HISTORY: PAPER I

**SOURCE MATERIAL
FOR SECTION B AND SECTION C**

SOURCE A   **An extract from the book *The Sixties Unplugged: A Kaleidoscopic History of a Disorderly Decade* by Gerald deGroot – an American historian who is now Professor of Modern History at the University of St Andrew's in Scotland**

Nasser (President of Egypt) had made his reputation through aggression, casting himself as the champion of small states unable to stand up to imperialist bullies. The Congo, Cuba, Vietnam, Indonesia were all interpreted by him as proof of how far the United States would go to to extend its power. In the Middle East, he concluded, Israel was simply the agent of the Americans. "We challenge you Israel. No, in fact, we do not address the challenge to you, Israel, because you are unworthy of our challenge. But we challenge you America."

Nasser sensed a perfect opportunity for a challenge. He presumed that the United States, stuck in the Vietnam quagmire*, could not afford another conflict. For that same reason, the Soviet Union encouraged Egypt to ferment trouble. The USSR wanted to create another trouble spot for the United States, in addition to that already existing in Vietnam. The Soviet aim was to create a situation in which the United States would become seriously involved economically, politically and possibly even militarily and would suffer serious political reverses as a result of siding against the Arabs.

[DeGroot, G *The Sixties Unplugged*, Pan Books, 2009, p. 146]

* quagmire = a difficult situation from which it is hard to get out

SOURCE B   **An excerpt from the transcript of a 24-part television series entitled *The Cold War* produced by CNN in 1998. This extract comes from *Episode 17: Good Guys, Bad Guys 1967 – 1978***

Narration: Nasser was the hero of the Arab world. The Egyptians rallied for war.

Nasser and the Arab states wanted to destroy Israel.

Moscow did not. In 1948, the Soviet Union had supported the creation of the state of Israel on Arab lands.

By 1967, Israel's two and a half million Jews were surrounded by 90 million hostile Arabs. Israel felt insecure.

The threat from Egypt became intense. Israel had America's political backing but not her weapons. Would Israel get support for a surprise attack?

Interview: Robert McNamara, US Secretary of Defence

"President Johnson asked us to bring Israel's foreign minister to the family quarters of the White House and, to speak rather crudely about it, the intent was to work him over, to persuade him is perhaps a more polite term, to … to avoid a pre-emptive attack. We thought we had persuaded him."

[<www.internationalschoolhistory.net>]

SOURCE C   **From the website <www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org> which is funded by the Jewish-American Co-operation Enterprise (a non-profit organisation which was established to strengthen United States and Israeli relations)**

The United States tried to prevent the war through negotiations, but it was not able to persuade Nasser or the other Arab states to cease their belligerent* statements and actions. Still, right before the war, Johnson warned: "Israel will not be alone unless it decides to go alone." Then, when the war began, the State Department announced: "Our position is neutral in thought, word and deed."

Moreover, while the Arabs were falsely accusing the United States of airlifting supplies to Israel, Johnson imposed an arms embargo on the region. (France, Israel's other main arms supplier, also embargoed arms to Israel) ...

… On June 5 1967 Israel was indeed alone, but its military commanders had conceived a brilliant war strategy. The entire Israeli Air Force, with the exception of just 12 fighters assigned to defend Israeli air space, took off at 7:14 a.m. with the intent of bombing Egyptian airfields while the Egyptian pilots were eating breakfast. In less than 2 hours roughly 300 Egyptian aircraft were destroyed …

[<www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org>]

* belligerent – aggressive

SOURCE D   **An extract from *Wisam fi at-Ta'rikh* – an Egyptian high school history textbook – written by Abdallah Ahmad Hamid al-Qusi and published in 1999**

Israel was not (fighting) on its own in the 1967 war. Hundreds of volunteers, pilots and military officers with American scientific spying equipment of the most advanced type photographed the Egyptian posts, jammed the Egyptian defence equipment, and transmitted to it (Israel) the orders of the Egyptian command.

[Abdallah Ahmad Hamid al-Qusi, *Al-Wisam fi at-Ta'rikh*, 'Al-Mu'asasa al-Arabiya al-Haditha, 1999, p. 284.]

SOURCE E   **An extract from an American history textbook published in 1976**

The Russo-American détente of the sixties did not mean that the two superpowers had abandoned their rivalry for the support of the unaligned nations and the Third World. The explosive situation in the Middle East made that clear. Following Israel's spectacular military victory in the Six Day War of 1967, the Arab nations aligned themselves more closely with the USSR. The Russians denounced Israel's 'aggression', provided new military aid to their Arab friends, and dispatched naval forces into the eastern Mediterranean to counter the US Sixth Fleet.

The United Nations was unable to bring the Arab-Israeli dispute much closer to a permanent settlement, and in later years the problem was further complicated by the guerilla attacks carried out by bands of Palestinian refugees against the Israelis. President Johnson and Premier Kosygin made no real progress in dealing with the Middle East crisis when they held a series of friendly conversations at Glassboro State College, New Jersey, 23 to 25 June 1967.

[Grantham, D (ed.) *The United States Since 1945: The Ordeal of Power*, McGraw-Hill, 1976, p. 230]

SOURCE F   **An extract from a speech to the Special Assembly of the United Nations delivered by Abba Eban, Israeli Foreign Minister, on 19 June 1967**

Since 1961, the Soviet Union has assisted Egypt in its desire to conquer Israel. The great amount of offensive equipment supplied to the Arab states strengthens this assessment.

A Great Power which professes its devotion to peaceful settlement and the rights of states has for fourteen years afflicted the Middle East with a headlong armaments race … It is clear from Arab sources that the Soviet Union has played a provocative role in spreading alarmist and incendiary* reports of Israeli intentions amongst Arab Governments …

Your (the Soviet) Government's record in the stimulation of the arms race … in the encouragement throughout the Arab World of unfounded suspicion concerning Israel's intentions, your constant refusal to say a single word of criticism at any time of declarations threatening the violent overthrow of Israel's sovereignty and existence – all this gravely undermines your claims to objectivity. You come here, in our eyes, not as a judge or as a prosecutor, but rather as a legitimate object of international criticism for the part you have played in the sombre events which have brought our region to a point of explosive tension …

[Heater, D *Case Studies in Twentieth Century World History*, Longman, 1988, p. 55]

* incendiary = wanting to cause a fight