

Mao's China

c.1930–1976 Answers

1. a)
 - Lots of criticism of the Communist Party so stopped early.
 - Many critics of the regime lost their jobs and were sent to be re-educated.
 - People who did not like the Communist Party learnt not to criticise it in public.
- b)
 - Improvement in basic education with peasants' literacy encouraged with literacy check points on the way to market.
 - Basic health care provided free with an emphasis on prevention and the cleaning of urban areas.
 - Women given more rights such as the right to divorce and nurseries so they could return to work.
- c) The dictatorship of the Communist Party did improve China's economy eventually and turned it into a world power but with great loss of life and a loss of individual freedoms.

The Communist Party introduced the Five-Year Plans, which did much to improve the Chinese economy, and they initiated social changes like free basic health care, which helped the Chinese population. However, the Hundred Flowers Campaign proved that many people within China were unhappy with the Communist Party but Mao did not allow this criticism to continue for long. Opponents of the Communist Party were subjected to re-education and propaganda was used to try and convince the Chinese people that the Communist Party was good.

In the 1960s, Mao felt that the Communist Party was not helping the people in the way that it should and so launched the Cultural Revolution. This involved the Red Guard, young people inspired by Mao, sweeping through the country and destroying anything that was seen as anti-Communist. Many people lost their lives and many more were made to suffer as factories were destroyed or technology that was seen as anti-Communist was brutally smashed. The Cultural Revolution did great damage to the Chinese economy and society.

Therefore, while it can be argued that the dictatorship of the Communist Party improved some aspects of China, the cost in human lives and suffering was very great meaning that overall it cannot be said to have helped.