



Candidate Name:

2025 Preliminary Exams
Pre-University 2

**H1 HISTORY 8838/01 Paper 1 The Cold War and the Modern World (1945-1991) 1
September 2025**

3 hours

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Write your name and class on all the work you hand in.
Write in dark blue or black pen in the answer booklet(s) provided
Do not use paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.

An answer booklet will be provided with this question paper. You should follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

Begin each question on a fresh page of the answer booklet.

Section A

Answer **Question 1**.

Section B

Answer **TWO** questions.

The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question or part question.

**This question paper consists of 5 printed pages and 1 blank page. [Turn
over**

Section A

You **must** answer Question 1.

THE KOREAN WAR

1. Read the sources and then answer the questions which follow.

Source A

It was in 1950 that Kim Il Sung came to visit [Moscow], along with a delegation of his people. During a conversation with Stalin, he said he would like to probe South Korea “with the bayonet.” He asserted that, with the very first prod from North Korea, there would be an internal explosion in South Korea and people’s power would be established there, the same kind of government as in North Korea. Stalin did not oppose this ... both [he and Kim Il Sung] inclined towards the view that if everything were done quickly – and Kim Il Sung was confident that everything would happen quickly – U.S. intervention would be ruled out; the United States would not intervene with its armed forces ... especially since this was an internal question, concerning Korea only.

From the recollections of Nikita Khrushchev, who was present as a member of Stalin’s delegation during Kim Il Sung’s visit, published in 2006.

Source B

The Security Council.

Recognising the hardships and privations to which the people of Korea are being subjected to as a result of the continued prosecution by the North Korean forces of their unlawful attack,

Appreciating the spontaneous offers of assistance to the Korean people which have been made by Governments, specialized agencies, and non-governmental organisations,

Requests the United Nations Command to exercise responsibility for determining the requirements for the relief and support of the civilian population of Korea and for establishing in the field the procedures for establishing such relief and support;

Requests the [United Nations] Secretary-General, the Economic and Social Council ..., other appropriate United Nations principal and subsidiary organs, the specialized agencies ..., and appropriate non-governmental organisations to provide such assistance as the United Nations Command may request for the relief and support of the civilians of Korea ...

From the United Nations Security Council Resolution 85, published on 31 July 1950.

Source C

To Comrade Stalin ...

Allow me to appeal to you, dear Iosif Vissarionovich, for help and advice. It is now obvious to all that the American aggressors, having had significant successes in the last military operations, will not stop before they seize all of Korea and turn it into their military-strategic beachhead for further aggression in the Far East.

The struggle of our people for their independence, freedom and national sovereignty, in my opinion, will be prolonged and very difficult.

For a successful struggle against the powerful opponent, who is armed with the latest achievements of military science and technology, we urgently ... appeal to you, Comrade Stalin, to allow the preparation of 1000 tankers, 2000 pilots, 500 communications specialists, and 500 engineering officers from among [those] who live in the Soviet Union.

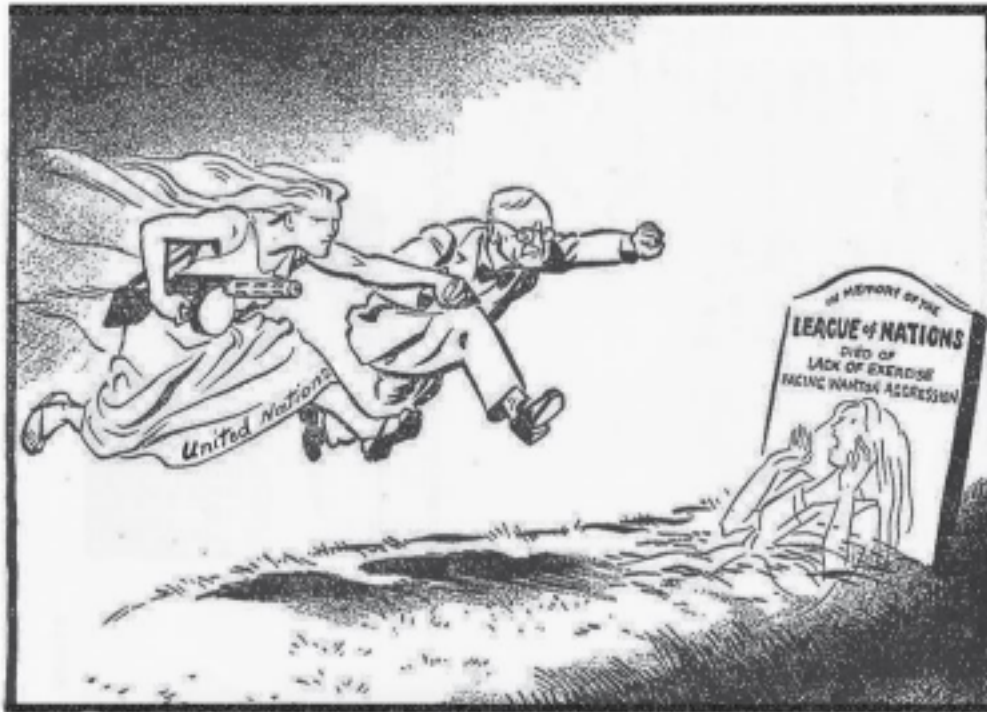
A handwritten letter from Kim Il Sung to Stalin, 9 October 1950.

Source D

Regarding American policy, if in fact one exists, towards South Korea, I can only say we know little, and of their future intentions even less ... Whilst being in no doubt about future North Korean (or Soviet) plans regarding South Korea, we think an invasion is unlikely in the immediate view; however, if it did take place, I think it improbable that the Americans would become involved. The possession of South Korea is not essential for Allied strategic plans, and though it would obviously be desirable to deny it to the enemy, it would not be of sufficient importance to make it the cause of World War III. Meanwhile, we must accept an uneasy status quo and hope for the best.

From an assessment of the situation in Korea by a military officer working in the British War Office in December 1949.

Source E



HISTORY DOESN'T REPEAT ITSELF

A British cartoon published on 30 June 1950. The man holding the hand of the United Nations is President Truman.

Now answer the following questions.

- a. Compare and contrast the evidence provided in Sources A and B on the impact of the invasion by North Korean troops on South Korea in June 1950. [10]
- b. How far do Sources A-E support the view that the Korean peninsula was of high strategic value to the United States? [30]

Section B

You must answer **two** questions from this section.

EITHER

- 2 To what extent was Mao's dominance of China's politics to blame for the Sino-Soviet split from the 1950s to the 1970s? [30]

OR

- 3 Why was Japan not able to establish closer relations with China between 1952 and 1991? [30]

AND EITHER

4 “The weakness of the South Vietnamese government was the main reason for American intervention in the Vietnam War from 1965 to 1973.” How far do you agree? [30]

OR

5 To what extent was ASEAN able to play a constructive role in resolving the Third Indochina War? [30]

Copyright Acknowledgements

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Source B © S/RES/85 (1950) adopted by the Security Council at its 479th meeting, 31 July 1950.

Source C © Kathryn Weathersby, “The Soviet Role in the Early Phase of the Korean War: New Documentary Evidence”, *The Journal of American-East Asian Relations* Vol. 2 No. 4, Winter 1993, pp. 425-458.

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Source E © <https://blogs.eui.eu/maxweberprogramme/from-the-league-of-nations-to-the-united-nations-conference/leagueofnationsoun/>, accessed on 28 August 2025.

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