



IMPACT OF THE COLLAPSE OF THE USSR ON SA

Checklist

Make sure you can answer the following question:

- How did the collapse of the Soviet Union contribute to the ending of Apartheid in South Africa in 1989?

Questions

Question 1

(Adapted from Nov 2012, Paper 2, Question 1.1)

Refer to Source 1.

This extract deals with the reasons for the changes in the ANC's stance on negotiations with the South African government.

The USSR was no longer inclined (likely) to support the ANC in its armed struggle but urged negotiations with Pretoria. The decline, followed by the collapse, of communist regimes in Eastern Europe and finally the USSR itself undermined the credibility (integrity) of the one-party state and the state-directed command economy. The 1985 party conference in Kabwe, Zambia, marked the high point of enthusiasm (keenness) for an insurrectionary (revolutionary) approach and of the predominance (majority) of hard-line SACP members in the ANC executive. But the mood rapidly changed in the direction of favouring negotiations and the acceptance of multiparty democracy together with the persistence (continuation) of a largely capitalist economic order. Finally, the resolution of the Angolan situation and the loss of the ANC bases there left no real alternative to negotiating with the government should the opportunity arise. The ANC thus published draft constitutional proposals demonstrating its moderate negotiating stance. The message that negotiations were an acceptable alternative to insurrection (uprising) was conveyed to the townships by the UDF. Mandela wrote to De Klerk suggesting they should meet.

[From: *History of Southern Africa* by JD Omer-Cooper]

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| 1.1 | Why did the USSR no longer support the ANC's armed struggle? | (1 x 2) (2) |
| 1.2 | Using the information from the source and your knowledge, define the concept multiparty democracy. | (1 x 2) (2) |
| 1.3 | Explain the factors that motivated the ANC to enter into negotiations with the National Party. | (2 x 2) (4) |
| 1.4 | Why did the UDF convey the following message to township residents: 'negotiations were an acceptable alternative to insurrection'? | (2 x 2) (4) |

Question 2

(Adapted from Nov 2012, Paper 2, Question 1.2)

Study Source 2.

The source below comprises two extracts which focus on the reasons for the unbanning of the ANC and the release of political prisoners.



Extract 1: This is an interview that Willem de Klerk conducted with his brother FW de Klerk. The interview focuses on the unbanning of the African National Congress (ANC) and the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990. This was FW de Klerk's response to the following question.

Was there pressure from outside to risk this leap?

No. I would rather speak of pressure from inside and opportunities. We had to release Mandela. The previous president and minister Kobie Coetzee and some officials had prepared the way. Mandela had committed himself to peace and PW Botha had accepted it after he had previously relinquished (given up) his claim to the renunciation (rejection) of violence. The insight and opportunity to unban organisations which included the African National Congress, coincided with the logic that such a step would mean the normalising of the politics. Many organisations were in any event busy to promote their image and policies. Besides, the fall and integration of communism in Eastern Europe and Russia created a new situation. The ANC was previously an instrument of the expansionism (extension) of Russia in Southern Africa. When that fell away, the carpet was pulled from under the ANC. Their basis of financial, advisory and moral support fell away.

Did this mean that you thought that the ANC was now on its knees?

Absolutely not. We realised that the ANC had wide support and they had to be incorporated into the negotiations. The risk of them being a Trojan horse (ANC being used as a front to promote communism in South Africa) of a world power had drastically lessened.

[From: *The Man and His Time* by W de Klerk]

Extract 2: This extract focuses on the reasons that motivated De Klerk to have talks with the ANC.

Finally, the collapse of communist rule in Eastern Europe symbolised by the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, changed Afrikaner perceptions of their opponents and themselves. They could no longer claim to be the bastion (defender) of Christian civilisation against the hordes (masses) of the evil empire, a perception which their contacts with the ANC top had in any event done much to dispel (dismiss) – and the government probably calculated that the withdrawal of Soviet financial support would emasculate (weaken) the ANC. At the same time, these events meant that lingering (remaining) American distrust for the ANC as a communist front, and consequent support for the South African status quo, no longer had any geopolitical (considering of the geographical and political situation) rationale (grounds). At all events, there is no doubt that De Klerk and his fellows calculated that they could control the process of transition in such a way as to guarantee their own interests, and probably to maintain their rule. It was to prove a mistaken calculation.

[From: *A Concise History of South Africa* by R Ross]

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| 2.1 | Why, according to the source, was Mandela released? (Extract 1) | (2 x 1) (2) |
| 2.2 | Explain to what extent you would agree with the statement: 'The ANC was previously an instrument of the expansionism of Russia in Southern Africa.' (Extract 1) | (2 x 2) (4) |
| 2.3 | Comment on whether the unbanning of the ANC normalised the political situation in South Africa. (Extract 1) | (2 x 2) (4) |
| 2.4 | How did the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe force the South African government to begin a process of negotiations with the ANC? (Extract 2) | (1 x 3) (3) |



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Question 3

(Adapted from Nov 2012, Paper 2, Question 1.3)

Use Source 3.

The source below consists of a written and a visual source about FW de Klerk's reform policy.

Written Source: This is an extract from the address by the State President, FW de Klerk, at the opening of the Second Session of the Ninth Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, Cape Town, 2 February 1990.

Mr Speaker, Members of Parliament

The general election of 6 September 1989 placed our country irrevocably (no turning back) on the road of drastic change. Underlying this is the growing realisation by an increasing number of South Africans that only a negotiated understanding among the representative leaders of the entire population can ensure lasting peace ...

For South Africa, indeed for the whole world, the past year has been one of change and major upheaval. In Eastern Europe and even the Soviet Union itself, political and economic upheavals surged forward in an unstoppable tide. At the same time, Beijing temporarily smothered with brutal violence the yearning of the people of the Chinese mainland for greater freedom.

[From: *Turning Points in History* by F du Toit]

Visual Source: The headline and subtext below appeared in *The Argus* of 2 February 1990. It reports on the unbanning of the ANC.



[From: Newspaper Archive in the National Library of South Africa]

- 3.1 How do you think the following would have reacted to De Klerk's parliamentary address: (Written source)
- (a) Conservative white South Africans
 - (b) The majority of black South Africans (2 x 2) (4)
- 3.2 Using information from the visual source and your own knowledge, comment on the significance of the newspaper headline:
- ANC unbanned
 'The season of violence is over.
 The time for reconstruction and reconciliation has arrived ...' (2 x 2) (4)



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Question 4

(Adapted from Nov 2012, Paper 2, Question 1.5)

Using information from ALL the sources and your own knowledge, write a paragraph of about EIGHT lines (about 80 words) explaining the consequences of the unbanning of the ANC on South African politics. (8)

Question 5

(Adapted from Nov 2012, Paper 2, Question 1.6.2)

It was the fall of the Berlin Wall coupled with the statesmanship of FW de Klerk that paved the way for political change in South Africa.

Do you agree with this statement? Substantiate your answer by using the information from ALL the sources and your own knowledge.

(30)