Methodist Ladies' College
ATAR course examination, Semester 1, 2018

Source Booklet

MODERN HISTORY
ATAR Year 12

Source Set 1

Source 1
(An American diplomat's cable to the State Department at the end of May 1947, summarising the situation in condensed language.)

There is good evidence that apathy, resentment, and defeatism are spreading fast in nationalist ranks causing surrenders and desertions. Main factors contributing to this are Communists ever mounting numerical superiority, … National soldiers discouragement over prospects getting reinforcements, better solidarity and fighting spirit of Communists, losses and exhaustion of Nationalists, their growing indignation over disparity between officers enrichment and soldiers' low pay, life, and their lack of interest in fighting far from home among "alien" unfriendly populace (whereas Communists being largely natives are in position of fighting for native soil).

Source 2
(An excerpt from Chang and Halliday, Mao: The Unknown Story*, 2007, Vintage, London, p.433.)*

In 1989, the post-Mao leader Deng Xiaoping told Russian leader Mikhail Gorbachev: "Of all the foreign powers that invaded, bullied and enslaved China since the Opium War (in 1842), Japan inflicted the greatest damage; but in the end, the country that got most benefit out of China was Tsarist Russia, including the Soviet Union during a certain period…". Deng was certainly referring to the [Sino-Soviet Treaty of 1950]…

At Stalin's insistence, China not only paid huge salaries to Soviet technicians in China, plus extensive benefits for them and their families, but had to pay compensation to Russian enterprises for the loss of the services of the technicians who came to China. But the concession Mao was most anxious to hide was that he had exempted Russians from Chinese [legal] jurisdiction. This had been *the* issue the CCP had always harped on as the embodiment of "imperialist humiliation". Now Mao himself had secretly introduced it.

Source 3
(A poster produced in January 1951 titled It's glorious to take part, to oppose America, support Korea, protect the home and the nation*. It shows family and neighbours bidding farewell to a volunteer leaving for the Korean front.)*

Source 4
(An excerpt from Margaret MacMillan, Nixon and Mao*, Random House, New York, 2008. Macmillan is a Canadian historian specialising in international relations).*

After the trip was over, the Nixon people always maintained that they'd felt quite confident about a meeting. "Well, we knew in our gut," said Winston Lord, "that Mao would meet Nixon." The Americans had no firm promise, though, only vague assurances from the Chinese. "I know," Lord remembered, "that we made unilateral statements that Nixon would, of course, be seeing Mao. We said that we would like to know when this would be, but we knew that this was going to happen. It would have been unthinkable if it didn't."

It was a gamble that Nixon was prepared to take because he felt that it was crucial for the United States. He had always taken risks-as a young soldier in the army, when he passed the time (and made a lot of money) playing poker, and, later, as a politician. He had not spent those long and often difficult years making his way to the presidency to be a caretaker. And the United States needed some good news. The war in Vietnam had cost the country much, in lives, in money, and in reputation. It had led to deep divisions at home and a loss of influence and prestige abroad. The failure of the United States to finish, much less win, the war had contributed to a decline in American power. But it had only contributed; the extraordinary military and economic dominance that the United States had possessed from the end of the Second World War to the start of the 1960s could not last forever.

Source Set 2

Source 1
(An extract from Jonathan Fenby, The Penguin Modern History of China*, Penguin, London, 2013, pp. 294-5.)*

More than a million men were recruited or press-ganged into the GMD forces each year, but many of the best officers had been lost in the fighting along the Yangtze, and ordinary troops were of poor quality, sometimes marched to camps tied together with ropes around their necks, and stripped naked at night to prevent their running away. At the very top, Chiang was well aware of the deficiencies of his generals and their men. "I have to lie awake at night, thinking what fool things they may do," he said.

Source 2
(An image from a booklet produced in around 1958, explaining the advantages of collective, industrialised social organisation in rural areas.)
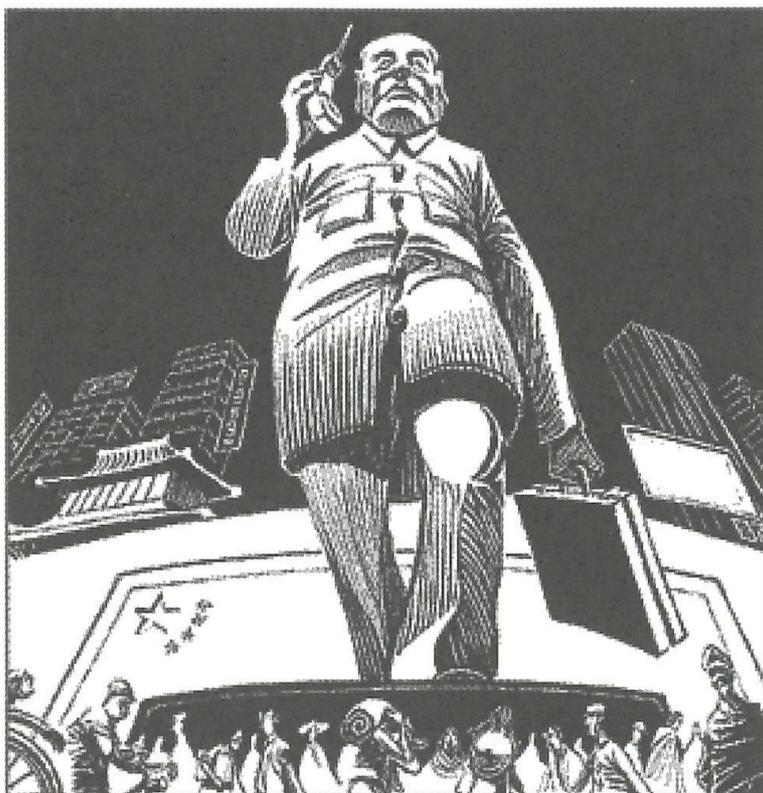
Source 3
(An excerpt from Dikotter, The Cultural Revolution: A People's History*, London, 2016, p. 59. Dikotter is a Western historian specialising in twentieth-century China.)*

Yan'an became the capital of red tourism in the summer of 1966, as throngs of visitors were shown documentaries about reclamation projects, with long lines of soldiers hacking away at the rough mountainside, convinced that selfless perseverance and collective action could change the face of nature. In communes and factories in Yan'an, the most popular text was "The Foolish Old Man who Moved the Mountain", a traditional tale given a new twist by Mao in 1945. A ninety-year-old man, so the story went, had tried to remove a mountain that obstructed his view with a hoe and a basket. When asked how he would ever complete the task, he had answered that the mountain would eventually be carted off if his children, and their children and other generations after them, would persevere. Mao reinterpreted the tale by saying that imperialism and feudalism were two mountains oppressing the people, but through sheer willpower and hard work they would be cleared away. It would become one of the three most frequently read stories from the Little Red Book during the Cultural Revolution.

Source 4
(A cartoon titled "Deng Xiaoping, the new leader of China", published in the New York Times Book Review*. Note the figures at the bottom of the cartoon are Chinese people.)*

END OF SOURCES