

A) Study Documents A & B. How useful are documents A & B to an historian examining the origins of the Cold War, 1945-9?

From Stettin in the Baltic, to Trieste in the Adriatic, an Iron Curtain has descended across the continent. Behind that line lie all the capitals of the ancient states of central and eastern Europe- Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia. All these famous cities and the populations around them lie in the Soviet sphere and are subject to a very high and increasing control from Moscow...The Russian-dominated Polish government has been encourage to make enormous and wrongful inroads upon Germany and mass expulsions of millions of Germans on a scale grievous and undreamed of are now taking place. The Communist parties which were very small in all these eastern states of Europe have been raised to pre-eminence and power far beyond their numbers are seeking everywhere to obtain totalitarian control...**This is most certainly the liberated Europe we fought for. Nor does it contain the essentials for a successful and sustained peace.**

Document A: Extract from Winston Churchill's 'Sinews of Peace' spech, delivered in Missouri, USA in 1946.

Document A would have significant value for an historian exploring the origins of the Cold War. The document is a political speech by former British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill. As Britain's wartime leader, Churchill had vast experience in foreign affairs and played a key role in the Yalta Conference in February 1945. Churchill's view that totalitarian control in Eastern Europe was 'not the liberated Europe we fought for' and could not therefore create 'a successful and sustained peace', thus reflects the fact that in his opinion, the USSR was wilfully betraying the terms of the 'Declaration of Liberated Europe', which he had signed with Stalin and Roosevelt at Yalta. Far honouring the promise of free and fair elections across the liberated states of Eastern Europe, Stalin had thus made 'the populations subject to a very high and increasing control from Moscow.' As such, this document provides the historian with a powerful message that Soviet aggression was the key element in the break up of the Grand Alliance and therefore the major factor in the origins of the Cold War.

Nonetheless, there are significant limitations to this document. Churchill delivered this speech in the USA in 1946, shortly after losing power in the 1945 General Election. An historian could therefore conclude that the main purpose of the speech was to maintain Churchill's profile as an international statesman, at a time when his political career appeared to be failing. As such, it is far from being a balanced or objective view of the post-war world. For a more complete picture of the origins of the Cold War, an historian would need to understand the post-war fears which drove the Soviet Union to enforce political control over Eastern Europe. Having fought a war of annihilation against Germany, with the resulting death toll of 27 million alongside a catastrophic level of economic ruin, it is clear that Stalin's first priority was to aid the Soviet post-war recovery, by securing its borders. This was made clear by Stalin in an angry response to Churchill's Iron Curtain speech, in which he argued he argued that 'In some quarters an inclination is felt to forget about the colossal sacrifices of the Soviet people which secured the liberation of Europe from Hitler', before ending with the question 'How can anyone who has not taken leave of his senses describe these peaceful aspirations of the USSR as expansionist tendencies?'

Beyond this, the date of the speech limits its usefulness. Delivered in March 1946, the document tells us nothing of the critical events, which took place in the following months and years up to 1949. For a more complete picture of the Cold War, an historian would thus have to assess how President Truman's policies, such as the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine served to harden Soviet attitudes and hasten the inevitability of the Cold War.

**Underline
academic
phraseology
Highlight
evidence of an
analysis of date,
content, purpose &
provenance in
terms of both
usefulness and
limitations.**

**Highlight parts
of the answer,
where the writer
produces a
synthesis of own
knowledge and
document analysis**