

History

1 Pathways to power – USA

After the first World War, the world was shell-shocked and wanted to put these miserable four year behind them, but none more so than the USA.

After the war the USA reverted to an isolationist policy which basically meant that they didn't want to have anything to do with what was going on outside their borders. They felt like they had been forced into a war that they had nothing to do with. They had sent volunteers over at first, most of them in the flying squads, and had lost many. Not to mention the fact that the British and the French didn't show them much gratitude for entering, properly, so late. They had also been asked to take their place as world leader, but they refused and reverted to isolationist policies.

However, when war broke out across Europe again in 1939, Roosevelt found it quite hard to be isolationist. Roosevelt was not isolationist at heart and contrary to his predecessor, he did not ask the American people to stay neutral in thought and encouraged them to side with the victims of Nazi and fascist invasions. In 1940, Churchill went to Roosevelt for help and they established the Lend-Lease Act, which meant that the USA would provide the Allies with arms which they would have to pay for until the war was over [sic]. But as time went on Roosevelt was drifting further and further away from his isolationist policies and by 1941, he had troops stationed in the Atlantic ocean "in case" of an attack. He was really actually hoping for a reason to go to war and his wish was granted. But not in the Atlantic ocean. In the early hours of a December morning in 1941, Pearl Harbour was attacked by a Japanese air-raid killing over 2000 of the men stationed there. This attack was a complete surprise, which explains the heavy losses in so little time. The very next day, Roosevelt had got the permission to declare war on Germany and Japan, this was very strongly backed by the public and also by Congress, therefore, the USA joined the war in December 1941 and ended it in 1945 by dropping atomic bombs on two Japanese cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

After World [sic] War II. the USA didn't go back to their isolationist policies, they decided to take the lead as world superpower. During the war there were a series of conferences to plan the world after the war. Churchill and Roosevelt agreed that a prosperous world would be a peaceful one under American economic dominance. Stalin was not of that opinion, he believed that a prosperous and peaceful world could only be achieved under communism. This is when it was definitely established that the USA and the USSR were not going [sic] to get along all that great, tensions probably started during the Potsdam conference but were only really felt after the end of the war. Now that Germany had fallen, that the rest of Europe was in a state of drastic recovery and that Japan was so deeply wounded, the world was left with two superpowers: the USA and the USSR. Both had one single objective : find a way to destroy the other and therefore spread their own ideology across the world.

This worried the USA, and this is probably the main reason they had to accept the title of world superpower; they were afraid of what a communist world might mean for their economic ideology, so involvement was the only way to prevent it. Containment was the main objective the USA had, they wanted communism to stay in the smallest possible region and hoped that with a bit of luck, it would die off.

However, their hate of communism is not the only reason why the USA adopted this role of global superpower, it was also a way to make more financial benefits. By being isolationist, trade can sometimes collapse and so they thought it was best to go back "in business" with the world.

To conclude, we can say that the USA's attempt to become isolationist was not a success no matter how good their reasons were, they were too powerful to stay out of things. But their main reason for adopting this role after the war was not so much economic or generous leadership reasons; the main reason was to contain communism and destroy it as soon as possible.

Mark awarded = 8-8+

Geography : Development issues.

a) Africa is a very rich and diverse continent, it is rich in resources such as oil, minerals, gas ... It's climate and landscape goes from the largest desert in the world to the jungle, we can find mountains and beautiful lakes, but unfortunately it is mostly a poor continent.

Document A is a map that gives us the HDi in 2011 and the GNP in 2010 by country, it deals with all of them and is quite clear. We can easily see that the most developed countries are Algeria and South Africa, but for some reason, it doesn't give us many of the countries names. It lacks other crucial information such as the geographical conditions, the resources and perhaps also the number of inhabitants, in a desertic country with a few thousand inhabitants and no resources is not going to have a high GNP.

However, the fact of using HDi and GNP together is a good idea, because it allows the reader to understand more or less what kind of political system is in charge. For example Algeria has a \$200 billion GNP and a fairly high HDi, this means that the country probably has a pretty fair and stable political system. On the other hand, Angola, who is smaller than Algeria, has a GNP of \$100 billion, which is not so bad; however its HDi is low; this probably means that the country's resources are exploited mostly by a rich part of the population who exploit their workers and it is also an unstable political system with high infant mortality rate, very low literacy rate, dangerous living conditions especially for women ...

Document B, on the other hand is probably a bit too technical although it's extremely precise. Globally, the beginning of the article is hard to understand because we don't have a reference in a developed country for the growth rate, but it does come later. The beginning of the document doesn't center enough on Africa and makes us the flow. However it gets much clearer after the third paragraph. It gives the reader the most important information in a short amount of space and in simple vocabulary, this makes it accessible to all. It presents both the up and the down side giving the reader a better idea of the situation than the map does. here we get the impression that something is possible, that the future could improve, whereas the map is pretty pessimistic in a whole.

To conclude we can say that both documents are important in helping to understand the contrasting levels of development in Africa but while the text is accessible to all and quite precise, the map is more complicated and lack essential information.

b) There are two main development strategies, the international trade model and the self sufficiency model.

Both these models have been used in Africa, South Africa and Algeria have adopted the international trade approach whereas Uganda preferred the self sufficiency one (this is where the names in the map come in handy!) Algeria and South Africa are doing fairly well for developing

countries, although this idea of open economy seems to be damaging South Africa, or at least slowing it down compared to what it could do.

When a country wants to use this international approach to development, the first thing to do is to look for what it is “good” at, or the resources it possess. For example, China’s strong point is a large and hard working labour force, South Africa’s strong point is the abundance of gold and diamonds mines and the presence of minerals. This model means that the country is dependant on outside countries (such as the USA or China) and their financial support to “survive”. Document B clearly states that “The IMF believes that South Africa suffers from its open economy which is affected by weak global growth and the sluggish European economy.”, this means that although this model can sometimes be a great success, as it was in Asia with the “flying geese” model, in South Africa it s not working as well as it should have.

The other development strategy is the self sufficiency model. This model is based on the idea of creating an economically independent country; the main goal is to develop your economy with the resources the country possesses without foreign investments. Everything is produced within an [sic] for the country.

This is the model Uganda chose to adopt and they tried to start by producing their own electricity, thanks to a dam that was built on the main river. Unfortunately this didn’t work out as planned. The material used to build the dam wasn’t of excellent quality as there were leaks all over the place, then it turned out that there wasn’t enough electricity produced for the whole country and it ended up being to [sic] expensive and finaly; the accumulation of water above the dam created floods and developed diseases such as malaria, which ended up decimating part of the population.

The self sufficiency model is easier to set up at a small scale, it works better on regional scales.

In the end, both models seem dangerous for the country, but according to document B, since the global economy’s state is worsening, it might be a safer bet to try and implement the self sufficiency model in order to have an economy that is as independent as possible from the outside world.

Mark awarded = 12-11