

# Good essay on history exam questions

[War](#), [World War 2](#)



- How successful were the programs of the New Deal in solving the problems of the Great Depression? Assess with respect to two of the following: Relief, Recovery, Reform.

The Great Depression is a title of the economic depression in the world in the decade before the World War II. It was the longest and the deepest economic decline in 20th century. The Great Depression in the United States started in August, 1929, when economic recession was first observed in the country.

The Wall Street Crash in 1929, the biggest stock market crash in the US history, signaled the beginning of the Great Depression. That time Herbert Hoover was the President of the United States. His measures against the depression were not effective. The nation needed a powerful president. And it appeared in 1933, when Americans were strongly disappointed with Hoover's presidency. His name was Franklin Delano Roosevelt. And served his country for 12 years and four terms until his death and was the only President, who managed to control the Office for such a long time.

As soon as he became the President, he understood that nation was in need of the series of reform aimed at reconstruction of the previous economic strength and on creating workplaces. He introduced the New Deal, a series of the domestic economic programs in response to the Great Depression enacted in a period between 1933 and 1936. All these programs were mainly focused on 3Rs: Relief, Recovery and Reform. The relief dealt with mass unemployment and the poor, the recovery was aimed at pumping the economic levels to the normal ones. Reforms meant the changes to the financial system to prevent depressions in the future. The effectiveness and success of these programs is a topic for discussion as the US did not reach

pre-Depression economic rates and the issue of unemployment was fully solved only because the World War II began. Yet, Roosevelt managed to control the economic stability of the country and lead it to the economic growth and growth of the workplaces. According to Roosevelt, “ Our greatest primary task is to put people to work.” (241).

As for the relief, Roosevelt took a series of immediate actions to hinder the economic deterioration. Such actions are Emergency Banking Act, under which insolvent banks were closed and only solvent remained opened.

Besides, Roosevelt signed Federal Emergency Relief Act and founded Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA). FERA was headed by Harry Hopkins, a close advisor to the President. The organization hired unemployed to work on public projects (Schaller, et al 844). To meet the challenge of youth unemployment, Congress created the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). They provided temporary jobs to unmarried single adults. Such young men (mostly in their 20s) received 30 dollars, room and board and had to send 22 dollars to their families. Within a few months 275, 000 men were enrolled and in 1935, at its peak, 500, 000 men worked at CCC projects. Apart from the payment and meals, men received also some education. Civil Works Administration was another innovation introduced within the frameworks of the relief direction. Workers occupied in this organization repaired roads and bridges across the US. Furthermore, the Social Security Act was signed. It guaranteed aid and financial security to elder unemployment people, the disabled and dependent mothers.

Roosevelt also implemented a series of long-term reforms to avoid further depressions. In the course of such reformation, the President created the

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. It meant that the government guaranteed savings deposits for all Americans. This also prevented banking panic related to closures of the banks. The Soil Conservation Act was signed to guarantee proper land maintenance to avoid another “dust bowl” (draught in the Southern States in 1933).

Programs introduced by Franklin Roosevelt regarding reforms and relief were effective. They created thousands of workplaces and made the issue of unemployment not as drastic as it was before. Long-term reforms helped prevent another economic decline.

- Compare and contrast the social, political, and economic impacts of WWI and WWII on American society.

Both world wars affected the worldwide community. The outcomes of the wars shaped the geography of many European countries and the political situation changed as well. And of course the social situation was not stable because wars are usually caused by social conflicts and they lead to other social conflicts and dissatisfied people around. The World War I led to the social conflicts in Europe. For example, the November Revolution in Germany was caused by the unsatisfied soldiers, who returned from the World War I. The US suffered from many economical problems as in the end of the World War I, as in the World War II. Besides, such powerful political leaders as Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin changed the political situation as well.

The World War I has the positive impact on the United States as it stimulated social, political and economical change within the nation. The war promoted many social reforms. First of all, it has positive effect on women and women rights. They became more a part of the society than ever before. Besides,

they could apply for jobs previously taken by men – they could be teachers, clerks and became more widely employed in industrial jobs. Wartime necessity for labor brought more women into the work force. They worked as railroad workers, cooks, shipbuilders and other industrial jobs. The major reform that occurred in 1920 is the passage of the 19th amendment to the US Constitution. This law allowed women to vote. Another social change caused by the World War I was the large-scale migration of the black population from South to the North. This event transformed the lives of many African Americans as well the life of many Northern cities. There were a lot of job opportunities created by the war and the blacks could work in steel mills, stockyards and munitions plants. Besides, by the end of the war African Americans could serve in many kinds of troops. Besides, they introduced their culture, especially jazz, to Europeans. Unfortunately, help of the blacks did not help them to get civil rights. World War I had not only positive social effects. The Espionage Act of 1917 was introduced as well the First Red Scare actions were taken. Furthermore, the epidemic of influenza took thousands of lives of the US citizens. Social changes after the World War II also were significant for the US history. During the war women and African Americans also got additional rights but when the soldiers came back their rights turn to be nothingness. Many social policies introduced by the New Deal to get out from the depression were abolished. Two biggest changes in everyday life of the USA started after the World War II. One of them is migration to suburbs – cars and houses were affordable and many whites refused to live together with the black population that moved to the cities during the wars. Besides, a television was invented and it changed the social

life of Americans. However, the World War II made the USA to fear for communists. The Red Scare policy was introduced. Communists were prosecuted everywhere in the United States. Even the Hollywood was harmed by this process.

Wars also brought changes into political life of the country. What was similar for both World War I and World War II is that the wars strengthen the power of government and the US Military. Before the US went into the World War I, the army consisted of about 200, 000 soldiers. After the war, US Army had over five millions of soldiers. The World War II had more drastic impact on the political life of the USA and on the whole world as well. The Potsdam conference shaped the areas of influence controlled by the Allies (Schaller, et al 923). A part of Germany was controlled by the US troops and the Government. The end of the war launched another war, which was later called the Cold War, the rivalry between the US and the Soviet Union. The United States chose the anti-communism way of development. Communists were prosecuted. The spies were looked for everywhere. The US started the policy of containment – the program of getting rid of communism inside the country as well as worldwide outside the US.

Wars shaped also the economical status of the country. The United States experienced an economic boom during and after the World War I. First of all, the issue of unemployment was solved. The economy was transformed. Working conditions improved and farming began to develop at new level. The World War II also improved the economy of the United States, because army needs a lot of artillery. Production of crops increased as well. Yet, the federal deficit continues even after the war.

All in all, world wars changed the United States significantly. Economical changes were almost the same. Yet the social changes after the World War I were much more important than the changes after the World War II. But the second war changed the political views of many Americans.

- Analyze the origins of the Cold War. Why did the Soviet Union and the United States turn into rivals after cooperating to defeat the Axis Powers in WWII?

The Cold War is often dated from 1947 to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. It was a sustained state of political and military tension between the Western Bloc and the Eastern Bloc. The Western bloc was dominated by the United States and was supported by members of the NATO. The Eastern bloc consisted of the Soviet Union and countries signed the Warsaw Pact. The World War II ended and both the United States and the Soviet Union became the superpowers. The term superpower refers to a state, which has the dominant position in the international system. Such states are able to influence the situation worldwide in the favor of the state and protect its interests.

Both the United States and the Soviet Union had lots of common. Political leaders of these countries managed to control the territories of the states and other territories that were under the influence of these countries according the results of Potsdam Conference or other international agreements. Besides, both the United States and the Soviet Union cooperated to win the World War II and to defeat such powerful armies as Nazis in Germany and the Imperial Japanese Army. Yet, states have different political views and therefore a lot of tensions were created. Both countries

possessed nuclear weapon and the open conflict could result in the World War III. The times of the highest tensions fell on the Cuban Missile Crisis, Berlin Blockade, Korean and Vietnam Wars. Besides, the conflict was expressed through other political, economical and social actions.

The origins of the Cold War can be traced in the events of the 1945 when the nuclear weapon was invented by the United States. This was a signal to the governments of both countries that from that time the United States has the power to destroy the whole planet with the help of dozens of pilots or even push of one button (Schaller 922). The Soviet Union introduced the atomic bomb in 1949. This created tensions because USSR was feared by the possible attack from the US and vice versa. Besides, Truman disliked Stalin and his policy. First, he was described as honest and smart leader, but then briefings with Roosevelt military advisors raised distrust in Stalin's policy (Schaller 922). The diplomats warned the US President that the Soviet Union planned a communist expansion in the countries of the Soviet influence. Truman needed to introduce strong anticommunist position. The policy of containment was launched. And the Soviet Union started expansion in the Eastern World. Stalin wanted reparation from Germany and the creation of "buffer" made of friendly countries to avoid possible invasion to the Soviet Union. Therefore, they started to build socialism country out their zone in Germany. The US Government protected democracy and actions taken in the Soviet zone did not correspond to the imagination of democracy.

The feeling of suspicion and mutual distrust provoked the deepening of the Cold War. Soviet Union continued the communism invasion in the countries of the Eastern bloc and the United States continued their containment policy



throughout the world. The political tensions sometimes grew into military conflicts. The differences in political views were so drastic in both countries that the Cold War could not have stopped until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

- Assess the success of the United States policy of containment in Asia between 1945 and 1975.

The United States policy of containment appeared as the reaction to the Soviet Union policy of communism expansion. The countries of Asia became important as they could become bases for the growing industries, offer political support or become allies in anti-communism struggle. Therefore a careful attention was paid on Asia, especially on China, Japan, Korea and Vietnam. China was a country with large territory and huge amount of population. Besides, it was developing country with big potential and such an ally could be a significant support on the international arena. Strength of Japan also meant the strong political ally. The War in Korea was the result of the United States' fears that communism could spread around the world after China along with Mao Zedong turned out to be a communist country. The last war on the territory of Asia, the Vietnam War, was the attempt of the USA to prevent communist takeover of South Vietnam. The war was supported by Chinese and Soviet military on the one hand and by US army on the other hand. All these wars and conflicts ended with different level of success to the United Nations.

In October 1949, China fell down to communists under the ruling of Mao Zedong. It was especially harmful for the US policy as General George Marshall ensured that China would remain free (Schaller et. al. 929). The

Civil War in China made the country allied with the Soviet Union. The Truman was blamed in the “ loss of China”.

Another point of the Cold War was the conflict in Korea. The territory of Korea was a Japanese colony. After the World War II, the United States and the Soviet Union divided the Korea into South and North occupation zones at the 38th parallel. Northern part was important for the USSR as it was buffer territory between the Soviet Union and Japan. Between 1945 and 1950 the Soviet Union invested a lot of money and resources to support the creation of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and the United States supported the Southern territories. The Korean War started after the troops of Northern Korea crossed the 38th parallel. The American counterattack brought the troops back to their territory. The US Government decided to destroy the North Korean regime. They ignored the Chinese warning and fail in their goal.

After the North Korean Invasion a part of the US Navy was sent to keep peace between the nationalist Taiwan and communist China. The US passed the Formosa Resolution, which allowed Eisenhower to take any military action to defend Taiwan. With the help of US support Taiwan maintained its independence.

The United States needed a strong ally in Asia to contain the communism in that region. They invested into strengthening of Japan, economically and militarily; restrict communism influence in the country by removing left-wing officials and revived old Japanese values. The occupation of Japan by the US ended in 1952 under the condition that America retained military bases in Japan. As the result, Japan was turned into ally against communism and

developed rapidly. However, it was not involved into military conflicts.

The Vietnam War ended with Communist Victory in 1975. The war actually occurred in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia from December 1956. It was fought between North Vietnam, supported by China and the Soviet Union, and the government of the South Vietnam. The aim of the North Vietnam was to unify the country and they managed to do it after 18 years of the war. The US did not succeeded in that war because there were lots of protests organized by hippies and other US citizens against the war and because of Vietnamization, which was aimed at ending the American presence in the Vietnam.

The containment in Asia cannot be considered 100% successful. The failure of Vietnam and China and the mutilated success in Korea weakened the positions of the USA. Yet, the success of Japan and Philippines strengthened the power of the United States.

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