to a government or occupying power by refusal to comply with orders.

#### Hyperinflation

Severe increase in general price levels of goods, causing a decline in purchasing power.

were among the most affected by the crisis, as their savings lost value and their economic activities saw a significant decline in profits. As a result, many joined those critical of the Weimar policies on both the extreme right and left.

### STUDENT STUDY SECTION

#### RESEARCH ACTIVITY

The media worldwide exposed the effects of hyperinflation in Germany. Individually or in pairs, find one source that you think illustrates the effects of hyperinflation in Germany. With reference to its origins and purpose, discuss its value and limitation for an historian studying German policy towards the occupation of the Ruhr.



#### ToK Time

From the research activity opposite, share your source with the class. If the group was asked to select only two sources to illustrate the effects of hyperinflation in Germany, which would those be and why? Follow the guide:

- How did you make your choice and why?
- In what ways was the process used by the group similar and different to the way historians approach the problem of handling too much evidence?

## What was the attitude of Britain towards the Ruhr Crisis?

Britain did not join France in the occupation of the Ruhr. The British government considered that only German acceptance of a status quo – as opposed to its imposition – could guarantee lasting peace. Britain also opposed any French attempt to dominate Europe and showed interest in the economic recovery of Germany. However, the British did not take explicit steps to oppose the occupation. Fear of war was a contributing factor to the British attitude.

#### SOURCE A

*On 19 January the [German Chancellor] Cuno government ordered miners and railway workers to withhold their co-operation, hoping to make the occupation as costly as possible for France, undermining its finances and the franc on the foreign exchanges, and in the expectation that British and American diplomatic pressure would be brought to bear on Poincaré. This 'passive resistance' led France and Belgium to send in more troops and to extend their area of occupation... The number of occupying troops rose to 100,000. The French and Belgians were obliged to exploit the mines and operate the railways themselves. Nevertheless the French continued to exercise restraint which was criticised in France as a lack of forcefulness.*

From John F. U. Keiger in Robert Boyce (ed.), *French Foreign and Defence Policy, 1918–1940: The Decline and Fall of a Great Power*, 1998

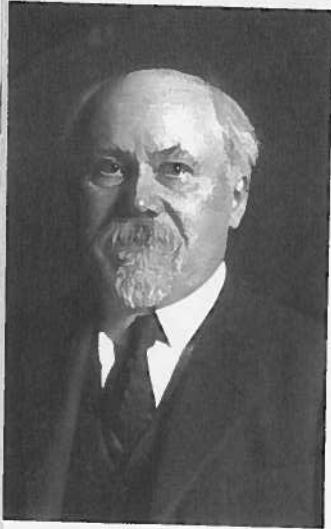
### STUDENT STUDY SECTION

#### QUESTION

According to Source A, what were the problems faced by France and Belgium as a result of the occupation of the Ruhr?

## How was the crisis solved?

In September 1923, the new German Chancellor, Gustav Stresemann, was forced to call passive resistance off as a result of the collapse of the German economy. This move was sensed as a defeat by right-wing groups. Acts of violence broke out in several cities and Germany was placed under martial law. Yet Germany could no longer bear the burden of passive resistance and hoped for British and, perhaps, US intervention to solve the problem of reparations. The French economy had also suffered due to the cost of maintaining the occupation of the Ruhr. France's attempts to support separatist movements in the Rhineland and promote unrest in Germany had failed and there was no hope of either British or American support. Eventually, France joined negotiations to solve the crisis.



Raymond Poincaré

## What were the consequences of the crisis?

It could be said that the French lost more than they gained from the Ruhr Crisis. If French action had been inspired by a feeling of isolationism, the invasion had only helped to strengthen such isolation. Although some material gains were made, the invasion confirmed to the British that France could not be trusted and that her actions were a significant threat to European stability. At home, Poincaré was attacked both by those who considered the occupation should have been extended, as well as by those who thought it had been a very risky policy that had done more harm than good to France.

Additionally, failure in the Ruhr taught France that it was impossible to impose the treaty by herself, which made the discussions on collective security that followed more productive. But ending French occupation was only part of the solution. The review of reparations was a step which, in the light of the situation in Germany, could no longer be postponed. The Dawes Plan (1924) addressed the issue of German reparations.

### SOURCE B

*It became clear that the occupation of the Ruhr constituted in fact a turning-point in the history of post-war Europe. It brought to a climax the Anglo-French conflict over the treatment of Germany and the application of the Treaty of Versailles; it signified the defeat of France and its slow subordination to British policy; it thereby pointed the way to the Treaty of Locarno and the resurgence of Germany... Lastly, the Ruhr occupation showed the inability of France, acting on its own, to produce any major change in the territorial integrity of Germany.*

From Lionel Kochan, *The Struggle for Germany, 1914–1945*, 1963

#### ● Examiner's hint

The key concept here is that of the Ruhr Crisis as a 'turning-point'. The source then continues to explain what issues made the Ruhr such a turning point. Carefully consider what the source says about each of the countries involved.

### STUDENT STUDY SECTION

#### QUESTION

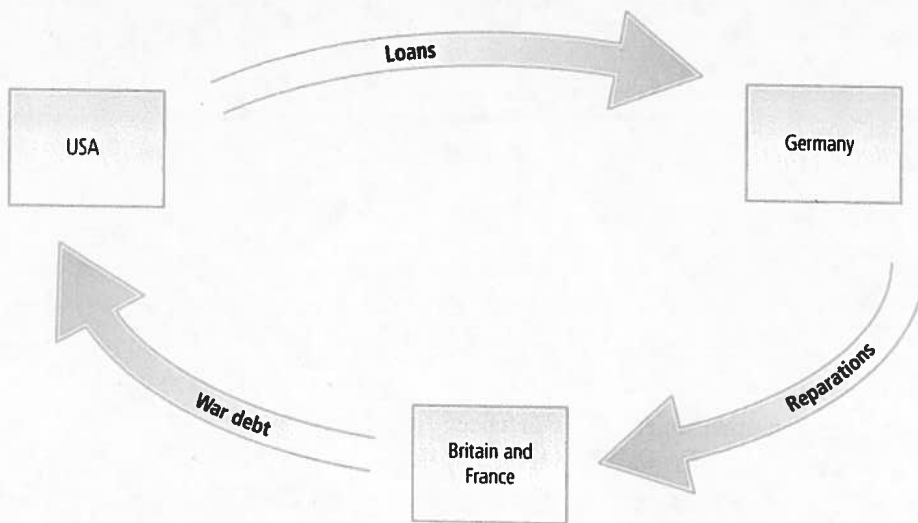
What, according to Source B, was the significance of the occupation of the Ruhr?

## Dawes Plan (1924)

In 1924, the Dawes Plan – prepared by the USA, Britain, France and Germany – presented a new schedule for the payment of reparations and discussed the withdrawal of occupation troops in the Ruhr. The final figure for German reparations was not altered, but the annual payment figures were reduced. A two-year moratorium was granted and a loan of 800 million marks was made by the USA to Germany to help her overcome the crisis.

The Dawes Plan showed that, regardless of the US diplomatic policy of isolation, the nation could not turn its back on European economic affairs. American loans enabled Germany to pay reparations to Britain and France who, in turn, paid their war debts back to the USA. Between 1924 and 1930, Germany received in loans far more than it paid as reparations. The nation began to make reparation payments on time, but remained significantly indebted.

The plan contributed to stabilizing the economic situation for Germany, but many sectors of society saw it as an official acceptance of what they understood to be an unfair situation – reparations. This flow of money made European economies liable to crises if the USA faced one. If the USA stopped the loans to Germany, then Germany would have difficulties in paying France and Britain who, in turn, would have problems repaying their war debts. The following diagram illustrates the flow of capital:



## Young Plan (1929)

The Young Plan was designed as a continuation of the Dawes Plan to solve the problems caused by reparations.

- The Young Plan further reduced the total amount of German reparations.
- The Reparations Commission would no longer be able to impose sanctions.
- Like its predecessor, it contemplated extensive loans for Germany, linking the European economies to the USA even more.

Both the Dawes Plan and the Young Plan carried elements of potential instability in that they depended on foreign economic assistance to Germany. If the USA ceased to pour money into Germany, the European economies would suffer the effects. In turn, the payment of debts to the USA would cease.

### STUDENT STUDY SECTION

#### QUESTION

'German reparations had a negative impact on international relations.' Using these sources and your own knowledge, evaluate this claim.

#### ● Examiner's hint

Questions asking you to evaluate a claim expect you to give reasons as to why you agree or disagree with the view expressed. It is useful to ask yourself the following questions:

- Why could it be argued that reparations had a negative impact on international relations?
- What supporting evidence – either from the sources or my own knowledge – can I offer?
- Are there any reasons to claim they did not have a negative impact? If so, what are they? What evidence can I provide to support these claims?

## The Locarno Agreement (1925) and the Locarno Spring

### Background information

The Ruhr Crisis marked the decline of the belief that the Treaty of Versailles could be imposed by the use of force. It was understood that policies of cooperation allowing some revision of the treaty would be more effective instruments to maintain peace in Europe. German inclusion in diplomatic talks and, eventually, its incorporation into the League of Nations, became a matter of discussions after 1923. This move partly responded to the idea that the nation would only contribute to peace if it accepted its terms, for which some revision of Versailles became necessary. Yet it was also hoped that the improvement of relations between Germany and its western neighbours would help to draw Germany away from the Soviet Union.

This section analyzes the relaxation of tensions following the Locarno Pact (1925) and the impact on international relations.





Gustav Stresemann

## The Locarno Pact (1925)

The Locarno Pact was a series of treaties signed by Germany, France, Belgium, Britain and Italy in 1925. The origin of the pact was a German proposal presented by Gustav Stresemann, now Secretary of Foreign Affairs, to accept Germany's western frontiers with France and Belgium in exchange for the withdrawal of foreign troops from the Rhineland. This proposal implied that Germany renounced its claims to French Alsace and Lorraine as well as Eupen and Malmedy in Belgium. Germany gained, on the other hand, assurance that events like the French invasion of the Ruhr would not occur again.

### What were the terms of Locarno?

- Germany, France and Belgium promised to accept their 1919 frontiers as permanent and not to attack each other unless in self-defence.
- Any dispute over the terms was to be settled by the Council of the League of Nations.
- By the terms of the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee included in the Locarno Pact, Britain and Italy, as guarantors, agreed to come to the defence of any country victim of aggression in violation of these terms.
- Allied troops were to evacuate the Rhineland in stages and Germany was to apply for and take membership of the League of Nations.

### What were the implications of Locarno?

- Germany renounced the use of force to recover territory from either France or Belgium.
- France had to respect German territorial integrity and abandon acts like the occupation of the Ruhr as well as any explicit encouragement of the separation of the Rhineland from Germany.
- France gained a guarantee of British assistance against a German attack. However, it was ruled that any major conflict would be directed to the Council of the League of Nations – where Germany occupied a permanent seat from 1926 – rather than allow direct British intervention. Therefore, British protection of France was not automatic.
- Locarno did not deal with Germany's eastern frontiers as Stresemann refused to recognize them as permanent. This meant Locarno was not to be equated to a German acceptance of all of the Treaty of Versailles.
- It did not benefit France's Eastern European allies as it would be more difficult for France to fulfil the terms of the Little Entente without violating German territory, thus breaking Locarno.

#### SOURCE C

*For the German foreign minister, Stresemann, Locarno was the first step towards treaty revision, for his French colleague, Aristide Briand, it was the first step on the road to compliance; for the British foreign secretary, Austen Chamberlain, it was an assertion of British detachment. By guaranteeing the Franco-German frontier Britain implicitly repudiated responsibility for any other European frontier.*

*From Anthony Adamthwaite, *The Lost Peace – International Relations in Europe 1918–1939*, 1977*

#### SOURCE D

*The three powers had their reasons to be satisfied with their work, but the reasons were very different. Britain believed that France had been given sufficient reassurance so as not to be tempted to act foolishly as they had done in 1923. Germany saw the way open to revision for the eastern frontiers, eventually by force if necessary. France was lulled by such a comforting sense of security that it overlooked the fact that the country had undergone a serious loss of power and prestige.*

*From Martin Kitchen, *Europe Between the Wars*, 1998*

## STUDENT STUDY SECTION

## QUESTION

Compare and contrast the views expressed about the Locarno Pact in Sources C and D.

**Student Answer – Karuna**

Both sources state that Locarno was a satisfactory Treaty and show that all countries gained from it. They both mention that Germany hoped for revision of Versailles. They both mention that France felt more secure after it. Both identify in Britain a sense of commitment, but also one of detachment.

However, Source D mentions German eastern frontiers and the possibility of German use of force. Source D mentions the French invasion of the Ruhr and the loss of prestige for France. None of this is stated in Source C.

**Examiner's comments**

The answer above provides some comparative structure – that is, the sources are not examined separately – as the candidate is trying to find ways in which they are similar and different. Similarities and differences are treated separately, which shows again a sense of structure and order. However, the use of the sources to support the similarities and differences found by the candidate needs to be made explicit. For each of the similarities identified in the first paragraph, the candidate should have included explanations of how and where the sources expressed similar views. The same could be said about the paragraph concerning the differences, which could gain marks by presenting other ways in which the sources differ. The student could have included a concluding remark summarizing how consistent the sources are in their views on Locarno.

## ACTIVITY

Now that you have an opinion of the strengths and weaknesses of the answer, write your own response to the question.

Locarno was resented by the German nationalists, who felt Stresemann had acknowledged Versailles. It was also resented by those who did not want German foreign policy to upset relations with the USSR. It was therefore not easy for Stresemann to get the Reichstag (the German legislative assembly) to pass Locarno. However, it would be wrong to conclude that Stresemann had given up hopes to revise Versailles further.

**SOURCE E**

*In my opinion there are three great tasks that confront German foreign policy in the immediate future. In the first place, the solution of the Reparations question in a sense tolerable for Germany, and the assurance of peace, which is an essential premise for the recovery of our strength. Secondly, the protection of Germans living abroad, those 10 to 12 millions of our kindred who now live under a foreign yoke in foreign lands. The third great task is the readjustment of our eastern frontiers; the recovery of Danzig, the Polish Corridor, and a correction of the frontier in Upper Silesia.*

From a letter from Gustav Stresemann to the Crown Prince, 1925, taken from Anthony Adamthwaite, *The Lost Peace – International Relations in Europe 1918–1939*, 1977

**SOURCE F**

*Briand and Chamberlain tried to get [Stresemann] to guarantee Germany's eastern frontiers, but he would not agree to such undertaking. The most he would do was to state that the frontiers should not be altered by force, but he refused to put his signature to this promise... In fact, when Chamberlain informed the House of Commons that Germany had renounced the use of force in the east, he was promptly told by Berlin that this was not the case.*

From Martin Kitchen, *Europe Between the Wars*, 1998

● **Examiner's hint**

Many students jump into writing on the value and limitations of sources without having carefully considered their origins and purpose first. This is not just a repetition of the information about the source offered on the paper; you need to make your own deductions as well. For example, what does the fact that Source E is a letter to the Crown Prince say about the value and limitations of the source? How might it affect what is written?

**STUDENT STUDY SECTION**

**QUESTION**

With reference to their origin and purpose, discuss the value and limitations of Source E and Source F for historians studying German foreign policy in the Locarno years.

The Soviet Union witnessed the 'Locarno Spring' with great suspicion. The improvement of relations between Germany and Western Europe was seen as a factor that could throw the USSR back into isolation. The Dawes Plan was perceived as a capitalist strategy designed to delay a communist revolution in Germany. However, Stresemann believed that good relations with the West did not necessarily imply hostility towards the USSR and that the Soviets could offer Germany a guarantee in the East should Britain and France confront her in the West. At the same time that Germany joined the League of Nations (1926), the Treaty of Berlin was signed, reaffirming the Treaty of Rapallo for five years. As a new member of the League's Council, Germany agreed to abstain from any League measure to boycott the USSR or take arms against her under the obligations to Article 16 of the Covenant. Both nations guaranteed mutual neutrality in the case of an attack by a third power.

**SOURCE G**

*The Pact of Locarno was concerned only with peace in the West, and it was hoped that what was called 'An Eastern Locarno' might be its successor. We should have been very glad if the danger of some future war between Germany and Russia could have been controlled in the same spirit and by similar measures as the possibility of war between Germany and France. Even the Germany of Stresemann was, however, disinclined to close the door on German claims in the East, or to accept territorial treaty positions about Poland, Danzig, the Corridor and Upper Silesia... Although our efforts were continued, no progress was made in the East. I did not at any time close my mind to an attempt to give Germany greater satisfaction on her eastern frontier. But no opportunity arose during these brief years of hope.*

From Winston Churchill, *The Gathering Storm*, 1948

**STUDENT STUDY SECTION**

**QUESTIONS**

- According to Source G, which were the German claims in the east?
- Using Sources C–G and your own knowledge, evaluate to what extent Locarno could be considered 'brief years of hope'.

**Student Answer (Question b) – Jerome**

The Locarno Treaties were signed in 1925 by Germany, France and Belgium with Britain and Italy acting as guarantors of the agreements. The aim was to end disputes between France, Belgium and Germany by ratifying their borders of 1919. It opened a period of relaxation of tensions, for which it could be said to be a turning point in the inter-war period.

First of all, by the Locarno Treaty signatories renounced the use of force and recognized the authority of the Council of the League of Nations to settle disputes between them. Germany raised expectations for positive change. As stated in Sources C and D, Stresemann hoped that Locarno would initiate the revision of Versailles. France felt more secure thanks to the Treaty and particularly to the British guarantee as stated in Source D. Germany received promises for the quick end of the occupation of the Rhineland and was included in the League of Nations, which also brought significant hope.

There is some indication that Locarno did not change international relations for good and that it was only a peaceful interval after the Ruhr Crisis. The fact that Germany had vowed to respect her western frontiers exposed her weak, new eastern neighbours to greater risks. The Locarno years did not see any 'Eastern Locarno' (Source G) materialize. This is supported by Sources E and F. Also, the Soviets felt that Locarno had introduced an element of unrest in Europe as they feared Germany would give priority to the West and leave the USSR isolated again.

**Examiner's comments**

This answer uses both the candidate's knowledge and the sources to address the question. It also tries to look at the two sides of the issue, i.e. why Locarno brought hope and why Locarno introduced uncertainty. However, there are some very good points that have not been sufficiently developed to show the candidate's knowledge. Also, the use of the sources is not explicit; the candidate does not show the examiner exactly what part of the source referred to makes the point offered. It is important that you provide supporting evidence from the sources to make the point; this may be a sentence, a phrase or even a single word.

## Kellogg–Briand Pact (1928)

Ten years after the end of World War I, the French Foreign Minister Aristide Briand proposed a treaty to the US government outlawing war between the two countries. Together with the American Secretary of State, Frank B. Kellogg, they agreed to 'the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy'. This was extended to more than 60 nations.

The origin of the Kellogg–Briand Pact can be found in the principle of collective security. This treaty demonstrated the change in favour of collective security after the Ruhr; the idea that the best way to prevent conflict was if all nations acted collectively and renounced the individual use of force. However, the Kellogg–Briand Pact was little more than a statement of good intentions that contemplated no enforcement provisions. When Japan, Italy and Germany – signatories of the pact – breached the terms in the 1930s, nothing was done to reinforce it.



▲ Aristide Briand

◀ Frank B. Kellogg

**SOURCE H**

*But, these treaties apart, the reality that we must not ignore if we do not wish to commit national suicide, the reality is this, my lords: that every country is arming itself! You should have no illusions about the general political climate in Europe. When the storm is approaching then it is that there is talk of calm and peace, as if because of a deep spiritual need. We ourselves do not wish to disturb the equilibrium in Europe but we must be prepared. None of you here, therefore, and nobody in the country will be surprised if, after a prolonged convalescence, I ask for another effort from the nation to bring up to scratch the forces of land, sea and air.*

From a speech by Benito Mussolini to the Italian Senate, 6 December 1928, taken from E. G. Rayner, *The Great Dictators – International Relations 1918–39*, 1992



**ToK Time**

- Do you think peace is a universal principle?
- Are norms and values capable of promoting international peace?
- What role do religious and cultural values, political beliefs and economic issues play in shaping a country's attitude towards peace?

## SOURCE I



Cartoon by David Low, first published by *The Star* newspaper on 1 December 1925.

## STUDENT STUDY SECTION

## QUESTIONS

Read Source H and answer the following questions:

- What do you know about Benito Mussolini? What events have mentioned him earlier in this chapter? Do you consider this speech to be consistent with his actions in such events? Explain your answer fully.
- To what extent is Source H consistent with Mussolini's role as guarantor of the Locarno Agreements?
- What is the message conveyed by Source I?

**Student Answer (Question c) - José**

Source I depicts Europe as a lady who has to cross a river and steps over stones to help herself. The stones are named after some international events of the inter-war period. She seems to have successfully used the Dawes Plan (stone) to advance. She is now standing on Locarno and hoping this stone will help her reach disarmament. The message conveyed is that Europe still has difficulties; that is shown by the fact that the lady has to cross a river and there is no shore in sight. The gap between Locarno and disarmament is very big and there is a risk that Europe may fall over. It is a message of hope in that some steps seem to have been successful (Dawes) but also, it shows that to reach disarmament, Europe will need to make a very big step.

**Examiner's comments**

This answer looks at all elements present in the cartoon (the woman, the river, the stones) and has interpreted each one of them to explain the message of the source. Pay attention to an effective approach for this particular type of question – a brief explanation of the elements followed by their interpretation.

## QUESTIONS

- Compare and contrast the views about the future of Locarno expressed in Sources H and I.
- Using the sources and your own knowledge evaluate whether international relations in Europe were more stable in 1928 than in 1923.

## Section III:

## Depression and the threats to international peace and collective security: Manchuria (1931–33) and Abyssinia (1935–36)

### Background information

The Great Depression marked the end of the atmosphere of international cooperation. The economic crisis caused by the collapse of the US financial markets in 1929 soon spread to American debtors as the USA started to call in their loans. In the world, productivity levels collapsed, **protectionist** policies were implemented and the **gold standard** abandoned.

The Dawes Plan and Young Plan had shown a larger involvement of the USA in European affairs, and America's entry into the Kellogg–Briand Pact had reinforced the US will to cooperate towards the goal of peace. However, the economic ties between the USA on the one hand and Germany, Britain and France on the other meant that what had started as an economic crisis in New York significantly affected the European economies and expanded the Depression to Europe and the world. The USA stopped the flow of money to Europe and began to ask to be repaid. Nations like Britain and France claimed they could not pay the USA back unless Germany paid them first. The greatest threat to international peace and collective security came from the social and political consequences of the Depression. The social unrest produced by situations of unemployment and low wages led to clashes between right and left political groups and to the rise of nationalist governments, which hoped to expand their frontiers to seize markets and raw materials.

The Depression marked the rise of economic protectionism, nationalism and international conflicts among the big powers. Japan saw the growing influence of a nationalist military in government, while the Depression contributed to the rise of Hitler and the Nazis in Germany. Italy – ruled by Benito Mussolini since 1922 – became a challenger of international order and adopted expansionist policies.

This section analyzes the causes of the Japanese invasion of Manchuria and the Italian invasion of Abyssinia and their effects on Europe, the League of Nations and international relations.



#### Protectionism

System of defending, promoting or developing domestic industries by protecting them from foreign competition through tariffs or quotas imposed on imports.

#### Gold Standard

Monetary system that backs its currency with a reserve of gold. The value of the currency of a given country under the gold standard is given by the amount of gold the country possesses.

## The Japanese invasion of Manchuria (1931–33)

### Background information

The dispute between China and Japan over the Chinese province of Manchuria needs to be understood in the context of the territorial changes that had been taking place in the region from the end of the 19th century. After the Russo-Japanese War (1904–05), Japan gained Korea, the Liaotung Peninsula containing Port Arthur, and the South Manchurian railway in China. During World War I Japan – an ally of Britain since 1902 – occupied former German colonies in the Pacific, which it received after the war. Like some other European nations, however, in the early 1920s the Japanese felt that their gains for their participation in the war were insufficient.

Despite feeling that it deserved more than it had obtained after World War I, Japan's position in the Pacific was still very strong. Neither Russia nor China could dominate Japan. In the 1920s, Japan's relations with the West produced a series of cooperative treaties such as the Washington Naval Treaties and the London Conference. An original member of the League of Nations, Japan joined the Kellogg–Briand Pact in 1928, renouncing the use of war. The country had clearly become an important player in international relations.

China, on the other hand, had been suffering internal problems and disintegration for many years. A combination of political instability and social and economic problems led many Chinese to turn to Marxism and follow the Bolshevik example. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) confronted the nationalist Kuomintang (KMT) in a civil war that contributed to increase the weakness of the country.

#### STUDENT STUDY SECTION

##### RESEARCH ACTIVITY

Individually or in pairs, research the political situation in China and Japan in the years before the Manchurian Conflict.

### Motives for Japan's aggressive foreign policy

The Great Depression brought the application of protectionist policies worldwide. Japan was at the time the world's largest silk producer, with silk constituting more than one third of her exports. These dropped nearly 40 per cent between 1929 and 1930 alone. The country's economy was also strained by a growing population, which challenged the nation's resources and made Japan dependent on imports it could hardly afford during the Depression. Moreover, Japanese immigrants were being turned away from countries like Australia and the USA as they became targets of anti-immigration laws.

The Depression brought political instability to Japan. The army – a highly prestigious institution in Japanese society – resented the government's decision to cut military spending in favour of disarmament. Right-wing sectors of the military were willing to rule and apply a policy of self-sufficiency to guarantee raw materials and space for their population based on the application of an expansionist policy. Manchuria produced almost half the world's supply of soya beans and had large supplies of coal and iron. These resources made it attractive to Japan for economic as well as strategic reasons.

#### SOURCE A

*Behind Japan's urge to expansion are a number of impelling forces. There is the explosive pressure of rapidly increasing population in a land that is already overcrowded. There is the feeling of being unfairly treated in the world distribution of territory and raw materials. There is the exceptionally strong position of the fighting services vis-à-vis the civil authorities. There is the high-flown sense of nationalism, which for many Japanese has all the force of religious conviction. There is the mystical idea of Japan's Pan-Asian mission, very popular with retired army officers and nationalist theoreticians, which envisages Japan as the leader of an Asia from which 'white imperialism' has been banished.*

From W. H. Chamberlin, *Japan over Asia*, 1938. Chamberlin was Tokyo correspondent for the *Christian Science Monitor* and author of books on inter-war Japan.

#### STUDENT STUDY SECTION

##### QUESTION

What, according to Source A, were the reasons for Japanese expansion?

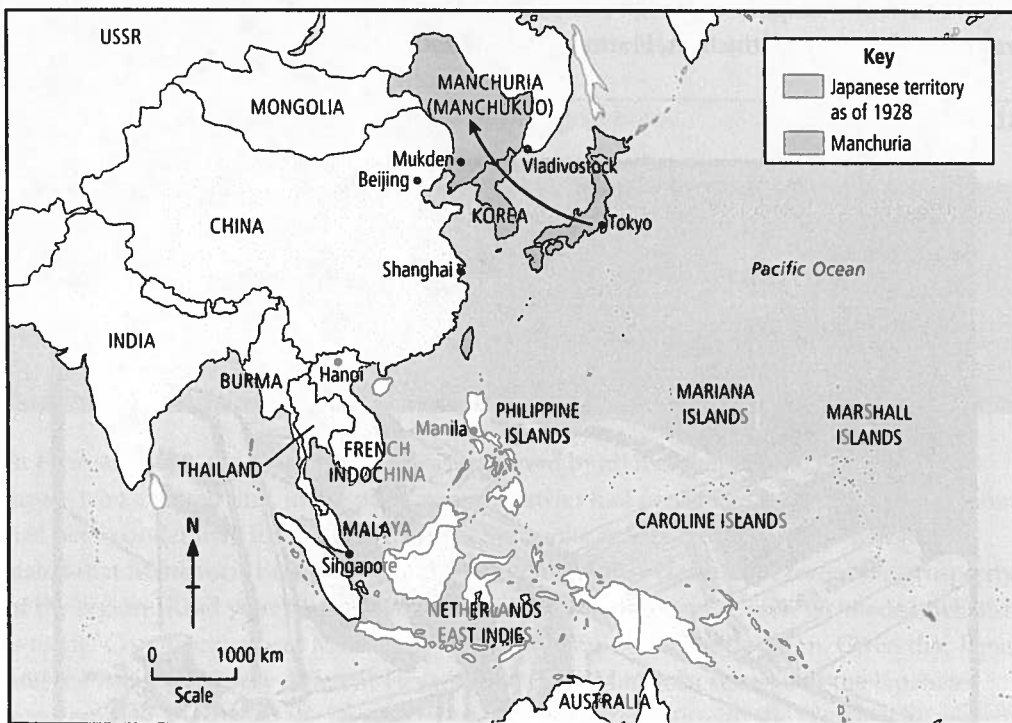
### The conflict

The Japanese presence in China was very strong. Victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1905 had granted Japan the lease of the South Manchurian railway together with the right to protect it with a military force, known as the Kwantung Army. By the time of the outbreak of the Chinese Civil War in 1927, China received nearly 80 per cent of Japanese investment and seven out of 10 foreigners living in China were Japanese.

During the Chinese Civil War, many acts of hostility against foreigners and their interests in China took place. Inspired by Chinese nationalism, strikes and boycotts against Japanese companies and attacks on Japanese citizens in China became frequent and constituted a cause of concern for the Japanese. The Chinese authorities often did not investigate these incidents, which worried the Japanese as they feared for their assets and citizens in China. Other investors in China, like Great Britain, shared these concerns with Japan, which implied that at an international level, there was some sympathy for the need of Japan to protect its citizens and investments in China. Japan was viewed sympathetically also because it was considered a valuable ally against the communist expansion that now threatened China.

### The Mukden Incident (1931)

On 18 September 1931, a bomb exploded near Mukden, on the South Manchurian railway. The Japanese accused the Chinese of sabotage. There is evidence to believe, however, that the Japanese planted the bomb themselves to cause friction with the Chinese. As a reprisal for the incidents, Japanese forces quickly advanced into areas of Manchuria beyond the railway. The Manchurian Crisis had begun. As a member state victim of an act of aggression, China appealed to the League of Nations.



**Map 5**  
Japanese invasion of Manchuria, 1931

**SOURCE B**

*Although Japan has undoubtedly acted in a way contrary to the principles of the Covenant by taking the law into their own hands, she has a real grievance against China. This is not a case in which the armed forces of one country have crossed the frontiers of another in circumstances in which they had no previous right to be on the other's soil. Japan owns the South Manchurian railway and has been entitled to have a body of Japanese guards upon the strip of land through which the railway runs. Japan's case is that she was compelled by the failure of China to provide reasonable protection for Japanese lives and property in Manchuria in the face of attacks of Chinese bandits, and of an attack upon the line itself, to move Japanese troops forward and to occupy points in Manchuria which are beyond the line of the railway.*

From a memorandum of Sir John Simon, Foreign Secretary, to the British Cabinet, 23 November 1931



**ToK Time**

How can it be determined whether an action that is defined as unjust by the international community is truly unjust? What elements could be considered in order to arrive at a decision?

**STUDENT STUDY SECTION****QUESTIONS**

- What is the attitude of the British Foreign Secretary towards Japan and China?
- With reference to their origin and purpose, discuss the value and limitations of Source A and Source B for an historian studying the causes of the Manchurian Crisis.

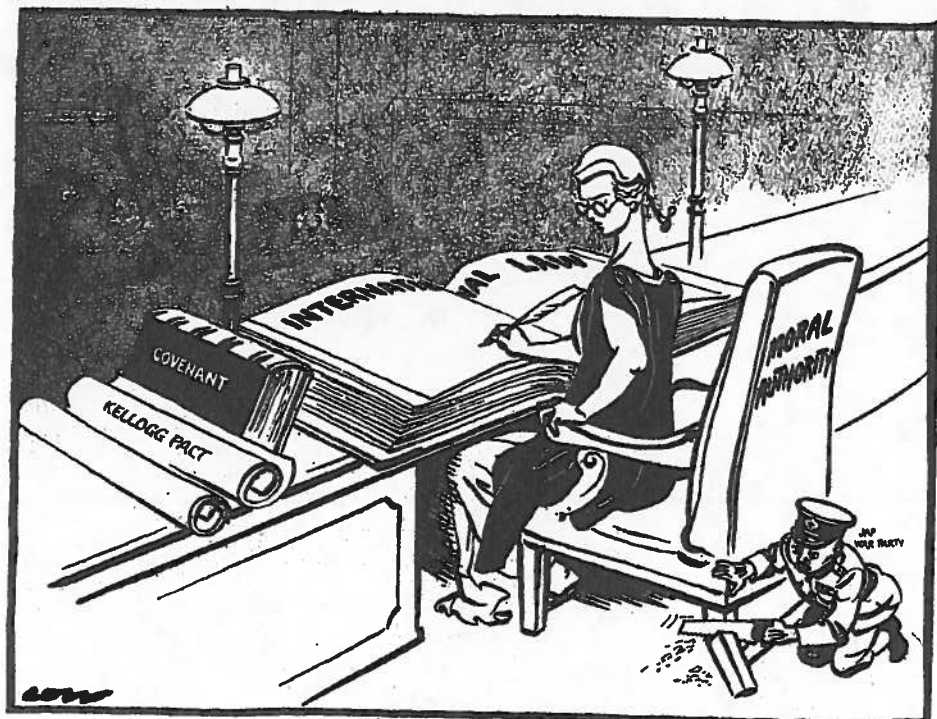
## The League of Nations and the Lytton Report

The League of Nations was very cautious about developments in Manchuria and held several meetings to try to find a solution that would be fair to both the Chinese and the Japanese. Japan was a permanent member of the Council, while China had recently taken a seat as a non-permanent member. The USA, though not a League member, was invited to send representatives to the Council and attend the sessions, in which Manchuria was discussed.

While the Japanese government seemed willing to cooperate with the League, the Japanese Army continued to move across Manchuria. One thing became clear – the Japanese government no longer controlled its own army. These events prompted the League to send a Commission of Enquiry under the command of Lord Lytton (Great Britain) and formed from representatives of the USA, France, Germany and Italy.

**SOURCE C**

'Will the League stand up to Japan?' by David Low, first published by the *Evening Standard*, a British newspaper, in November 1931.



WILL THE LEAGUE STAND UP TO JAPAN?

**Examiner's hint**

To consider all the relevant elements in a cartoon, you can draw arrows identifying them and include brief comments to help you focus your writing about their meaning and significance. This should help you check that you have not left important elements out.

**STUDENT STUDY SECTION****QUESTIONS**

- Why do you think the USA was invited to form part of the Lytton Commission?
- What is the message conveyed by Source C?

It took months before the Lytton Commission arrived in the area to investigate the Manchurian incident. It then spent several months in the region gathering information and interviewing witnesses. These delays worsened the situation for China. While the Commission was engaged in fact finding, the Japanese Army continued its move across Manchurian territory, arguing that they were acting to protect their property and nationals from revenge by the outraged Chinese. By March 1932, Manchuria had become a Japanese puppet state called Manchukuo, with Pu Yi, the last Chinese Emperor, as ruler by name.

## What were the conclusions of the Lytton Report?

The Lytton Report recognized that Japan had special rights in the region. It considered China was responsible for the deterioration of relations with Japan as its internal instability had affected Japanese economic interests. However, it rejected the use of force by the Japanese and refused to see this as part of 'police operations' to protect Japanese in Manchuria. Other conclusions of the Lytton Report were:

- It refused to recognize Manchukuo as an independent state and rejected the Japanese explanation that it was a result of independence movements in the region.
- It recommended that Japan withdraw its troops and recognize China's sovereignty over Manchuria.
- It recommended Manchuria adopt self-government while remaining under Chinese sovereignty.
- It recommended that Japan and China open negotiations.

### STUDENT STUDY SECTION

#### ACTIVITY

In class, discuss to what extent the Lytton Report effectively addressed the causes of the Sino-Japanese conflict. Start by making a list of the causes of the conflict and, using information on the Lytton Report, decide to what extent the causes were addressed.

In February 1933, the Lytton Report was approved by all members of the League except Japan, who claimed that, in the past, many countries had used force against China and none had been condemned for it. In his address, Matsuoka, leader of the Japanese delegation, stated that Manchuria belonged to Japan by right and that Japan had created the prosperity of the region: 'Read your history. We recovered Manchuria from Russia. We made it what it is today.' Compromise over Manchuria – he said – was out of the question. Given that Japan and the League had very different views on the issue, Matsuoka stated that the Japanese government had reached the limit of their efforts to cooperate with the League with regard to Sino-Japanese differences. The Japanese withdrew from the League of Nations Assembly in March 1933.

## The impact of the Manchurian Crisis on the League of Nations

- Even when the League of Nations had tried hard to determine fairly what had happened in Manchuria, and had approved the Lytton Commission report with full support from its members as well as US agreement, nothing changed for China. Confrontations with Japan on Chinese territory continued throughout the 1930s, with large-scale fighting breaking out in 1937.



#### ToK Time

'In Manchuria alone, we received approximately 1550 letters in Chinese and 400 letters in Russian, without mentioning those written in English, French or Japanese.' (Lytton Report as quoted in Manley O. Hudson, *The Verdict of the League: China and Japan in Manchuria; the Official Documents, 1932*)

- What does this source tell you about the difficulties in deciding 'what really happened' in Manchuria?
- How does this situation help illustrate some of the difficulties historians face in their research?

**Stresa Front**

Britain, France and Italy formed a common front against Nazi Germany following Hitler's announcement of German rearmament.

**Anglo-German Naval Agreement**

This treaty allowed Germany to build a navy 35 per cent the size of the British navy. The agreement revised the disarmament clauses of the Treaty of Versailles and was a major triumph for German diplomacy.

**Rome–Berlin Axis**

An understanding between Hitler and Mussolini on cooperation in foreign policy.

**● Examiner's hint**

Take a few minutes to plan your answer before you start writing. You need to consider two aspects of the League's actions in Manchuria: (a) Why could it be said that the League did too little? (b) Why could it be argued that its eventual actions were 'too late'? Make sure you address both elements in the question and that you provide material from both the sources and your own knowledge for each. Remember to consider exactly what the League could reasonably be expected to do.

- Failure to prevent Japanese expansion in China improved Japan's economic and strategic position, as Japan gained access to timber, coal and iron resources, as well as suitable land for agriculture.
- Failure to address Manchuria collectively may well have encouraged Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia in 1935.

## Why was the League of Nations not effective?

- The Lytton Commission took very long to prepare their report. By the time their findings were presented, Manchuria had been turned into Manchukuo and was firmly under the control of Japan.
- Neither France nor Great Britain, the two most important members of the League, felt they could confront Japan. Any plan to engage in conflict against Japan would have clearly been met with hostile public opinion at home. Both countries were severely affected by the Depression, and either economic sanctions or military intervention would have put a lot of strain on their economies. Also, having interests in the Far East, there was some degree of sympathy with the Japanese, as the situation of chaos and civil war in China affected economic interests at a very sensitive time, due to the Depression.
- Although the USA played some part in the diplomatic efforts to solve the crisis, President Hoover made it clear that the USA would not use economic sanctions against Japan.
- The fear of communism, prompted by civil war in China, was another reason why there was little consensus about going to war against Japan, which was at the time viewed as a strong ally that could help contain the regional expansion of communism.

The Manchurian Crisis, however, also showed the weaknesses of other instruments of international diplomacy. Japan disregarded the Kellogg–Briand Pact and the Nine Power Treaty signed at the Washington Naval Conference in 1922, by which all signatories were bound to respect the integrity of China.

### STUDENT STUDY SECTION

**RESEARCH ACTIVITY**

Refer back to the information on the Washington Naval Conference in Chapter 2 and explain why it is claimed that Japan violated the agreements reached at the Conference.

**QUESTION**

'Too little, too late.' Using these sources and your own knowledge, examine whether this is a fair judgement of the role of the League of Nations in the Manchurian Crisis.

## Italian invasion of Abyssinia (1935–36)

### Background information

After the Corfu incident (1923), Italian foreign policy under Mussolini underwent a great transformation as the country drew closer to the West. In 1925 Italy played a part in consolidating collective security by guaranteeing the Locarno Pact. In 1928, Mussolini joined the Kellogg–Briand Pact renouncing war, while in 1934 he helped prevent Hitler's expansion into Austria. Perceived as a valuable ally against Nazi Germany, Mussolini was invited by Britain and France to sign the **Stresa Front** in 1935 to contain German expansion. However, Italian foreign policy was about to take another sudden change. Later in 1935, Britain and Germany signed the **Anglo-German Naval Agreement**. Britain had not informed her Stresa allies of this intention. Not long after that, Italy invaded Abyssinia. By the following year, Mussolini had joined Hitler in the **Rome–Berlin Axis**.

## Why did Mussolini invade Abyssinia?

Abyssinia (Ethiopia) was an independent country situated between the two Italian colonies of Eritrea and Somaliland and ruled by Emperor Haile Selassie. In 1896 its army defeated an Italian invasion at the battle of Adowa. Mussolini sought to redress this humiliation, obtain overseas territories for Italy and transform it into an imperial power. Under the effects of the Depression in Italy, he developed an aggressive foreign policy aimed at gaining access to raw materials, markets and territory for the growing Italian population.



Map 6

Abyssinia, 1934

### STUDENT STUDY SECTION

#### QUESTION

Look at the map above and explain why you think Mussolini had interests in Abyssinia. Explain your answer fully.

In 1934, Italian troops provoked a clash at the Wal Wal oasis near the Abyssinian border with Italian Somaliland. Mussolini demanded from the Abyssinian government both the Wal Wal oasis and compensation for the deaths of 30 Italian soldiers in the incident.

Haile Selassie, the Emperor of Abyssinia, hoped that, should Italy attack, the international community would defend his country, which was a member of the League of Nations. Throughout 1935 he repeatedly asked the League to send neutral observers to arbitrate in the conflict with Italy. Mussolini, however, refused arbitration and began preparations for an invasion of Abyssinia.

In May 1935, an arms embargo was placed on both Italy and Abyssinia, aiming at preventing further escalation of the conflict. However, the arms embargo affected the Abyssinian Army far more than the Italian Army. Abyssinian forces could not obtain weapons, a situation that only served to stress the inferior position of the Abyssinian forces compared to that of the Italians.

Later that year the League declared that any discussion of the conflict would exclude issues of sovereignty over the disputed territories. Reluctance to discuss the issue of sovereignty denied Abyssinia the opportunity to use the instruments of the League of Nations and meant surrender to Mussolini's demands. Britain and France, acting independently, offered Mussolini territorial concessions in the region to prevent a war, but they were rejected. Yet this gesture showed the readiness with which Britain and France were prepared to make concessions to avoid war and probably only contributed to feed Mussolini's ambition.



Benito Mussolini



Haile Selassie

In October 1935, Italian troops invaded Abyssinia. The League declared Mussolini an aggressor and imposed economic sanctions in an attempt to deprive him of necessary goods and force the Italians out of Abyssinia. However, sanctions were not effectively applied:

- They took too long to be implemented.
- They excluded valuable goods such as coal, oil and steel.
- Not all countries respected the measure but rather continued to trade with Italy. Sanctions were not fully implemented by the USA and were ignored by Japan and Germany.
- Britain kept the Suez Canal open so Italy had ways to supply the troops in Africa.

One of the reasons why economic sanctions were not imposed more forcefully was British and French keenness not to lose Mussolini as an ally against Hitler. They feared that if the Italian economy was affected by the sanctions, Mussolini might decide to go to war over the issue, a chance they were unwilling to take. Mussolini considered it was unfair that sanctions were applied to Italy after the Japanese had not been punished for the invasion of Manchuria. He was aware of how important Italy had become to the Allies since Hitler's rise and was prepared to use that in his favour.

#### SOURCE D

*The oil sanction was the crucial question. I have no doubt now that in their handling of this the British Government made a most serious mistake of judgement. By early December, most member states of the League had said they would support the embargo if others did likewise, and President Roosevelt was trying to put pressure on the American oil companies not to increase their exports to Italy. Some Ministers feared that imposition of the oil sanction would drive the Duce to war with us.*

From a memorandum by Sir Anthony Eden in 1935, taken from *Facing the Dictators: The Memoirs of Anthony Eden, Earl of Avon*, 1962

#### SOURCE E

*With Ethiopia we have been patient for forty years! It is time to say enough! In the League of Nations there is talk of sanctions instead of recognition of our rights. Until there is proof to the contrary, I shall refuse to believe that the real and generous people of France can support sanctions against Italy... Similarly, I refuse to believe that the real people of Great Britain, who have never had discords with Italy, are prepared to run the risk of hurling Europe along the road to catastrophe for the sake of defending an African country universally branded as a country without the slightest shadow of civilization.*

From a speech by Benito Mussolini, 1935, taken from *Scritti e Discorsi di Benito Mussolini*, vol. IX

### STUDENT STUDY SECTION

#### QUESTIONS

- a) What reasons does Source D give for economic sanctions against Italy being weak?
- b) What is the significance of Source E for an historian studying Mussolini's policy during the Abyssinian crisis?
- c) With reference to their origins and purpose, discuss the value and limitations of Source D and Source E for an historian studying the Abyssinian crisis.

**Student Answer (Question c) – Dominic**

Source D is a memorandum by Sir Anthony Eden, who at the time served as British Minister for the League of Nations under Prime Minister Baldwin. It was written at the time of the crisis and published in 1962 in his memoirs. The purpose is to express his critical views about British policy towards sanctions on Italy and to explain that Britain had not been harder on Italy because some Ministers feared it would lead to a war with Italy.

The value of the source is that Eden was part of the British government at the time of the invasion of Abyssinia. As such, he provides an historian with valuable information such as the fact that Roosevelt was trying to contribute to the effectiveness of the embargo on Italy or that British Ministers feared war. We can also learn about his personal view on the issue, which becomes particularly relevant when we consider he was part of the government at the time and is nonetheless critical of the policies. Published in 1962, the source may have benefited from hindsight.

However, Eden admits the British made 'a crucial mistake'; he expresses his negative opinion on how the situation was handled and his stand could be taken as a limitation in his objectivity to present the evidence. The memorandum was published in 1962 in his memoirs. We cannot be certain that he has not altered it to reflect a better image of his role during the crisis.

Source E is a speech by Mussolini at the time of the invasion of Abyssinia. It is a primary source and it is therefore reliable. The purpose of the speech is to encourage the audience to support him in Abyssinia and to explain that it was a fair cause. The purpose is also to pass a message to Britain and France about how he expects them not to oppose him and to announce that, should they join sanctions against Italy, they may be 'hurling Europe to catastrophe'.

The value of this source is, as we have mentioned, that it is a primary source. We find out from Mussolini himself what his views about Abyssinia, France and Britain are. The limitation is that it could be propaganda and that the translator may have made mistakes.

**Examiner's comments**

The candidate has addressed all aspects of the question. However, the level of performance is better for Source D. Source D has been well handled, particularly in the comments the candidate has made on the origins and purposes. His own knowledge on Eden is used to make relevant comments on the usefulness of the source. (If there is anything relevant you know about the author of a source, use it in your source evaluation.) There's also awareness that although the source is a memorandum, it was published later in time, and the student links this issue effectively to the values and limitations. The candidate refers explicitly to what an historian studying the Abyssinian Crisis could learn from Source D.

Source E is not as well handled as Source D for two reasons. In the first place, the evaluation of Source E makes some assumptions that are not entirely supported/correct. Also, the time spent on D may have prevented the candidate from writing a more detailed evaluation of E. Although some imbalance can be allowed, make sure you have enough time to look at all aspects of both sources in similar depth.

One of the assumptions made in relation to E is that because it is a primary source, it is reliable. The first problem with this statement is that the question does not ask you to determine reliability, but usefulness. Next, there is no rule against identifying sources as primary or secondary, but you need to show explicitly how the nature of a source relates to its value and limitations. Avoid saying that a source is valuable because it is primary. It may be the case, it may not; it will largely depend on valuable for what.

The second assumption made is that because this is a translation of the speech, it has limitations. Avoid these comments unless you have specific evidence that this is the case. It is something which could be said of many sources on exam papers and it does not necessarily demonstrate your skills to evaluate sources.

## What were the reactions to the invasion of Abyssinia?

Italy was strategically important to Britain and France, the strongest countries in the League of Nations. If the organization was to act in defence of Abyssinia, it needed their full support. But they both had important reasons to want to prevent confrontation with Italy.

- Britain did not wish to engage in confrontation in the Mediterranean, because this might have affected her naval bases in Malta and Gibraltar. After the Japanese aggression in China, Britain wished to keep her navy strong for a potential conflict against Japan in the Pacific.
- A friendly Italy could also help protect the French Mediterranean coast. Additionally, in the event of war against Germany, a neutral Italy meant that there would be no requirement to station French troops in the Alps.
- Italy was a corridor through which French assistance could be sent to the Little Entente countries.
- Public opinion on both sides of the Channel was against war, and it played a part in determining the appeasing approach of Britain and France towards the conflict. Even within those groups ready to stand by the League, there was certain feeling that they were prepared to go, in Baldwin's phrase, for 'all sanctions short of war'.

### SOURCE F

*On 7 January 1935 Laval and Mussolini signed the Rome Agreements... The most controversial of agreements was a secret one on Abyssinia. With minor reservations France signed over to Italy her economic interests in Abyssinia. In a private conversation with the Duce, Laval used the phrase a 'free hand'. The Italian leader interpreted this gloss as meaning that France would turn a blind eye to the military conquest of Abyssinia, whereas Laval probably assumed Italy would stop short of war. No record of this colloquy was kept and the ambiguity was no doubt intentional.*

From Anthony Adamthwaite, *The Making of the Second World War*, 1977

#### ToK Time

Laval used the phrase a "free hand". The Italian leader interpreted this gloss as meaning that France would turn a "blind eye". Do you think there could have been a problem of interpretation? One of translation? Is the way we communicate more important between statesmen and diplomats than between ordinary citizens?



### STUDENT STUDY SECTION

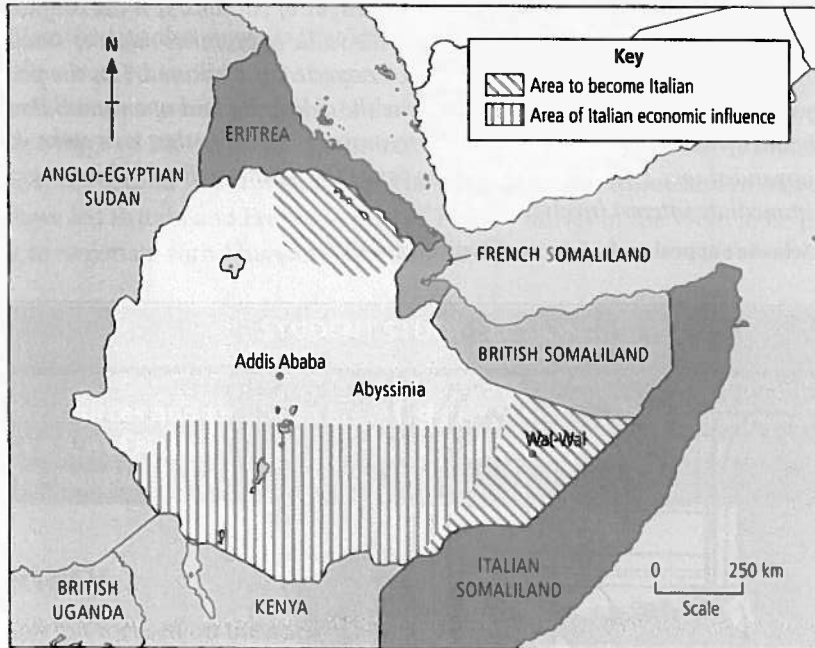
#### QUESTION

What, according to Source F, were the reasons for the Italian invasion of Abyssinia? What does Source F reveal about French foreign policy?

## The Hoare–Laval Pact

In December 1935, in an attempt to solve the Abyssinian Crisis and appease Italy, Sir Samuel Hoare (British Foreign Secretary) and Pierre Laval (French Prime Minister) secretly offered Mussolini large parts of Abyssinia, some of which would come under direct Italian control and other under Italian economic influence. They proposed to compensate Haile Selassie by giving him territory from British Somaliland with an outlet to the sea. Details of the Hoare–Laval Pact leaked out the next day and there was public outcry in Britain and France at the double game their governments were playing by combining sanctions with the promise of concessions. It cost both Hoare and Laval their posts.

The following map illustrates the proposals made under the Hoare–Laval Pact.



**Map 7**  
Proposals of the Hoare–Laval  
Pact, 1935

**SOURCE G**

*[To accept the British–French plan] would not only be a cowardice towards our people but a betrayal of the League of Nations and of all the States which have shown they could have confidence up to now in the system of collective security. These proposals are the negation and the abandonment of the principles upon which the League of Nations is founded. For Ethiopia they would consecrate the amputation of her territory and the disappearance of her independence for the benefit of the State which has attacked her. They imply the definite interdiction for her own people to participate usefully and freely in the economic development of about a third of the country, and they confide this development to her enemy, which is now making the second attempt to conquer this people. A settlement on the lines of this proposal would place a premium upon aggression and upon the violation of international engagements.*

From a speech by Haile Selassie, taken from George W. Baer, *Test Case: Italy, Ethiopia, and the League of Nations*, 1976

**STUDENT STUDY SECTION**

**QUESTIONS**

- a) How, according to Source G, would the League of Nations be affected by the Hoare-Laval Pact?
- b) Compare and contrast the map of the Horn of Africa (page 83) before the invasion of Abyssinia with that illustrating the proposals of the Hoare–Laval Pact. Explain how this can help provide a better understanding of Source G.

Open confrontation in Abyssinia devastated the country, whose military resources could not match the Italian Army and Air Force. Italian troops massacred civilians, attacked ambulances and used mustard gas against Abyssinians in open violation of international conventions on warfare. Haile Selassie protested to the League about these violations and asked for the arms embargo to be lifted so that the Abyssinian troops could have access to weapons to fight the Italian advance. Nothing effective was done about this by the League, who admitted failure in the dispute in April 1936. Mussolini continued his advance and in May the King of Italy, Victor Emanuel III, was proclaimed Emperor of Abyssinia. The League abandoned economic sanctions.



**SOURCE H**

*It is collective security: it is the very existence of the League of Nations. It is the confidence that each State is to place in international treaties. It is the value of promises made to small States that their integrity and their independence shall be respected and ensured. It is the principle of the equality of States on the one hand, or otherwise the obligation laid upon small Powers to accept the bonds of vassalship. In a word, it is international morality that is at stake. Have the signatures appended to a Treaty value only in so far as the signatory Powers have a personal, direct and immediate interest involved?*

From Haile Selassie's appeal to the League of Nations, June 1936

**SOURCE I**

Cartoon 'On the Throne of Justice', first published by the *Evening Standard* on 24 July 1935.



ON THE THRONE OF JUSTICE.

**STUDENT STUDY SECTION****QUESTION**

With reference to their origins and purpose, discuss the value and limitations of Sources H and I to an historian studying the role of the League of Nations in the Abyssinian Crisis.

**Effects of the Abyssinian Crisis**

- The Abyssinian Crisis shattered any hopes that either the League or collective security could protect nations against acts of aggression.
- The Stresa Front ended and the relations of France and Britain with Italy became tense.
- Italy approached Germany, signed the Rome–Berlin Axis (1936) and abandoned the League of Nations (1937).
- There is a link between the Abyssinian Crisis and Hitler's invasion of the Rhineland, as the latter took place while the Abyssinians were suffering their last major defeat

in March 1936. As a consequence of the Abyssinian Crisis, Mussolini left the Stresa Front, which meant he would not join Britain and France in actions to stop Hitler. A. P. Adamthwaite also suggests that Hitler took advantage of British and French distraction over Mussolini and Abyssinia to send troops to the Rhineland. 'While Britain and France were distracted, Hitler made his first major territorial move, sending a force of 22,000 men into the demilitarised Rhineland' (Adamthwaite, *The Making of the Second World War*, 1977). The invasion of the Rhineland in March 1936 could have led Britain and France, scared of Hitler's moves in the West, to be more willing to negotiate with Mussolini over Abyssinia.

### STUDENT STUDY SECTION

#### QUESTION

Using the sources and your own knowledge, assess the claim that the failure of the League of Nations should be attributed mainly to the policies of its most powerful members.

## Summary

This section has focused on the attempts to apply the principle of collective security through the League of Nations and has assessed the successes and challenges for the organization by analyzing some of the early attempts at peacekeeping as well as the Manchurian and Abyssinian Crises of the 1930s. It has also analyzed significant events of the inter-war period such as the French invasion of the Ruhr. It has evaluated the impact of the Ruhr Crisis on international relations by analyzing the Locarno Spring period. Finally, it has assessed the effects of the Depression on international affairs. The Depression not only brought economic instability to world affairs. It also contributed to the rise of Hitler and the Nazis in Germany, the collapse of the Disarmament Conference in Geneva, the Japanese occupation of Manchuria, the Italian invasion of Abyssinia and Hitler's occupation of the Rhineland. In these conflicts, national interests were placed before collective security and the Covenant of the League was broken by its members, whether by acting against it or by failing to apply the instruments to keep peace through collective security.

### REVIEW SECTION

Assess the importance of each of the following factors in explaining the weaknesses of the League of Nations:

- The absence of the USA
- The conflicts between Britain and France
- The withdrawal of Japan
- The policy towards the Italian invasion of Abyssinia
- The Locarno Spring and why was it short-lived

Add brief notes to the following bullet points to analyze how each of these events contributed to the development and outcome of the Manchurian incident:

- Wall Street Crash
- The role of the Lytton Commission
- Creation of the state of Manchukuo
- Japanese withdrawal from the League

## Sample exam for Prescribed Subject 1: Peacemaking, Peacekeeping – International Relations 1918–36

These sources relate to the Treaty of Versailles, 1919.

### SOURCE A

From Zara Steiner, *The Lights that Failed – European International History 1919–1933*, 2005

*Germany was not destroyed. Nor was it reduced to a power of the second rank or permanently prevented from returning to great-power status. Outside of Russia, it remained the most populous state in Europe. With the disintegration of Austria-Hungary and the fall of Tsarist Russia, the application of the nationality principle left Germany in a stronger position than before the war. It was now surrounded on almost all its borders by small and weak states, none of which, including Poland, posed a danger to its existence... Germany's productivity capacity and industrial potential were left intact. Despite the loss of Saar coal and Lorraine iron ore, Germany remained Europe's 'industrial power house', able, in a remarkably short time, to dominate the trade of the central and eastern European states.*

### SOURCE B

From the private diary of Colonel E. M. House, advisor to President Wilson and member of the US delegation at Versailles

*I am leaving Paris, after eight fateful months, with conflicting emotions. Looking at the conference in retrospect, there is much to approve and yet much to regret. It is easy to say what should have been done, but more difficult to have found a way of doing it. To those who are saying that the treaty is bad and should never have been made and that it will involve Europe in infinite difficulties in its enforcement, I feel like admitting it. But I would also say in reply that empires cannot be shattered, and new states raised upon their ruins without disturbance. To create new boundaries is to create new troubles. The one follows the other. While I should have preferred a different peace, I doubt very much whether it could have been made, for the ingredients required for such a peace as I would have were lacking at Paris.*

### SOURCE C

'The Easter offering', cartoon published in *Punch*, British magazine, April 1919. Cartoon caption: Mr Lloyd George (fresh from Paris). 'I don't say it's a perfect egg; but parts of it, as the saying is, are excellent.'



**SOURCE D**

From the *Deutsche Zeitung* (a German newspaper), 28 June 1919

*Vengeance German nation! Today in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles a disgraceful treaty is being signed. Never forget it! On that spot where, in 1871, the German Empire in all its glory began, today German honour is dragged to the grave... The German people, with unceasing labour, will push forward to reconquer that place among the nations of the world to which they are entitled. There will be vengeance for the shame of 1919.*

**SOURCE E**

From David A. Andelman, *A Shattered Peace – Versailles 1919 and the Price We Pay Today*, 2008

*In the end, Versailles proved a colossal failure for Woodrow Wilson, for the United States, and for the future of a world that had hoped it might be governed by principles of freedom and self determination – even today... Covenants of peace were not openly arrived at. Freedom of the seas was not secured. Free trade was not established in Europe; indeed, tariff walls wound up being erected, higher and more numerous than any yet known. National armaments were not reduced. German colonies and the land of its allies, Austria Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, were distributed among the victors as spoils – from the Saar to Shantung, from Serbia to Syria – the wishes, to say nothing of the interests, of their population flagrantly disregarded. Russia was not welcome in the society of nations... Territorial settlements in almost every case were mere adjustments and compromises between the claims of rival states. Even the old system of secret treaties remained untouched.*

**STUDENT STUDY SECTION****QUESTIONS**

- 1a) What, according to Source E, were the reasons why Versailles proved 'a colossal failure'?
- 1b) What message is conveyed by Source C?
- 2) Compare and contrast the views expressed in Sources A and B about the Treaty of Versailles.
- 3) With reference to their origin and purpose, discuss the value and limitations of Source D and Source E for historians assessing the Treaty of Versailles.
- 4) 'The Treaty of Versailles was too harsh.' Using these sources and your own knowledge, assess the validity of this claim.