CHINA AFTER MAO
1976–89

Timeline – 1976–89

1976 Premier Zhou Enlai dies
   Chairman Mao Zedong dies
   Hua Guofeng takes over as Chairman of the CCP
   The Gang of Four is arrested

1977 Hua Guofeng is confirmed as Chairman
   Deng Xiaoping returns to the party leadership

1978 The Four Modernizations are introduced
   Democracy Wall is set up in Beijing

1979 The Chinese Invasion of Vietnam takes place

1980 The trial of the Gang of Four takes place
   Hua Guofeng resigns as Premier of the State Council and is replaced by Zhao Ziyang
   Hu Yaobang is appointed General Secretary of the CCP

1984 The Special Economic Zones are established.

1986 Student demonstrations call for more democracy

1989 Death of Hu Yaobang
   Student demonstrations take place in Beijing
   Gorbachev visits Beijing
   Zhao Ziyang is put under house arrest
   June Fourth Incident / Tiananmen Square

This chapter will focus on the developments in China after the death of Mao Zedong in 1976. Like the Soviet Union, China was facing the dilemma of how to encourage economic growth without weakening the control of the Communist Party. Unlike the Soviet Union, however, China was able to combine rapid economic growth with preserving the single-party system.

The first section will deal with the aftermath of the Maoist era and the emergence of a new leadership. The second section will look at the emergence of Deng Xiaoping as the ‘paramount leader’ of China and his economic reforms. The third and final section will be an analysis of how Deng and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) responded to calls for democratic reforms, ending with the events in Tiananmen Square in 1989.

Section I:
The struggle for power following the death of Mao Zedong; the leadership of Hua Guofeng; the re-emergence of Deng Xiaoping and the defeat of the Gang of Four

Background
Mao Zedong ruled China from 1949 until his death in 1976. During this time, he consolidated the control of the CCP over the state and established a personality cult that
made his image and sayings familiar to people all across China. Mao's rise to power came after 25 years of revolutionary activity, during which he formulated new ideas about how communism could be applied to a predominantly rural society. These ideas that based the revolution around the peasants and not the proletariat (workers in the cities) were put into practice in Jiangxi and Yanan over a period of 20 years. During this time, Mao struggled to become the leader of the CCP, fight and win a guerrilla war against both the Japanese and the Kuomintang and establish his reputation as a national hero.

Mao Zedong united a country fractured after the revolution of 1911 and set about creating an industrialized and productive economy. China received some assistance from the Soviet Union, but this was withdrawn at the end of the 1950s when relations between the two major communist states deteriorated. There were problems at home, too, as Mao's bold experiment in 1958, the 'Great Leap Forward', ended in famine and economic disaster. The Cultural Revolution that started in 1966 restored him to a position of undisputed authority, however, and the publication of the Thoughts of Chairman Mao (known as 'The Little Red Book') took the Mao personality cult to new heights. Rivals were purged, but by the early 1970s many would be restored to positions within the Party. By the time Mao died in 1976, he had consolidated the rule of the CCP and also established better relations with the USA, as well as recovering a seat in the UN for mainland China.

The struggle for succession

From 1973 onwards, Mao's health declined quite rapidly. He suffered from Parkinson's disease and, by early 1976, was no longer actively running the country. Who would succeed him?

During the Cultural Revolution, it was assumed that Mao's successor would be Lin Biao, the Minister of Defence, but Lin died in a plane crash in 1971 after being accused of plotting against Mao. Afterwards, there was no obvious successor and it was not known whether Mao favoured a 'Leftist' or a 'Rightist'.

The Rightists (Moderates)

The Rightists were the wing of the CCP led by Zhou Enlai, the Prime Minister. He had been a close comrade of Mao since the days of the Jiangxi Soviet in the late 1920s and stood alongside Mao when the People's Republic of China was declared in 1949. Zhou was a pragmatist, however, and believed that revolutionary ideology was not always a sound guide for economic policies. He did not want to repeat the mistakes of the Great Leap Forward and supported economic reform to help China recover. For Zhou and the Rightists, it seemed practical, for instance, to allow peasants to form smaller communes and to be given some plots of land to farm individually. Also, it was important that China would become a strong industrial power and so needed to use modern technology and to encourage skilled labour. Zhou would have been a natural successor to Mao, but he died in January 1976.

Another possible successor was Deng Xiaoping. Before the Cultural Revolution, Deng was an important Party official, but in 1967 he was accused of having joined the CCP to destroy the revolution 'from the inside'. Deng was called 'number two person in authority taking the capitalist road' (President Liu Shaoqi was 'number one') and was accused of keeping Mao away from power after the failure of the Great Leap Forward. According to David Goodman, Deng, who was deaf in one ear, was also accused of sitting far away from Mao at meetings so that he could not hear what the Chairman was saying. (See David S. G. Goodman, Deng Xiaoping and the Chinese Revolution, 1994.)

In 1969, Deng was 'sent down to the countryside' in Jiangxi, placed under house arrest and made to work at a tractor factory. Conditions were not easy, but it is rumoured that
Zhou Enlai used his influence to make things a little easier for Deng, who was now 65 years old. With Zhou's help, Deng was able to return to Beijing in 1973. After the extremes of the Cultural Revolution, there was a quiet restoration of many of the Rightists and a return to the authority of the Party rather than Chairman Mao. Zhou wanted to focus on more practical, realistic economic policies and he knew Deng would be a valuable ally. By 1975, Deng had been elected one of 12 vice-premiers and he would often replace Zhou Enlai, now suffering from cancer, at meetings of the State Council. Deng was also Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces.

The Leftists – the Gang of Four

Mao was thought to favour the Left (more radical) wing of the CCP. Unlike the Rightists, the Leftists favoured using revolutionary ideology as a guide to economic development. One group, considered by some to adhere more strongly to Mao’s policies even than Mao himself, became known as the Gang of Four.

A propaganda poster after the fall of the Gang of Four – the high officials blamed for the worst excesses of the Cultural Revolution after the death of Mao Zedong – has the ‘gang’ impaled and burning, with their human heads on the bodies of animals. They are (left to right): Yao Wenyuan, Wang Hongwen, Zhang Chunqiao, and Jiang Qing, Mao’s widow.

Jiang Qing

The leader of the Gang, Jiang became the fourth wife of Mao Zedong when they were married in Yanan in 1939. A former actress, Jiang became famous during the Cultural Revolution. She replaced traditional opera and ballet with productions that celebrated the communist revolution and proletarian culture. Jiang hoped to succeed Mao as Chairman of the Party.

Yao Wenyuan

Based in Shanghai, Yao became an important member of the Party and the Politburo. It was Yao’s criticism of a play in 1966 that helped start the Cultural Revolution. He was known for his radical interpretations of the ideology of the CCP.
Zhang Chunqiao
Also based in Shanghai, Zhang Chunqiao played an important role in the purging of the Rightists and later wrote articles denouncing their return. In 1980 at the trial of the Gang of Four, he would not respond to questions and seemed to spend much of the time sleeping.

Wang Hongwen
The youngest of the Gang of Four, Wang was a prominent trade union leader. He was responsible for the ferocity of the Cultural Revolution in Shanghai. His nickname was ‘Helicopter Wang’ because of his very rapid rise from factory worker to Party leadership. The Gang were active during the height (1966–68) of the Cultural Revolution and were responsible for campaigns against Rightists such as President Liu Shaoqi. They quoted from the Little Red Book to support their policies and it was difficult for anyone to challenge them.

It is still uncertain whether Mao led or was led by the Gang of Four, but they were his most fervent supporters during the most radical phases of the Cultural Revolution. Ultimately, the impact they had was more cultural than political as they did not have the necessary powerbase either in the Party or in the People’s Liberation Army (PLA). Most of the supporters of the Gang of Four were ambitious young cadres who had risen to positions of authority during the Cultural Revolution.

It is said that Mao was the first to call them 'The Gang of Four' because he warned them not to behave 'like a gang', suggesting that perhaps Mao was wary of letting them become too powerful. Also, although he was married to Jiang Qing, she did not live with him for the last 10 years of his life from 1966 to 1976.

An important question is whether or not the Gang of Four was only following Mao’s orders when they tried to make the Cultural Revolution more extreme.

**SOURCE A**

Mao realised his wife’s 'wide ambitions' to become chairman, and he also knew of the countless number of people she had wronged, harmed, arrested or killed during the decade of the Cultural Revolution. On July 17, 1974, Mao had warned the Gang: 'You'd better be careful; don’t let yourselves become a small faction of four.' In May 1975 he admonished them...: 'Don’t function as a gang of four, don’t do it anymore.' Mao was thus aware of the Gang’s excesses and could have restrained their leader with a simple order.


During her trial in 1980, Jiang Qing indicated that she had faithfully followed Mao’s instructions.

**SOURCE B**

She argued that she had done everything during the Cultural Revolution 'on behalf of Chairman Mao Zedong' or 'according to his instructions'. Again and again, she repeated these assertions of hers: 'Arresting me and bringing me to trial is a defamation of Chairman Mao Zedong,' 'Defaming Mao through defaming me.' I have implemented and defended Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line.' She shrieked, 'During the war I was the only woman comrade who stayed beside Chairman Mao at the front; where were you hiding yourselves then?' - a statement that made it difficult for those in the public gallery to suppress their laughter – generals who fought hundreds of battles, pioneers in establishing revolutionary bases, underground workers operating at all hazards in the KMT-controlled or Japanese-occupied areas...

This is an extract from a summary of the statement given by Jiang Qing at her trial in 1980. It is taken from *A Great Trial in Chinese History* published by the New World Press in Beijing in 1981 and included in Alan Lawrance, *China Since 1919*, 2004
In the early 1970s after the Cultural Revolution had lost its fervour, the Gang of Four remained powerful. As long as Mao was alive, it seemed that no one dared criticize them. When Mao’s health declined, however, a power struggle began for the succession. The Leftists disagreed with many of the economic policies of the Rightists.

The Leftists argued that decisions should be based on what was good for the revolution and not on what made economic sense. For example, communes should become self-sufficient in grain, even though not all communes were located in areas that were able to grow grain successfully. It wasn’t efficiency, but ideology that mattered. They also said it was important for everyone to do some manual labour and they continued to emphasize this even when schools and universities reopened. It was still considered more important for students to have work experience than to do well in examinations.

Although the Rightists had some success in managing the economic recovery of China, the Gang of Four controlled propaganda and they continued to emphasize their policies.

SOURCE C

The leftists devoted much more attention to vilifying the followers of the ‘capitalist road’ than to figuring out how to make the socialist road function effectively. They emphasised spirit over material reality; they chose policies that displayed their own correct revolutionary attitudes… Thus, we have the story, supposedly true, of a man who was trying to fight a forest fire, but getting nowhere because he lacked effective tools. He finally gave a loud cry of ‘Long live Chairman Mao’, lay down and tried to put out the flames in his immediate vicinity by rolling on them. This had no significant effect on the fire, and he was quickly burned to death. His sacrifice accomplished nothing … but it demonstrated tremendous revolutionary dedication and lack of concern for self-interest. He was praised as a hero.

From Edwin E. Moise, Modern China, 1994

The death of Zhou and Mao

After a long illness, Zhou Enlai died of cancer in January 1976. The Gang of Four made sure that only a limited period of mourning was allowed for the leader of the Rightists. It was expected that Zhou would be succeeded by Deng Xiaoping, but instead, it was Hua Guofeng who became the new Prime Minister. Hua was a relatively unknown individual who had been a party official in Hunan province, the birthplace of Mao Zedong. He was a Leftist, but more moderate than the Gang of Four. Hua disliked them, because he thought Jiang Qing expressed her views very forcefully and expected to be obeyed. It was later rumoured that Hua was the son of Mao and that he went to great lengths to resemble him by combing his hair in the same way and puffing out his cheeks.
Mao trusted Hua more than he trusted Deng Xiaoping, and Hua became Mao's most likely successor. It was claimed that in April 1976 Mao told Hua, 'With you in charge, I am at ease.' Some sources even claim that this was Mao's last coherent sentence.

SOURCE D

'Boundless confidence!' A poster by Han Shuo, May 1977. In this poster, Hua Guofeng is seated next to Mao Ze'dong. Mao is holding a pen and is about to write on a piece of paper. The implication is that Mao is about to write the words 'With you in charge, I am at ease.' It was rumoured that Mao had not only spoken these words but also written them.
The campaign against Deng Xiaoping

In 1976, the traditional Qing Ming festival took place in April. An important date in the Chinese calendar, this was when people would visit the graves of their ancestors to pay their respects to the dead. The CCP had tried to put an end to this tradition by denouncing it as 'superstitious', 'bourgeois' and an 'outmoded feudal custom'. In 1976, crowds of people defied the Party and turned this festival into a demonstration of loyalty and affection for Zhou Enlai. Thousands of wreaths were brought to Tiananmen Square in Beijing and laid at the Revolutionary Martyrs Memorial. Attached to the wreaths were poems that had a political message. The demonstrators were not only showing their support for Zhou (a Rightist) and his policies, but also their opposition to the policies of his opponents and, in particular, the Gang of Four. Almost immediately, orders were given to remove the wreaths and this led to demonstrations that in some cases turned violent.

The Politburo denounced this event as 'counter-revolutionary' but the April 5th Movement, as it became known, symbolized public protest against the government. Deng Xiaoping was blamed for having encouraged the demonstrators and he was dismissed from his positions as Vice Chairman of the Party and Chief of Staff of the PLA. Once again, he was denounced as 'the bourgeois inside the Party' and sent down to the countryside. Throughout the summer of 1976, there was an official campaign to denounce Deng, although this did not have much popular support.

It was a traditional belief in China that natural disasters preceded the death of an Emperor, and in July 1976 more than 250,000 people were killed when an earthquake measuring 8.2 on the Richter scale struck Tangshan near Beijing. In August, this disaster was followed by floods. Every effort was made to dampen public speculation and to criticize old beliefs, but Mao, 'the Emperor', was very sick and he died on 9 September 1976 at the age of 82.

The arrest of the Gang of Four

The death of Mao Zedong was followed by a week of mourning. Although political divisions appeared to be set aside, the fate of the Gang of Four hung in the balance now that they no longer had Mao’s protection. Jiang Qing demanded to be given all of Mao’s personal papers and it was rumoured that she was looking for (or intending to forge) a testament that named her as Mao’s successor. Afraid of the threat they posed to his succession, Hua Guofeng plotted to have the Gang arrested.

Each member of the Gang was called to an emergency meeting of the Politburo scheduled for midnight on 5 October 1976 and on their arrival, they were arrested. A public statement was issued accusing the Gang of Four of plotting to assassinate Hua and take power. It is doubtful whether or not this was true because they did not have the necessary support among the Party officials or the PLA for such a bold plan.

It was barely five weeks since the death of Mao and Hua had acted decisively to secure his succession. He was fortunate to have the support of the main Party leaders and of the army. He was also fortunate that the Gang was isolated despite or maybe because of its role in the Cultural Revolution.

... the Four were not simply puppets suspended on strings pulled by Mao. They represented more than themselves and their personal ambitions, although not the workers and peasants whose interests they claimed to champion. About the countryside they knew little and among the peasants they were little known. Among the urban working class they could claim only scattered pockets of support; the mass organisations of the Cultural Revolution where they once
had had influence had long since been suppressed, while the conservative mass organisations that represented the bulk of the working class long had supported the veteran leaders of the Party and the PLA.
From Maurice Meisner, Mao's China and After, 1999

**STUDENT STUDY SECTION**

**QUESTION**
What, according to Source E, were the reasons for the lack of support for the Gang of Four?

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## The return of Deng Xiaoping

Deng Xiaoping was forced to leave Beijing in the spring of 1976, but with the help of powerful friends he was smuggled back into the capital in October. Now, he waited for the right moment to recover his former position within the Party. Hua Guofeng, meanwhile, had a pressing problem. He needed to call a meeting of the Central Committee to be confirmed as Chairman of the CCP. Hua also knew that at the same time the Central Committee would probably call for the restoration of Deng. After many months of hesitation, the Third Plenum of the Tenth National Party Congress of the CCP was held in July 1977 and, as anticipated, Hua was confirmed as Chairman and Deng was also restored to his role in the leadership of the Party.

## The demystification of Mao

Another dilemma for Hua was how to preserve his links to Mao, but also to 'manage' what became known as the 'demystification' of Mao. This revision of the past was not as dramatic as Khrushchev's *de-Stalinization* speech in 1956. The historian Maurice Meisner points out that criticizing the legacy of Mao was rather more dangerous than criticizing Stalin. Meisner suggests that whereas Stalin could be accused of not being a true follower of Lenin, to demystify Mao risked undermining the whole legacy of the communist revolution in China. 'In condemning Stalin, Khrushchev could invoke the authority of Lenin. But for Mao's successors, there was no Chinese Lenin to call on other than Mao himself' (from Maurice Meisner, *Mao's China and After*, 1999).

Some careful distancing from the cult of Mao began when Hua Guofeng declared that the Cultural Revolution was officially over. Even so, Hua maintained the importance of Mao's ideas in a speech known as the 'Two Whatevers' (see Source F). This speech would later be countered by Deng Xiaoping, whose own interpretation of Mao Zedong Thought was 'Seek Truth from Facts'.

In 1981, the reputation of Mao Zedong was looked at critically and it was decided by the authorities that, overall, he had been '70 per cent good and 30 per cent bad'.

**SOURCE F**

*Although Mao had wanted his remains sent to his home village, Hua arranged for a mausoleum to be built in Tiananmen Square in order to put Mao on permanent display. There millions of people have been able to pay their last respects to the larger than life figure somewhat swollen by embalming fluid. The new leadership continued to invoke Mao on whom the legitimacy of Hua's succession depended. The fact that he had arrested Mao's widow was no great problem although there was some muttering about the policies of the Gang of Four; the implication being that Mao himself was culpable. Soon after Hua took office, attempts were made to build up his image, with posters displaying portraits of Hua and Mao side by side and*
lavish praise of Hua in the press. In February 1977 the People’s Daily declared, ‘We resolutely defend whatever policies Chairman Mao has formulated and unwaveringly adhere to whatever instructions Chairman Mao has issued.’ Those who adhered to this policy were to be categorized as the ‘whateverists’.

From Alan Lawrance, *China Under Communism*, 1998

### SOURCE G

The balance of power appeared fairly even at first. Deng and the other recently rehabilitated rightists, while they pushed to reverse much of what Mao Zedong had done during the ten years of the Cultural Revolution, had to mute their public statements to avoid antagonising the ‘Whatever’ faction too badly. They blamed leftist excesses on Lin Biao and the Gang of Four, not on Mao himself. They pretended to regard the Cultural Revolution as a great and good thing, whose spirit had been violated by the vile actions of Lin Biao and the Gang of Four. However, as the months went by the Right wing consolidated its position and the Left weakened. The extent to which the changing evaluation of the Cultural Revolution as a whole was being re-evaluated was suggested by the changing evaluation of the Red Guards. People began to refer to them in public discussion of the Cultural Revolution as the ‘beating, smashing and looting elements’.

From Edwin F. Moise, *Modern China*, 1994

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### STUDENT STUDY SECTION

**QUESTION**

Compare and contrast the views expressed in Sources F and G about how Mao was remembered.

**Student Answer – Kate**

Sources F and G suggest very different things about how Mao was remembered. Source F emphasizes how memories and veneration of Mao were used as a tool to justify Hua’s leadership. Moreover, Source F suggests that ‘millions’ of people mourned Mao, by visiting the mausoleum that Hua created. Contrasting, Source G suggests that China was very divided after Mao’s death, with the leftists and rightists in an ‘equal’ balance of power. Moreover, it states that people were very critical of the Cultural Revolution, a policy Mao had created. Finally, Source G focuses to a greater extent on the aftermath of Mao’s death, while Source F focuses on the use of Mao as a figurehead for a cult of personality. Sources F and G also have some similarities, however. Both mention the ‘Whateverists’, those who decided to follow any and all policies Mao had endorsed. Both also speak of the isolation of the Gang of Four, suggesting that they lost power and influence as time went on.

**Examiner’s comments**

Kate has organized her answer correctly using what is called a ‘comparative structure’, as she has compared both sources and then contrasted them. The first paragraph in her answer focuses on differences between the two sources and she mentions how Source F has a strong focus on the way Mao was remembered. She could mention here how in Source G, the memory of Mao is addressed in a more neutral way, with more focus on the reluctance of the Rightists to criticize him too openly. Generally, she has mentioned a few similarities and a few differences and tried to support her points with evidence, although there could be a bit more of this. When you compare and contrast, it is a good idea to try to support your points either with a reference to the source or with a short quotation. Kate has just used single words like ‘millions’; when she refers to the Gang of Four, she mentions their isolation etc., but could support this with some material from the sources.
The trial of the Gang of Four

The Gang of Four were arrested in late 1976, but were not put on trial until 1980. This allowed time for them to be forgotten and for the Rightists to consolidate their hold on power.

The trial began on 20 November 1980 and was televised. The prosecution argued that the Gang of Four had been linked to Lin Biao and they were charged with 48 separate offences, from attempting to assassinate Mao Zedong to the torture of the officials who were arrested during the Cultural Revolution.

Maurice Meisner suggests that the trial was important for the following reasons:

- It provided an opportunity to publicize the horrors of the 'cultural revolution decade'.
- It was a kind of 'catharsis' (emotional release) or a 'settling of accounts' for those who had suffered so much during the Cultural Revolution.
- For the Rightists, including Deng Xiaoping, who had been purged in the 1960s, it offered 'political revenge' and a chance to remove the Leftists from the Party.
- It provided the opportunity to question the role of Mao Zedong and his legacy.

As we have seen in Source B, Jiang Qing clearly implicated Mao Zedong in the actions of the Gang of Four. Among her more famous statements at her trial was 'I was Chairman Mao's dog. Whomever he told me to bite, I bit.'

The trial ended in 1981 and all four defendants were found guilty. Jiang Qing and Zhang Chunqiao were sentenced to death, but with a delay of two years to give 'time for repentance'. In both cases the death sentence was later commuted to life in prison. An unrepentant Jiang Qing died of cancer in 1991 and Zhang died, also of cancer, in 2005. Wang Hongwen was sentenced to life imprisonment and Yao Wenyuan to 20 years in prison.

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**REVIEW SECTION**

In this section, we have looked at the events that followed the death of Mao Zedong in 1976 and have seen how Hua Guofeng was able to succeed Mao despite the Gang of Four. We have also considered how the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution was 'managed' and how China was able to move forward from an era when Mao Zedong Thought had been the guide to policy making.

Write brief answers to the following questions, supporting your arguments with information both from the text and the sources.

- Review questions
  - Give reasons for the failure of the Gang of Four to seize power after the death of Mao Zedong.
  - Why was the denunciation of Mao Zedong considered to be necessary?
  - How did Hua Guofeng use his position as Chairman of the CCP to consolidate power?

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**Section II:**

**China under Deng Xiaoping: economic policies and the Four Modernizations**

This section will focus on how Deng Xiaoping ousted Hua Guofeng and pushed ahead with the Four Modernizations.

Mao indicated that Hua was his chosen successor, but there was only limited support for this former Minister of Public Security. Hua was the Chairman of the CCR, but his hold on power was not very secure. In Hua's favour, it could be said that he didn't represent any particular faction. He did not arouse strong opposition from either the Left (except for the Gang of Four) or the Right.
In 1977, Deng Xiaoping was restored to his former positions within the Party and Hua was quietly pushed into the background. Deng became 'paramount leader' and he promoted his supporters onto the Central Committee and the Politburo. Quietly but persistently, Deng undermined Hua. To start with, he kept his titles but lost his power and then lost even his titles.

The Third Plenum of the Eleventh National People's Congress and the removal of Hua Guofeng

Deng Xiaoping returned to a position of real influence in 1978 at the Third Plenum of the Central Committee Meeting of the Eleventh National People's Congress. It was in preparation for this meeting that Deng challenged the 'Whatevers', who were loyal to Mao's ideology, by making a speech entitled 'Emancipate the mind, seek truth from facts and unite as one in looking to the future.' Deng said that although revolutionary ideology was important in theory, to achieve economic progress China needed policies that actually worked in practice. He criticized the way in which 'Lin Biao and the Gang of Four set up ideological taboos [issues that could not be discussed]... and preached blind faith to confine people's minds within their phoney Marxism' (from Jonathan D. Spence et al., _The Search for Modern China_, 1999).

**SOURCE A**

*When it comes to emancipating our minds, using our heads, seeking truth from facts and uniting as one in looking to the future, the primary task is to emancipate our minds. Only then can we, guided as we should be by Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought, find correct solutions to the emerging as well as inherited problems, fruitfully reform those aspects of the relations of production and of the superstructure that do not correspond with the rapid development of our productive forces, and chart the specific course and formulate the specific policies, methods and measures needed to achieve the four modernisations under our actual conditions.*

*From the speech of Deng Xiaoping, 13 December 1978, to the Central Working conference of the Central Committee as it prepared for the Third Plenum of the Eleventh National People's Congress. Taken from Jonathan D. Spence et al., _The Search for Modern China_, 1999*

**STUDENT STUDY SECTION**

**QUESTION**

With reference to its origin and purpose, discuss the value and limitations of Source A for historians studying the restoration to power of Deng Xiaoping.

**SOURCE B**

*At the beginning of 1962, as the Party was preparing for a congress of 7,000 people amid a ride of boastful flattery, Deng Xiaoping made a wry comment: 'If something is so beautiful in the first place, why do we need to put make-up on it?' This was splendid. And again, at the lively third plenary session of the 11th Party Congress, there was no need for embroidery, no need to 'revise' history. In fact, reform wasn't discussed at the Third Plenum. Reform wasn't listed on the agenda, nor was it mentioned in the work reports. No one passed a motion calling for it, and there was no investigation into a possible reform program. At that time, Wan Li in Anhui was implementing his policy of 'household responsibility' for farmland, while Zhao Ziyang was trying out his policy of 'reforms to expand the self-determination of farmers and enterprises' in Sichuan. But they were local leaders at that time. The word 'reform' wasn't even in the*
Although Hua Guofeng succeeded Mao as Chairman of the CCP in 1976, within three years all power had transferred to Deng Xiaoping. Hua resigned as Premier of the State Council in 1980 and was replaced by Zhao Ziyang, one of Deng’s protégés. Hua remained Chairman of the Party, but Deng revived the position of General Secretary of the Party, a position to which he appointed Hu Yaobang, his closest disciple. Hua Guofeng resigned as Chairman in 1982 and this position was abolished.

**Source C**

![Zhao Ziyang](image1)

![Hu Yaobang](image2)

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**STUDENT STUDY SECTION**

**Question:**
You can see here that both Zhao and Hu are wearing Western-style clothes. They were the first Chinese leaders to do this since the 1949 Revolution. What kind of message do you think they were trying to convey?

**Student Answer – Mary**

Wearing Western-style clothes, Zhao and Hu seem to criticize Mao as they were the symbols of the need to move away from the Cultural Revolution. Wearing Western-style clothes instead of the ‘Mao suit’, usually worn by Mao himself and Chinese leaders since the 1949 revolution, they were maybe trying to convey their criticism of what the revolution had brought about and their wish to move towards a more Western-style political system.
Economic reforms 1978–85

Even before his removal from Beijing in 1976, Deng had laid the groundwork for what became known as the Four Modernizations. This economic plan was first proposed by Zhou Enlai. He said that the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution had both shown that when revolutionary policies guided government policies, economic growth slowed down or came to a halt.

In 1975, Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping called for the modernization of:
- Agriculture
- Industry
- National defence
- Science and technology.

During the late 1970s, the Leftists went along with this change of direction and allowed the Rightists to restore peasant plots and raise product subsidies in order to improve agricultural production. Wage differentials and greater technical specialization were allowed in industry to encourage higher industrial production. Deng’s departure from Beijing in 1976 postponed the introduction of further reform, but his return in 1977 meant that the Four Modernizations could continue.

During the years 1978–85, Deng established his control over China. It was a period of strong economic growth and political stability. The following famous catch-phrases of Deng Xiaoping summed up his pragmatic attitude to post-Mao China:
- ‘Seek Truth from Facts’
- ‘It does not matter if a cat is black or white as long as it catches mice’
- ‘To get rich is glorious’
- ‘Not introducing reforms will take us down a blind alley’.

Deng wanted everyone to become more prosperous by encouraging economic growth, with more room for individual initiative and less emphasis on political ideology. There could be no stronger contrast with the policies of the Cultural Revolution, when it was frowned upon to make a profit.

Did this amount to capitalism?

Deng argued that it was a fundamental part of Marxist ideology that socialism grew out of capitalism. In other words, a bourgeois revolution was necessary before a proletariat revolution could take place. Deng maintained that in China a ‘feudal mentality’ had obstructed sustained economic growth because in pre-revolutionary times, feudalism had prevented capitalism from taking hold. Under communist rule, China needed more of a free-market economy, as this would increase wealth and advance the cause of socialism.

In 1979, Deng brought Hua Guofeng’s ambitious but unsuccessful Ten Year Plan to an end and the focus shifted from heavy industry to agriculture and consumer goods. The intention was to help the economy grow faster and to encourage peasant farmers and workers to be
more independent and therefore more entrepreneurial. In other words, they would become more motivated to work hard in order to make a profit, and so earn more money.

If you have read the chapter on the Soviet Union after 1976 (see Chapter 6), you can compare China to the Soviet Union during the 1980s, when both Andropov and Gorbachev were trying to introduce economic reforms. Like his Soviet counterparts, Deng felt that one of the biggest problems facing China’s economy was the state bureaucracy. If the economy was to grow, it needed to respond quickly to demand and supply, rather like a free market. He felt that if every decision had to go through layers of bureaucracy generated by a central planning process, there would be no improvement in productivity and the reforms would fail.

Agriculture – the Household Responsibility System

In the 1970s, China was still largely an agricultural economy. Its population had grown rapidly, but there were few incentives to work hard and so production had barely increased. Deng Xiaoping was determined to bring about fundamental reforms and these began in December 1978. The vast communes of the Great Leap Forward were broken up into smaller production units, although the policy of collectivization remained. Collective planning was not efficient, but it was difficult to change because it was a legacy of the Mao era and was important for ideological reasons. Deng addressed this issue by persuading Party officials that production units should be given more freedom to make decisions and to run their own affairs. He sweetened this deal by raising the subsidies farmers received for the goods they produced.

One of Deng’s closest supporters, Wan Li, was put in charge of the de-collectivization of agriculture. This became known as the ‘Household Responsibility System’. Wan successfully introduced this system in Anhui province and then it was applied to the rest of China:

- Peasant farmers were allowed to rent plots, referred to as ‘taking out a contract’, although all land was still owned by the state.
- Arrangements could be made with the commune production team, who would decide what kind of crop should be planted and how much should be produced.
- Once a farmer had taken charge of his plot, he was given full control over the production process and was ‘responsible’ for ‘paying’ a quota of whatever he produced to the production team.
- If the farmer produced more than the required amount, he could sell this surplus to the commune or onto the local market.

In 1980, 15 per cent of all agricultural land was set aside as private plots, where peasants could grow whatever they wanted. By 1984 the communes of the Great Leap Forward had more or less been dismantled and farmers had increasing control over the land they farmed. This policy was a great success and eventually was applied to nearly all peasant farms. It was official policy ‘to make the peasants rich’ and annual contracts were replaced by contracts for 15 years (later this was increased to 30 years). Farmers were encouraged to invest time and money in ‘their’ land and to feel reassured that it would not be taken away from them.

An important development was to allow peasants who did not want to farm their plots to rent them out to other farmers. The next step was to allow contracts to be passed on from one generation to the next and make it possible to inherit land. All of these changes were intended to encourage peasant farmers to increase agricultural production.
**SOURCE D**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual growth in grain production</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>-1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual growth in agricultural value</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


This table illustrates the impact of the responsibility system on agricultural production, which grew sharply in the period 1978–84. You can see that after 1984, however, the annual growth rate fell again. Peasant farmers were still rather nervous about investing too much of their time and money in cultivating land they did not own. There was a move away from grain production to more heavily subsidized crops, such as rice, which was more profitable, but adversely affected output. By now, attention had also moved on to the industrial sector, which offered greater opportunities for employment and growth.

**SOURCE E**

As a result of the agricultural reforms, both yield and productivity rose sharply. In 1987, rice and wheat yields had risen 50% over those obtained under the commune system. More importantly, the farmer spent only an average of 60 days a year on the crops compared with 250 to 300 days a year in the field in the days of farm collectives. The time saved was spent on sideline activities aimed at profit. Cash income quadrupled and the standard of living vastly improved... In Sichuan and many other provinces, the contracted quota accounted for approximately one-sixth of total output, and although most plots were less than one acre in size, there was enough food raised for each household.

From Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China, 1995*

**STUDENT STUDY SECTION**

**QUESTION**

What, according to Source E, were the benefits of the agricultural reforms for the peasant farmers?

**Student Answer – Arthur**

The agricultural reform has increased the productivity for the farmers. This has resulted in two consequences. First, they can now produce enough food for their own consumption. Second, the extra time generated is allocated to other income-generating activities. This has contributed to a higher level of income for the farmers. The reforms have raised the standard of living for all the peasants.

**Examiner’s comments**

Arthur has pointed out that productivity went up and, implicitly, that yield has also increased. He could state this more clearly. He also states that the peasants could engage in other activities, although he could make this clearer by linking this statement to how private plots were more labour efficient. The response is good and very concise.

**Industry – the Sichuan Experiment**

Zhao Ziyang, one of Deng’s close supporters, used a similar system of ‘responsibility’ to encourage industrial workers to increase productivity. Zhao had been a long-time associate of Deng and by the late 1970s he was Party Secretary in Sichuan province. Here, he applied Wan Li’s ‘responsibility’ model to industry. Known as the ‘Sichuan Experiment’, factories were given more freedom and independence or more ‘responsibility’ to produce goods that would be bought by the state. If they produced more than required, they could sell the surplus for a profit.
the problem, however, was that most factories in China were state-owned. The State
Owned Enterprises (SOEs) were large and inefficient, but they had power and political
influence. For workers, they provided a job for life, as well as benefits such as housing and
medical care. A less secure free-market system was not as attractive to the bosses or the
workers of these heavy industries.

The encouragement of private business was an important economic target, but it was
difficult for entrepreneurs to prosper without a ready source of capital. Progress at first was
slow, but once the government introduced market reforms, including a legal framework
to protect private investment, more people felt able to take a risk and to try to find ways to
make money. As the farmers and city workers grew richer, there was an increased demand
for consumer goods, which provided the stimulus for the development of light, low-capital,
family-based industries.

**SOURCE F**

As in the countryside, small enterprises in the cities requiring less capital were relatively more
profitable. This was where the enthusiastic small entrepreneurial family came into its own; the
figures show 100,000 private businesses registered in 1978, 6 million in 1983 and 17 million in 1985.
From Alan Lawrance, *China Under Communism*, 1998

**SOURCE G**

### CHINA’S INDUSTRIAL PERFORMANCE, 1979–90

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Gross Domestic Product (in millions of yuan)</th>
<th>GDP Growth Rate (% p.a.)</th>
<th>Inflation Rate (% p.a.)</th>
<th>Manufacturing Output Growth Rate (% p.a.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>732.6</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>790.5</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>826.1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>896.3</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>987.7</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>1130.9</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>1276.8</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>1385.4</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>1539.1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>1713.1</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>1786.7</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>1856.4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


This table illustrates the strong impact economic reforms had on Gross Domestic Product
and Manufacturing Output, which grew at remarkable rates. Unfortunately, when growth
was strongest, inflation picked up, and the government had to slow down the economy
to control inflationary pressures. The government restrained the economy in late 1988,
but this led to higher unemployment rates, which sparked worker tolerance of and
participation in the student-led demonstrations in 1989.

**STUDENT STUDY SECTION**

**Question**

What does Source G tell you about the rate of growth in China in the 1980s?
GDP growth rate

By the early 21st century, the CCP considered a growth rate of 8 per cent to be the minimum requirement to avoid social unrest. A growth rate of less than 8 per cent would probably result in higher unemployment levels and, possibly, a crisis of confidence in the ability of the CCP to provide a sound economy.

**SOURCE H**

Although rising consumption was due primarily to rising incomes, it was aided by the Deng government's vigorous encouragement of what proved to be an astonishingly rapid revival of private entrepreneurship in both city and countryside. In addition to thriving rural markets and fairs, in the early 1980s city streets were quickly transformed by the reappearance of peddlers and vendors selling various wares and foods, the opening of private restaurants and inns, and the establishment of many new retail and service businesses – from barbers and beauticians to television repair shops. By 1984, according to official figures, nearly 4,000,000 people were employed or self-employed in the burgeoning private sector of the urban economy and more than 32 million worked in urban 'collective' enterprises, which more and more operated in a capitalist fashion in an increasingly market driven economy.

From Maurice Meisner, *Mao's China and After*, 1999

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**STUDENT STUDY SECTION**

**QUESTION**

What evidence is given in Source H to support the claim that there was a revival of 'private entrepreneurship' in urban areas?

**The Special Economic Zones (SEZs)**

As well as stimulating small-scale local business, Deng wanted China to attract larger-scale international enterprises, so he promoted an 'Open Door Policy' which he hoped would bring in:

- Foreign direct investment
- Modern technology
- Access to export markets.

In order to achieve these objectives, Deng set up four Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in 1979 in Guangdong and Fujian provinces. These were:

- Shenzhen
- Zhuhai
- Shantou
- Xiamen.

The SEZs were almost like separate countries; non-residents needed special permission and an internal passport to travel to them. Inside these zones, roads, railways and port facilities were built by the Chinese government. Foreign joint venture companies, especially from Hong Kong, were encouraged to set up factories. These foreign investors were attracted by a relatively cheap, educated pool of labour, combined with promises of a market-based approach to business decisions. Deng Xiaoping knew that China needed to speed up its economic development and the quickest way to achieve this was to bring in foreign expertise. Local managers were expected to learn business methods from foreign firms, who would hopefully bring in the latest machinery for the factories and train the workers.
### Map 15

This is a map showing the SEZs. In addition to the four SEZs, the area around Hainan Island, as well as the estuaries of the Pearl, Min and Yangzi rivers, were opened up to development in 1984.

### Table 1

**CHINA'S EXTERNAL PERFORMANCE, 1979-90**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Foreign Direct Investment, net inflows (current USD millions)</th>
<th>Official Development Assistance and Official Aid (current USD millions)</th>
<th>External Debt (current USD millions)</th>
<th>Exports (% of GDP)</th>
<th>Imports (% of GDP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>5757</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>8358</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>668</td>
<td>9609</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>1258</td>
<td>797</td>
<td>12081</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>1659</td>
<td>938</td>
<td>16695</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>1875</td>
<td>1095</td>
<td>23719</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>2314</td>
<td>1377</td>
<td>35339</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>3194</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>42438</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>3393</td>
<td>2070</td>
<td>44932</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>3487</td>
<td>2030</td>
<td>53301</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*From the World Bank Online Data Enquiry Service, accessed March 2009*

This table illustrates the strong impact Deng's Open Door Policy had on the external economic relations of the People’s Republic of China. There was a significant increase in foreign direct investment into China, but at the same time the government attracted larger volumes of aid and took on heavier levels of external debt. This large infusion of foreign capital was used to develop the Chinese economy and make it more export-orientated. You can see this from the increasing levels of GDP devoted to exports and imports of goods and services from 1980 onwards.
**STUDENT STUDY SECTION**

**QUESTION**
With reference to its origin and purpose, assess the value and limitations of Source J for historians studying the economic development of China during the 1980s.

**Student Answer – Arturo**

Source J is a collection of economic data of China’s External Performance from 1979 to 1990. Its purpose is to demonstrate the improving economic performance as a result of Deng’s Open Door Policy. The value of Source J is its credibility since it is from the World Bank data archive. This is very important for historians who are looking for a quantitative approach to account for the rapid economic development in China. However, the source is rather limited. There is not much information about how people in the interior had different income levels from the people who lived on the coast. The data provided is merely numbers. They fail to outline all the details of specific economic projects. It would be hard for historians to analyze economic development in a precise manner.

**Examiner’s comments**

There are some good comments here. The origin and purpose of the table of statistics are mentioned, although it is probably not correct to say that the World Bank is aiming to show how Deng’s policy is improving! The purpose of this table could be to provide statistical information for researchers or economists who would be interested in this topic. The statistics are not meant to present any particular point of view. Arturo could also say more about the value of the table and its origin. The World Bank would need to have accurate statistics and so it could be assumed that it has different methods of gathering this information. It is important that the information is reliable because the World Bank is a reputable organization and it needs to be trustworthy. There is an attempt to assess the limitations of the source, and the comments are quite valid and linked to the question of how this source would be used by historians. As Arturo says, the data are ‘just numbers’, but it might have been more useful to say something about how difficult it may have been to collect statistics. If you are discussing statistics related to a single-party state that controls access to information, then it is worth pointing this out as a limitation.

‘Opening the window will let in flies’ (Deng Xiaoping)

Deng knew that the SEZs would become more and more like capitalist Hong Kong and that the people who lived and worked in the SEZs would come into contact with Western ideas. By limiting access to these zones, Deng tried to make sure that any ‘bad influences’ would be kept under control and would spread less quickly to the rest of the country.

There was also, however, a political motive for the development of these SEZs. Deng hoped that both Hong Kong and Taiwan would soon be ‘brought back’ to China. In his view, although they were outside its control, both of these territories ‘belonged’ to China. Both Hong Kong and Taiwan had successful but strongly capitalist economies. Deng believed that if he could show that China had capitalist zones, the citizens of Hong Kong and Taiwan would more readily accept ‘returning’ to China. He called this policy, ‘One Country, Two Systems’.

**The mid 1980s**

In 1984, Deng stated that he had three main ways in which to improve the economy:
- To give more autonomy to state enterprises, emphasizing the importance of making a profit.
- To ‘smash the iron rice bowl’ and so increase the productivity of workers.
- To allow the price of goods, especially food and consumer goods, to be determined by market forces.
Despite the difficulty of achieving these objectives, by the mid 1980s China had plenty of people eager and willing to make the most of new opportunities to create wealth. This was a very different experience from that of the Soviet Union and the failure of perestroika.

In a meeting in June 1984, Deng Xiaoping explained his interpretation of what he called ‘building Socialism with a Specifically Chinese Character’.

**SOURCE K**

Capitalism can enrich less than 10% of the Chinese population; it can never enrich the remaining 90%. But if we adhere to socialism and apply the principle of distribution according to his work, there will not be excessive disparities in wealth. Consequently, overproduction will occur as our productive forces become developed over the next 20–30 years. The minimum target of our modernisation programme is to achieve a comparatively comfortable standard of living by the end of the century. We shall accumulate new experience and try new solutions as new problems arise. In general, we believe that the course we have chosen, which we will call building socialism with Chinese characteristics, is the right one.


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**STUDENT STUDY SECTION**

**QUESTION**

What, according to Source K, were the benefits of ‘building socialism with Chinese characteristics’?

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**How successful were the Four Modernizations?**

Deng maintained that reform had to start in the countryside and, at first, emphasis was placed on changing the methods of agricultural production. The family had replaced the commune as an economic unit and peasant farmers would benefit from how hard they worked as individuals rather than being rewarded for their work as part of a team. The Household Responsibility System expanded rapidly and production increased. The Party still maintained that land could not be owned by individuals and that although peasants could farm the land, it was still owned by the state. In practice the collectivization of agriculture was now virtually over in China.

In industry, change began slowly because so many of the industrial enterprises in China were owned by the state. There was less opportunity here for entrepreneurs but, gradually, small workshops were set up by individuals who hired workers and operated in a market environment.

The SEZs made the biggest difference to the economy. Shenzhen was especially successful in attracting foreign direct investment, becoming more and more capitalist. At first, most of the work carried out in the SEZs was basic manufacturing and, whatever Deng had intended, the foreign companies used the workers as cheap, unskilled labour. Also, initially, most of the goods produced were consumed inside China and not exported, but over time this changed as the skill levels and product quality improved.

Some Party leaders had been sceptical and resistant to Deng’s reforms, but they quickly realized that they were able to decide who would benefit from foreign investment flows and became less critical of the new capitalist ways. They were able to make connections with foreign joint venture partners as well as find jobs for their relatives in the SEZs, where wages and living standards were higher.
There were a number of cases of open bribery and corruption, notably one on Hainan Island in 1985, when the governor was dismissed for circumventing import regulations on motor vehicles. Behind closed doors, it was rumoured that Deng's famous catch-phrase should have been amended to 'It doesn't matter whether a cat is black or white, it doesn't even matter whether a cat catches mice. What matters is that the cat does not get caught.'

Of course, not everyone grew rich; not everyone had a job; and the gap between the poor and the wealthy widened. The Open Door Policy favoured the coastal cities, where incomes grew much faster than in the largely rural interior. Pressure built for internal migration from the rural areas to the cities in search of higher incomes and a better lifestyle. Rapid economic growth also put a strain on the infrastructure of the country. There were problems with getting enough raw materials to where they were needed and so production was not always able to keep up with demand. This also led to higher inflation, and demand grew faster than supply.

Action to slow down inflation and control large budget deficits in government spending resulted in higher levels of unemployment, especially among the internal migrants and new graduates. Reduction in subsidies and support for workers in state-owned organizations also fuelled discontent and growing unease about the future. The second half of the 1980s held problems for the leadership of the CCP as it tried to push ahead with economic reform without giving in to demands for democratic reform.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT STUDY SECTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>QUESTION:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using the sources in this section and your own knowledge, write a short essay answering the following question:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'By 1984, Deng's modernizations had successfully brought about the modernization of agriculture and industry. How far would you agree with this judgement?'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Student Answer – Yuri**

Deng's economic modernization programmes have provided a clear legal framework to attract more foreign direct investment into China. The way he and his cabinet promoted the ideas also transformed people's views about economics. Consequently, the agricultural productivity increased by 50% per cent (Source E). FDI net inflows were increased from $1 million in 1979 to $1,659 million in 1985. Although China took on more external debt to provide capital for its domestic investment, exports were increased from 9 per cent to 11 per cent of GDP. The current account balance was achieved at the second half of the 1980s (Source J).

In addition, the establishment of the household responsibility system successfully motivated peasants to look after their small production units and generate wealth for themselves. Ultimately, they were transformed into small, rural enterprises without the need for central planning. This helped to increase the yield and the efficiency of work (Source H). Nevertheless, the industrial reform was relatively less successful by 1985. Most heavy industries and factories were state owned by that time. Workers had little incentive to innovate and work harder. This phenomenon could be attributed to a large and inefficient corporate structure, as well as an incompletely established free market. For instance, the Sichuan experiment shows this.

Besides, emphasis was placed on allowing the people living in the coastal cities to get rich first. This has led to an income disparity. Thus it caused people to emigrate from the interior to the coast, putting heavy social burdens on it. Also, a more liberal market structure has led to corruption between officials and entrepreneurs.
Examiner's comments

Yuri has used both the sources and ‘own knowledge’ here. It is a fairly brief response, however, and it is a good idea to aim for around 600 words rather than 250! Don’t forget that this is a short essay response so, just like a longer essay, it is a good idea to plan. Unlike Yuri, you should begin with an introduction where you refer to the question and briefly put it in context, but saying something about Deng and what he aimed to do. The question asks you to measure the success of the modernization of agriculture and industry and these two parts give you a structure for your answer.

Yuri does address agriculture, but doesn’t say much about it. He could refer to Source D as well as Source E and also say quite a lot more about the incentive provided by the ‘responsibility system’. Industry is also neglected and although he refers to the SOEs, he does not explain the problems with reforming these large industries. The SEZs are referred to, but, again, more could be said about this and a reference made to their location and purpose. At least Yuri has indicated some sources, although these could be used more fully by including quotes and some analysis of their content.

Yuri could also answer the question more clearly. Was there successful modernization of agriculture and industry by 1984? Yuri implies that there was some modernization but there were also problems. This is good but he needs to develop his analysis and to support it.

REVIEW SECTION

This section has dealt with the removal of Hua Guofeng and the emergence of Deng Xiaoping as the ‘paramount leader’ of China. We have also looked at the methods used by Deng to accelerate economic growth and to encourage Chinese workers and managers to respond to market forces and produce more of what was needed.

Consider the following questions and see if you can come up with answers using the text and the sources from this section.

Review questions
1. Why did Deng think it was necessary to carry out economic reforms in China?
2. What kind of methods did he use to improve agricultural production and did this change peasant life?
3. Why was it more difficult to change the working habits and production levels of industrial workers?
4. Were his economic reforms successful?

Section III:
China under Deng Xiaoping: political changes and their limits, culminating in Tiananmen Square (1989)

This section deals with the growing demands for more political freedom. Deng Xiaoping had encouraged criticism of the Leftists, and displays of public opposition to the Gang of Four had helped him to return to the party leadership in 1978. When the criticism went further than criticism of the Left, however, Deng took a different view and limited the opportunities for political debate.

Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang came to the fore in the 1980s as leaders of the CCP, but it was Deng who remained ‘paramount leader’. Eventually, both Hu and Zhao lost the support of
Deng because they supported a more democratic system, and in 1989 in his response to the Tiananmen Square protests Deng demonstrated just how determined he was to keep a tight control over the state.

Social reforms – education

Deng knew that China needed well-educated citizens and he also knew that education could no longer be directed by revolutionary ideology. Mao feared that the students who did best at school and were most likely to go on to higher education were the children of the ‘middle classes’ (by now, the Party cadres) and in turn, their children were more likely to do well in examinations. Meanwhile, the children of peasants or unskilled workers were less likely to succeed and so, unless education was drastically reformed, a class system would be perpetuated.

This situation was one of the reasons for the Cultural Revolution, when the system was changed so that a student could not go to university without a good work record and the recommendation of his or her work team. Coming from the ‘right class’, i.e. a worker or a peasant class, now substantially improved a student’s chances of getting into university.

During the Cultural Revolution, there had been a strong focus on making a basic level of education available to all rather than putting money and resources into providing a good level of education for a few. After the Cultural Revolution, this policy was reversed and certain schools now became ‘centres of excellence’ and were given the best teachers, the best facilities and the best students. Written examinations were reintroduced and the brightest pupils could go directly to university from secondary school without having to do manual labour. The exams were deliberately made very challenging, and in 1980 only 4.8 per cent of high school students were successful in gaining a place to study at university. Even so, by the mid to late 1980s there would be a problem with finding employment opportunities for graduates.

**Source A**

*In education there was a new stress on academic achievement and a downgrading of egalitarian ideals. Leftist leaders had stressed the goal of giving at least some sort of education to everyone; they had hoped to make not only primary education but also several years of secondary schooling universal as quickly as possible. The moderate leadership that came to power in 1976 did not completely abandon these goals but it assigned them a lower priority. The main thrust after 1976 was now providing a really good education to a limited number of people.*

From Edwin E. Moise, *Modern China*, 1994

During the Cultural Revolution, intellectuals had been especially targeted for criticism and had been categorized as the ‘stinking ninth’. This phrase meant that they were at the bottom of a list of categories of people known as the ‘revisionist’ classes or, in other words, people who were not considered to be revolutionary and who were ‘bourgeoisie’ or ‘capitalist readers’. All these terms were insults and it could be dangerous to be labelled in this way. Things began to change, however, and in a speech given in 1980, Hu Yaobang announced the rehabilitation of the intellectuals.

**Source B**

*We must value intellectuals and attach due importance to culture and education. Intellectuals play an important role. In our country there is a general lack of learning among our people, and learning is inseparable from intellectuals. We have not yet finished our job of implementing the*
relevant policies towards intellectuals. Intellectuals have not been used appropriately enough. They still face many practical problems, such as housing, separation from spouses and wages… Now, when the intellectuals have just begun to raise their heads, a few comrades are trying to beat them down. This demands that we work on these comrades.

Hu Yaobang speaking in 1980. From Edwin E. Moise, Modern China, 1994

**SOURCE C**

In the cities, the intellectuals were often poorly paid. One heard jokes that a man who repaired the outside of the head (a barber) could make more money than a man who repaired the inside of the head (a brain surgeon). Salaries for teachers were so low that some observers expressed astonishment at their dedication, their willingness to go on trying to educate their students when given hardly any reward.

From Edwin E. Moise, Modern China, 1994

**SOURCE D**

**STUDENT STUDY SECTION**

**QUESTION**

What do Sources A, B, C and D tell you about China's changing attitudes towards education? Support your points with evidence taken from the sources.

The Fifth Modernization – the Democracy Movement

After the fall of the Gang of Four, there was an easing of censorship, and in November 1978 a Democracy Wall was set up in Beijing. This was backed by Deng Xiaoping, as many of the 'big character' posters supported his return to power. The Wall was also very useful for public criticism of the Cultural Revolution and even Maoist policies. As long as these posters were directed against the Left, Deng allowed them to be displayed.
The Democracy Wall was a local phenomenon and its biggest impact was on people who lived in Beijing who could gather round to read the posters. News about the posters spread to other areas of China, however, and journalists from foreign news agencies wrote about the Wall or made news broadcasts from the Wall. Here was another way of spreading news of the Wall inside China, as many Chinese citizens listened to the BBC World Service.

For Deng, the Democracy Wall served another purpose, as it echoed his call for reform within the Party. For instance, there were calls for a reappraisal of the April 5th Movement (the Tiananmen demonstrations that followed the death of Zhou Enlai in 1976) and for these demonstrations to be re-categorized as ‘revolutionary’ rather than ‘counter-revolutionary’. The posters of the dissidents who supported the Four Modernizations were tolerated until a pro-democracy movement sprang up calling for the ‘Fifth Modernization’. How, it was asked, could effective and far-reaching economic change take place without the establishment of a democratic political system?

**SOURCE E**

Those who worry that democracy will lead to anarchy and chaos are just like those who, following the overthrow of the Qing dynasty (in 1911), worried that, without an emperor, the country would fall into chaos. Their recommendation was: Patiently suffer oppression! For without the weight of oppression, the roofs of your homes might fly off! To such people, I would like to say, with all due respect: We want to be the masters of our own destiny. We need no gods or emperors and we don’t believe in saviours of any kind. We want to be masters of our universe; we do not want to serve as mere tools of dictators with personal ambitions for carrying out modernisation. We want to modernise the lives of the people. Democracy, freedom, and happiness for all are our sole objectives in carrying out modernisation. Without this ‘Fifth Modernisation’, all other modernisations are nothing but a new promise.

From a big character poster by Wei Jingsheng put up on Beijing’s Democracy Wall on 5 December 1978, published in Alan Lawrance, *China Since 1919*, 2004

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**STUDENT STUDY SECTION**

**QUESTION**

With reference to its origin and purpose, assess the value and limitations of Source E for historians studying political reform in the 1980s.

Wei Jingsheng had been a Red Guard during the Cultural Revolution and he used big character posters to complain about the lack of democracy. He also complained about China’s invasion of Vietnam. Wei was arrested in March 1979, tried for ‘counter-revolutionary’ activities and sentenced to 15 years in prison. He was released in 1993, resumed his criticism of the government and, in 1995, was sentenced to a further 14 years in prison. Interestingly, he was not accused, this time, of ‘counter-revolution’ because this was no longer classified as a crime. Instead, Wei was tried for ‘conspiracy to subvert the government’. He was released after two years and sent into exile.

Now that he no longer needed the support of the protestors, Deng silenced the call for change and closed the Democracy Wall in December 1979. The following year, it became illegal to put up wall posters.

Although Deng Xiaoping was eager to improve the Chinese economy and to encourage entrepreneurship, he considered democracy and a multi-party system to be dangerous for China. He reminded the Chinese people that the Four Fundamental Principles still applied. These were:

- The Socialist Road
- The People’s Democratic Dictatorship
• The Leadership of the Communist Party
• Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought.

For Deng Xiaoping, the growing demand for democracy was an example of ‘bourgeois liberalism’ and China needed to be protected from this.

SOURCE F

[Deng Xiaoping] was a curious mixture of economic progressivism and political conservatism, endowed with a gift for playing a balancing act as political necessity dictated. In a system where the rule of man superseded the rule of law, he was the supreme arbiter. In his mind, economic reforms and an open-door policy were but means by which to borrow foreign technology, capital and managerial skills. These were seen as tools with which to strengthen Communist rule, but never as steps to move the country toward a Western-style democracy.

From Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, The Rise of Modern China, 1995

SOURCE G

Deng’s aim was to restore the morale and the standing of the CCP after the disruptive decades of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. He wanted to show that the Communist Party was still capable of governing China and had the right to the loyalty of the people. It is broadly correct to see Deng Xiaoping as a reformer but only in the economic sphere. In politics he was a CCP hardliner… His belief in the authority of the CCP as the only legitimate shaper of China’s destinies was unshakable. It was this conviction that made a major showdown between the old-guard CCP and the supporters of democracy increasingly likely.


STUDENT STUDY SECTION

QUESTION

Compare and contrast the views expressed in Sources F and G about Deng’s role as a reformer.

Deng favoured political reform, but reform of the CCP, not reform of the single-party system. He sensed that the CCP had been damaged by the excesses of Mao Zedong and that it needed to be restored to a position of undisputed authority. At the same time, Deng wanted to reassure the people that, unlike the Cultural Revolution, when anyone could be a target for punishment, there would be no arbitrary harassment of ‘revisionists’. As long as they did not question the authority of the Party or ask for more political freedom, Chinese citizens could live without fear of being made to undergo ‘self-criticism’.

From 1985 to Tiananmen Square: No turning back

By the mid 1980s, communes were being disbanded and small businesses were permitted as part of the Four Modernizations. There was more freedom to look for work, to accumulate wealth and to be an ‘entrepreneur’, but the state also became less involved in providing basic necessities.

Reforms in agriculture had gone ahead rather smoothly, but in industry, change meant an end to the ‘iron rice bowl’ jobs in the SOEs. For industrial workers, jobs in the SOEs had provided not only guaranteed employment, but also food coupons, free health care and free education for their families. As pressure grew to modernize the big state-
owned factories, unemployment started to rise and beggars were seen more often on the streets of the main cities. Criticism was made of the changes brought about by economic reform, but there was also criticism of 'Western-style' individualism in literature, fashion and music.

Traditionally, the CCP would allow a certain amount of change, only to clamp down when this went too far. For instance, when the left-wing revolutionary policies of the Great Leap Forward failed, there was a return to a more moderate economic system. The same happened after the excesses of the Cultural Revolution. What would happen now that there was criticism of the right-wing policies of Deng Xiaoping?

Determined to keep the Chinese economy growing, Deng was sure that there could be no turning back, but he was equally determined not to give in to demands for what he called 'bourgeois democracy'. Deng saw the changes in Poland at the start of the 1980s and believed that the strikes and demonstrations organized by Solidarity led directly to martial law. Deng did not want this to happen in China and so demands for political change had to be handled carefully. No concessions were to be made but, if possible, confrontation was also to be avoided.

The student demonstrations of 1986

By 1982, Deng's most likely successors were Zhao Ziyang, the Prime Minister, and Hu Yaobang, the General Secretary of the Party. Both gave the impression of being in favour of more reform and both were to lose power because of their support for student protests. President Ronald Reagan visited China in 1984 and in a speech given in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, he had spoken of freedom and of 'trust in the people'. His speech was censored before it was printed in the Chinese press, but he made a similar speech in Shanghai. In The Rise of Modern China, Immanuel Hsu argues that although President Reagan had spoken in English and there was no subtitled translation of this televised speech, his message got across and it was not long before uncensored copies of both his speeches were being distributed illegally.

In 1986, in order to strengthen the CCP, Deng introduced small changes to the electoral system for the selection of representatives to local congresses. Before these elections were held, university students in Wuhan, Hefei and Shanghai called for even more changes to the electoral system. They were supported by Fang Lizhi, a professor in astrophysics and an outspoken supporter of democratic reform. He made a speech that argued for the freedom to think freely if China was to develop.

SOURCE H

In democratic societies, democracy and science – and most of us here are scientists – run parallel. Democracy is concerned with ideas about humanity, and science is concerned with nature. One of the distinguishing features of universities is the role of knowledge; we do research, we create new knowledge, we apply this knowledge to developing new products, and so forth. In this domain, within this sphere of science and the intellect, we make our own judgements based on our independent criteria. In Western societies, universities are independent from the government. This is how universities must be. The intellectual realm must be independent and have its own values. It is only when you know something independently that you are free from relying on authorities outside the intellectual domain, such as the government. Unfortunately, things are not this way in China.

From a speech by Fang Lizhi, calling for 'complete Westernization', at Tongji University, Shanghai on 10 November 1986. From Alan Lawrance, China Since 1919, 2004
Fang Lizhi was expelled from the CCP and lost his post at the University of Science and Technology at Hefei.

The students were supported by Hu Yaobang, who bore the brunt of the criticism. He was blamed for the student demonstrations and dismissed as General Secretary in 1987. He was accused of 'only opposing the Left while never opposing the Right' and 'saying many things he should not have said.' It was felt by the conservatives in the Party that he expressed his reformist views too openly and was over-confident of becoming Deng’s successor. Hu was removed, but Zhao survived and took over as General Secretary and Li Peng became Premier.

These changes in leadership were confirmed at the Thirteenth Party Congress in 1987, where another noteworthy event was the retirement of Deng along with several of his elderly comrades from the Standing Committee of the Politburo. This reduced the average age of Committee members from 77 to 63. An effort was being made to show that China was moving forward to a more youthful and dynamic future.

In reality, not much had changed, because Deng remained Chairman of the Military Affairs Commission as well as 'paramount leader'. Meanwhile, his elderly comrades became known as the 'Gang of Old' for their continuing influence over party policy.

**Source 1**

*The Long March 1934*

The original Long March had taken place in 1934 and become symbolic of the struggle endured by the early communists, when they escaped from Jiangxi province and trekked more than 12,000km to Yanan.

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**Student Study Section**

**Question**

What is the message conveyed in Source 1?
Tiananmen Square

In 1989 a rift developed between the reformer, General Secretary Zhao Ziyang, and the more conservative Premier Li Peng. Zhao felt that more openness was needed and a greater willingness to include trade unions and student organizations in discussions concerning both economic and political reform. This approach was opposed by the critics of Zhao's 'centrist' policies and he was aware that any strikes or demonstrations could be used as an excuse to end reform. Meanwhile, Deng believed that firm control by the Party was necessary if economic reforms were to continue. Now more than ever, he implied, China needed strong leadership and an authoritarian system.

Symbolically, 1989 was an important year. It was the 40th Anniversary of the establishment of the People's Republic of China and the 70th Anniversary of the May 4th Movement of 1919. It was also one of the most momentous years in the history of the PRC.

In the Soviet Union, political reform had accompanied economic reform and in the spring of 1989, the satellite states of Eastern Europe were moving away from the single-party system. It was interesting to speculate whether the same path would be followed in China.

Demands for the Fifth Modernization reached a climax in the spring of 1989. In April, Hu Yaobang died after suffering a heart attack brought on, it was rumoured, by criticism from the 'anti-reformers' within the Party. Hu supported student protests and had called for more reform to improve education. What happened next was very reminiscent of 1976, when Zhou Enlai's death had sparked the April 5th Movement. Students who saw Hu as their strongest supporter took to the streets of Beijing and marched to Tiananmen Square. They asked for the following reforms:

- Hu Yaobang's reputation should be rehabilitated and his pre-democracy policies restored.
- There should be freedom of information and a free press.
- Those who had used violence against the demonstrators should be punished.
- Measures should be taken to end corruption and to publicize how much money was made by the party leaders and their families.
- Investment in education should be increased and the treatment and pay of teachers should be improved. Those who had been responsible for wrong educational policies should be punished.
- The 'anti-bourgeois liberalism' campaign should end and its victims be rehabilitated.
- There should be accurate reporting of the 'democratic and patriotic' movement that was taking place.

(Adapted from John Gittings, The Changing Face of China, 2006.)

The May 4th Movement

The May 4th Movement began as a student demonstration in May 1919 in protest against the decision made at the Paris Peace Conference to allow Japan to take over German interests in Shandong province, where they established a centre for trade, and Japan had taken advantage of the war to increase its influence in China. The emergence of the CCP in 1921 grew out of the public protest against the continuation of foreign involvement in China.
students and there were calls for his policies of perestroika and glasnost to be adopted in China. The visit turned into a humiliating experience for Deng Xiaoping, who was unable to keep to the planned schedule. The official reception for Gorbachev was moved to Beijing Airport and his tour of the Forbidden City and a wreath-laying ceremony in Tiananmen Square were cancelled.

On 19 May, Zhao Ziyang showed his concern and confusion by walking among the students and apologizing for the actions of the Politburo. He said, 'We were too late coming. I'm sorry. Your criticism of us is justified.' Zhao was in a minority and the Politburo had already decided there would be no compromise or dialogue with the demonstrators. Later that same day, he was dismissed from office.

On 20 May, the Politburo declared martial law and the PLA were ordered to take up positions in Beijing. It was rumoured that they were unarmed and when the people asked them not to use force, they complied. Ten days later, on 30 May, the students erected a figure known as the 'Goddess of Democracy and Spirit of Liberty' in Tiananmen Square. This polystyrene statue closely resembled the Statue of Liberty in New York and was criticized by the anti-reformers as 'un-Chinese'.

Deng Xiaoping was nervous about how to address the demands of the students and he was even more alarmed when they were joined by workers and ordinary residents of Beijing. Protests also focused on corruption inside the Party and posters and pamphlets asked how the families of party leaders could afford to gamble in Hong Kong or to play golf in Beijing.

At midnight on 3 June, Deng ordered the troops to take positions and to clear Tiananmen Square by 6:00 am on 4 June. There is still a great deal of confusion about what happened next, but estimates put the casualties at between 600 and 1200 dead and between 6000 and 10,000 injured. The government maintained that there had been no casualties in the square, but that 23 students had been killed accidentally in the surrounding streets. It also stated that 150 soldiers had been killed and 5000 wounded.

What actually happened in Tiananmen Square is still the subject of debate. The official explanation was that the army had taken action against a 'counter-revolutionary rebellion' planned to spark a coup d'état led by 'misguided Party leaders'.

SOURCE L

*The mass arrests began almost immediately after the bloody crackdown. An all-points bulletin was issued to ferret out 21 student leaders, and citizens were urged to inform on them. By July 17, some 4,600 arrests had been made and 29 of the prisoners were then given a quick trial and shot in the back of the head.*


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**Examiner's hint**

There are quite a few statistics mentioned here. How reliable are these, do you think? Notice that the source is an American-Chinese historian. Think about where he might have found these numbers.

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**STUDENT STUDY SECTION**

**QUESTION**

How reliable, do you think, is the account of events given in Source L?

It is difficult to exaggerate the shock with which the world reacted to the events in Tiananmen Square. The 1980s had been a period of opening up of China to foreign investment and also to foreign visitors. Economic reform, it was commonly believed, would lead to political reform. The crackdown, therefore, was all the more shocking because it was so unexpected. There were many questions to be asked, but finding the answers was not easy when the government was determined not to allow foreign journalists access to eyewitnesses. Some conclusions were drawn, however, regarding the causes of the unrest.
Examiner’s comments

Mabel has identified several similarities (comparisons) and differences (contrasts) and handled these quite well. She lists three points from Source M and then three points from Source N and makes the differences quite clear. She also finds two similarities, although she could support these with more evidence.

QUESTION

With reference to its origin and purpose, assess the value and limitations of Source N.

Student Answer – Kaitlin

This source originates from an extract from a speech by Deng Xiaoping to those he depended on to enforce martial law and control the masses in June 1989. Its purpose is to inspire absolute certainty and loyalty among these officers, by convincing them that the actions they are carrying out are not only just but the only option. It is verbal propaganda, also aimed at creating a divide between the officers and protestors, in order to break down any sense of empathy or loyalty they may feel towards them.

This source is very valuable for a number of reasons. First, it shows Deng’s desire to inspire loyalty among these military personnel. This in turn suggests that he was fearful of the protests. The source is an example of his official stand during the protests and strategy used to alienate the protestors from others. All in all, this speech, as mentioned before, is propaganda, and devised to convince those who hear it of one point of view.

This source is also limited because it is so very one-sided. It simply shows Deng’s instructions to the officers, not their reactions to these instructions or thoughts at the time. Moreover, it does not provide a great deal of information about protestors, only Deng’s view that he wanted to spread: that they were divided, led by a few very bad individuals, and members of the ‘dregs of society’.

Examiner’s comments

A very good response. Kaitlin refers very clearly to the origin, purpose, value and limitations of Source N.

Post-Tiananmen

As news of the events in Tiananmen Square spread, sympathizers took to the streets all across China and also Hong Kong where a population, already nervous about 1997, was frightened by this brutal suppression of freedom of speech. Meanwhile, Deng and the Party leadership went on television to condemn the students, but also to re-affirm a commitment to economic growth. Zhao Ziyang, who had been dismissed on 18 May, remained under house arrest until his death in January 2005. The more conservative wing of the CCP was unable to slow or to reverse economic reform, however, and Deng was determined to go ahead with moving towards a free-market economy.

One of the many questions asked about the events of May and June 1989 was why the government had given so many mixed messages? There was a two-week delay between the declaration of martial law and the military crackdown, during which time the Party leadership had watched the students assemble in Tiananmen Square, go on hunger strike and be joined by the workers. One reason for the delayed response may have been the official visit by Mikhail Gorbachev that began on 15 May and ended on 19 May. There may also have been disagreement within the Politburo about what action to take.
Events in Europe conveyed a mood of democratic reform within the communist bloc, and the world was keenly interested in seeing whether China would proceed along the same path. It may be that not all the leaders wanted to risk condemnation by world opinion. Even when the PLA was called in, it did not act immediately and when orders were finally given to clear the square, officers continued to ask for clarification. There seems to have been nervousness about giving direct commands to use lethal force against the demonstrators. Afterwards, Li Peng claimed that the soldiers used live ammunition only after they had run out of tear gas. Some reports stated that orders were given to end the 'counter-revolution' only after reports that a soldier had been killed.

Although some student leaders called for non-violence, there were extremists among the demonstrators as well as in the Politburo and it is possible that both of these groups relished a fight. It was an asymmetric clash, however, with unarmed demonstrators being confronted by an army using guns and tanks.

**SOURCE O**

![A protester confronts PLA tanks in Tiananmen Square](source_o)

**SOURCE P**

![A cartoon by Nicholas Garland published in The Independent, a British daily newspaper, on 16 June 1989. A handwritten note on yellow paper pasted to the reverse of the cartoon said 'China – Deng Xiaoping tries to prevent the truth about the massacre in Peking being told'.](source_p)
Aftermath

In the aftermath of what became known as 'the Beijing Spring', there was a clampdown on the Democracy Movement. Widespread arrests of students and workers who had participated in the demonstrations were carried out and many were executed, while others were given long prison terms. Members of the CCP known to have sympathized with the demonstrators were purged. It is no coincidence that this return to a far more rigid climate of censorship and repression took place against the backdrop of reform in Eastern Europe and the USSR. For Deng, those events were not an example to follow but a warning of what to avoid. The success of a movement similar to that of the Polish trade union, Solidarity, was something that Deng was afraid of and he was determined to prevent a similar worker-led movement emerging in China. It was said that workers who attempted to link any kind of trade union activity to the democracy movement were executed.
The Tiananmen demonstrations, however, were also damaging for Deng. The party leaders who had opposed the move away from Mao’s policies seized this opportunity to condemn the Four Modernizations. Although Deng believed as strongly as ever in the need for economic reform, he now had to take a back seat as privatization was officially criticized and investment in the SEZs was blocked. It was not until 1994 that Deng felt he could challenge the conservatives and restore his economic policies. Once more, he urged ‘to get rich is glorious’, but hoped that workers and peasants would accept that, in the short term at least, there would be no democratic reform.

REVIEW SECTION

This section has looked at the political protest that emerged in China during the 1980s. In the West, it is assumed that economic change leads, inevitably, to political change. During the Industrial Revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries, as people moved into the cities and as entrepreneurs became wealthy, demand grew for a fairer distribution of political power. People wanted laws that reflected a new economic reality and to have influence on policy making. Over time, more people were given the right to vote for different political parties that sprang up to represent different economic interests. Would this also happen in China or was it possible for people to accept prosperity without the kind of democracy familiar in multi-party states?

By 1979, the democracy movement had taken hold in China, but this ebbed and flowed throughout the 1980s ending with the events of Tiananmen Square. Consider the following questions and see if you can come up with answers using the sources and the text in this section:

Review questions
1. Why was Deng Xiaoping concerned about the growth of the democracy movement?
2. Compare and contrast the events of 1979, 1986, and 1989 — in what ways were these protests by the supporters of democratic reform similar and different?
3. Why do you think the leadership of the CCP responded so harshly to the Tiananmen Square protests in 1989?

Sample exam for Prescribed Subject 3: Communism in Crisis 1976–89

These documents concern the reasons for Soviet involvement in Afghanistan in 1979. Read all the documents carefully and then answer the questions that follow.

SOURCE A

From the minutes of a meeting of the Politburo in March 1979; Andrei Gromyko was the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union

Gromyko: I fully support Comrade Andropov’s [head of the KGB at this time] proposal to exclude such a measure as the introduction of our troops into Afghanistan. The [Afghan] army there is unreliable. Thus our army, if it enters, will be the aggressor. Against whom will it fight? Against the Afghan people first of all, and it will have to shoot at them. Comrade Andropov correctly noted that indeed the situation in Afghanistan is not ripe for a [socialist] revolution. And all that we have done in recent years with such effort in terms of a détente and in international tensions, arms reduction, and much more — all that will be thrown back. Of course, this will be a nice gift for China. All the non-aligned countries will be against us. One must ask, what would we gain? Afghanistan with its present government, with a backward economy, with inconsequential weight in international affairs … we must keep in mind that from a legal point of view too we would not be justified in sending troops.