

18. Evaluate the extent to which the economic policies of **either** Castro or Hitler achieved their aims.

Candidates should demonstrate a clear understanding of the requirements of the question and effectively deploy knowledge of the key issue raised by the question. They should appraise the economic policies of their chosen ruler and assess whether or not they achieved what they were designed to.

Castro

The aims of Castro's economic policies should be identified: key areas being to end foreign ownership of Cuban resources including sugar plantations, tobacco plantations, to embark on land redistribution to the peasants by ending the *latifundia* system. This would improve the economic wellbeing of the peasants and retain wealth in Cuba.

In 1959 the First Agrarian Reform Bill was enacted, land was expropriated and redistribution in relatively small units began. Sugar plantations tended to be turned into cooperatives to try and maintain efficiency. All other foreign holdings in Cuba were nationalized. There was a central command economy and price control of rents and services. In 1968 the "revolutionary offensive" was implemented to try and increase productivity, thereby centralizing the economy even more.

A Second Agrarian Reform bill was passed, Five Year Plans were also introduced to try and industrialize further.

The success of these policies is debatable, certainly many landless peasants now gained land; however, some may argue that government control of prices discouraged anything more than subsistence farming. Cuba's economy remained dependent to a great extent on the sugar trade and there was limited money for other investment. The nationalization of foreign holdings resulted in the US trade embargo in 1960, which thus removed Cuba's major trading partner and made Cuba reliant on trade and aid, and especially oil, from the Soviet Union. Some candidates may consider the impact of the collapse of the Soviet Union on the Cuban economy.

Hitler

Hitler's initial aim was to secure his political position and then to prepare the country for war. This meant rearmament and self-sufficiency. Reducing unemployment was an immediate priority and to that end, public works programmes such as the autobahns were important. Hjalmar Schacht's New Plan aimed to deal with the balance of payments crisis. Mefo bills were introduced to fund rearmament and from 1935 this was a priority. The Four Year Plan (1936), directed by Goering aimed to achieve self-sufficiency in key industrial products in preparation for war. Unemployment was eradicated, helped by conscription and the removal of women and Jews from official statistics and, by 1938, there was a labour shortage. Despite the scarcity of some basic foodstuffs, many Germans were pleased that the economic crisis seemed to be over and there was full employment.

*The above material is an indication of what candidates may elect to write about in their responses. However, it is not exhaustive and **no set answer is required.***

*Examiners and moderators are reminded of the need to apply the markbands that provide the "best fit" to the responses given by candidates and to **award credit wherever it is possible to do so.***