

SECTION B

For this section, you will need to use the sources and interpretations in the Sources/Interpretations Booklet.

3 (a) Study Sources B and C.

How useful are Sources B and C for an enquiry into the challenges facing the Weimar Republic in the years 1919-23?

Explain your answer, using Sources B and C and your knowledge of the historical context.

(8)

Sources/interpretations for use with Section B.

Source B: A photograph published in a German newspaper in March 1920. It shows Freikorps soldiers taking part in the Kapp Putsch. The soldiers are occupying an area in Berlin near to the Reichstag building.



Source C: From an interview with a German woman in 1974. She was a factory worker during the early years of the Weimar Republic. Here she is recalling the hyperinflation of 1923.

You got paid at the end of every day. You had to spend it straight away because the next day your wages would only be worth half as much as the day before. Money was literally not worth the paper it was printed on.

Many people who had their savings in bank accounts lost all the money they had managed to scrape together. We asked ourselves, 'How can that happen? How is it that the government can't control this inflation which wipes out the life savings of most people?' We never got an answer that meant anything.

After the hyperinflation, people didn't trust the government anymore.

Content

Pick out details from the source which link to the focus of the question.

Own

Knowledge

Give specific knowledge about this event, link it to the details in the source. Give a mini judgement on utility.

Provenance

Use the nature, origin and purpose of the source to make a judgment on its utility.

Source B is useful because it is a photograph of the Freikorps near to the Reichstag, the source shows they are heavily armed with a large gun and the men have WW1 grenades on their belts. It also shows people in the background who appear to be going about their normal lives. The men are not fighting but are stood around with their hands in their pockets. This is useful because it agrees with what I know about the Kapp Putsch. The Freikorps were ex-army soldiers so many would have access to weapons they had used in the war which explains how they have grenades and large guns. The Freikorps were a voluntary force taken from the army who had been set up to put down the Spartacist Uprising, however under the direction of Wolfgang Kapp, a right wing journalist, they staged their own coup on the 15th March 1920. There was no military resistance to the Putsch in Berlin which fits with the image of the men standing around with their hands in their pockets. However, the Putsch was put down after a few days by a general strike called by the government. The image suggests the Kapp Putsch was a serious challenge for the Weimar government because the soldiers were well armed and unopposed. This is a useful source because it is a photograph which gives us a clear idea of what was actually happening in that place in Berlin. It was made for a newspaper which is useful because it gives us an idea of what was important in the news that week. However, it should be borne in mind that we don't know whether the newspaper was trying to show the Kapp Putsch in a positive or negative light because the country was divided by left and right politics in 1920. If they are trying to show it as a positive, they may have chosen a photo which made the Putsch less threatening.

Source C is also very useful because it is a personal account of the effect of hyperinflation on ordinary people in 1923. In the account the lady describes how goods were rising in value so quickly that money had to be spent immediately. She also describes how people lost their savings and describes the frustration of ordinary people and how they lost trust in the government. This is useful because it agrees with my own knowledge. In 1923 the Germany economy collapsed and hyperinflation set in. The cost of a loaf of bread rose from 1 mark in 1919 to 200,000 million marks by the end of 1923. The source mentions the speed of the increase in prices, this is similar to one example from the time when a man could not afford a coffee because it had risen in price in the time it took him to drink it. The source also mentions people losing their savings and I know that this was a big source of anger against the Weimar Republic because even after Stresemann had fixed the economy people never got their savings back. It also shows that the "people didn't trust the government anymore" which was reflected in the uprisings and protests in 1923. This shows that hyperinflation was a serious challenge for the Weimar Republic This is a very useful source because the woman was living in Germany at the time of hyperinflation, so it's a first-hand account. It is also useful because it's from an interview in 1974 which means the woman remembered the events clearly. However, we should be careful because this is only one person's memory from a long time ago and may not represent everyone's experience because some people for example farmers profited from the high food prices.