

General Certificate of Education
January 2007
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
Unit 2 Parties and Pressure Groups

GOV2

Thursday 11 January 2007 1.30 pm to 2.30 pm

For this paper you must have:

- an 8-page answer book.

Time allowed: 1 hour

Instructions

- Use blue or black ink or ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The *Examining Body* for this paper is AQA. The *Paper Reference* is GOV2.
- Answer **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.
In Section A, answer **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.
In Section B, answer **either** Question 3 **or** Question 4.
- Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 60.
- The marks for part questions are shown in brackets.
- You will be marked on your ability to use good English, to organise information clearly and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Advice

- You are advised to read through the examination paper before you attempt the questions.
- You are advised to spend the same amount of time on each question.

Answer **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.

SECTION A

Answer **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.

Each question carries 30 marks.

EITHER

- 1 Study the extract below and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

Changing Party Conferences

In the past, Labour Party conferences involved furious rows and *party splits*. By contrast, Conservative conferences were carefully stage-managed and subservient to the leadership. More recently there has been some reversal of party roles. Labour conferences have become more stage-managed and tame, while Conservative conferences have sometimes involved serious embarrassment for the party leadership. For instance, Ann Widdecombe, then a shadow Home Office minister, secured a rapturous reception from the party faithful for her hard line on drugs during the 2000 Conservative conference. This alarmed her Shadow Cabinet colleagues who publicly distanced themselves from her views, leading to damaging media stories of party splits that were once more common in the Labour Party.

Source: adapted from B COXALL *et al*, *Contemporary British Politics*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003

- (a) Explain the term *party splits* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) ‘Party conferences of the major parties now seem to be more about public relations than policy.’ Discuss. (22 marks)

OR

- 2 Study the extract below and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

Political Parties: Programmes and Policies

A problem for the parties is that they serve two very different ‘markets’. Pleasing *constituency party members* may not involve policies that appeal to ordinary voters. Labour Party members in the 1980s wanted left-wing policies, including more nationalisation and Britain giving up nuclear weapons, which the electorate rejected. The problem has been even worse for the Conservatives. Its existing grassroots membership is elderly, over-whelmingly white and middle class. The policies that appeal to them include zero tolerance on drugs, a hard line on asylum seekers and support for ‘family values’. Such policies alienate some of the new target voters the party is trying to attract, including ethnic minorities, unconventional families, gays and young people generally.

Source: adapted from B COXALL *et al*, *Contemporary British Politics*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003

- (a) Explain the term *constituency party members* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) ‘It is becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish between the policy programmes of the main parliamentary parties.’ Discuss. (22 marks)

Turn over for the next section

Turn over ►

SECTION B

Answer **either** Question 3 **or** Question 4.

Each question carries 30 marks.

EITHER

3 Study the extract below and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

Pressure Group Resources

Each pressure group has certain features which affect the methods it may use. The nature of the group's organisation – whether it has a large and permanent bureaucracy, the type of leadership the group enjoys, and the degree of internal democracy – influences the ways in which a group operates. Membership is very important; here one should examine the degree of commitment of members, the size of membership in relation to the *potential membership*, and the type of members in regard to such factors as class, age and gender. Small elite groups can be more effective than much larger groups whose members lack money, organisational skills and political contacts. Finally, the wealth of the group has an important bearing on its methods; groups such as unions that can collect membership fees from their own members have a real advantage over more voluntary groups.

Source: adapted from A BALL & B PETERS, *Modern Politics and Government*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005

- (a) Explain the term *potential membership* as used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) To what extent do pressure groups hinder or help the democratic process? (22 marks)

OR

- 4 Study the passage below and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

Animal Rights Protests

Many pressure groups are motivated by *self-interest*. Animal rights activists, in contrast, are altruistic (not self-interested). They see animals as having interests just as human beings do. This is because of the capacity of animals to experience pain and pleasure.

A farm in Staffordshire which bred guinea pigs for medical research purposes closed in 2005 following pressure from animal rights protestors. Direct action against the family included desecration of a relative's grave, damage to hundreds of local properties and disruption of power supplies.

Many campaigns have been directed against Huntingdon Life Sciences, a company that tests the safety of products on animals. The company argues that it performs laboratory tests to the strictest scientific standards and is committed to the highest level of animal welfare. However, protest groups such as SHAC (Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty) and BUAV (British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection) have led vigorous protests aimed at closing the company.

- (a) Explain the term *self-interest* as used in the passage. (8 marks)
- (b) 'The politics of conventional pressure groups involves compromise; the politics of direct action frequently does not.' Discuss. (22 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS

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