

General Certificate of Education
June 2007
Advanced Level Examination



GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
Unit 7 Ideas in Contemporary British Politics

GOV7

Friday 22 June 2007 9.00 am to 10.30 am

For this paper you must have:

- an 8-page answer book.

Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes

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 GOV7.
- Answer **Question 1** and **one** other question.
- 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 80.
- The marks for questions (or part questions) are shown in brackets.
- You will be marked on your ability to use good English, to organise relevant 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 **Question 1** and **one** other question.

Each question carries 40 marks.

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

The Labour Party and Socialism

The history of parliamentary socialism throughout the twentieth century was characterised by ‘revisionism’; that is, a shift from left to right away from the traditional principles of socialism, namely, collectivism, egalitarianism and social justice.

In the UK in the first half of the twentieth century, traditional ‘democratic socialism’ was the dominant school of thought within the British Labour Party. In the post-war era of *consensus politics*, the more moderate philosophy of social democracy predominated; and since the 1990s New Labour has sought to redefine the political landscape and to deny the left versus right model altogether.

By the mid 1990s, after almost twenty years in opposition, the Labour Party decided to ‘modernise’ in response to declining working class numbers, economic globalisation, the collapse of communism and the discrediting of ‘old fashioned’ socialist ideas by a Conservative Government whose policies had been significantly influenced by the New Right. A ‘new’ Labour was born, the most symbolic turning point being the abandonment in 1995 of the party’s historical commitment to Clause IV. The term ‘Third Way’ was also increasingly used in the late 1990s to describe a pragmatic repositioning somewhere between free market capitalism and state socialism. It involved concepts such as ‘stakeholding’ and ‘social inclusion’ and sought to involve and provide wider opportunities for more people, including the disadvantaged, within a capitalist economy.

Supporters of this Blairite agenda assert that the goals of New Labour – community, co-operation and fraternity – remain the same as those of Old Labour, but the means of achieving these aims is via an enterprise economy.

Source: adapted from M GRANT, ‘Is the Labour Party still a socialist party?’, *Politics Review*, Philip Allan Updates, September 2005

- (a) Explain the term *consensus politics* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) Using the extract and your own knowledge, explain why and how Labour revised Clause IV in 1995. (12 marks)
- (c) To what extent does the contemporary Labour Party owe more to the philosophy of social democracy than it does to democratic socialism? (20 marks)

Answer **either** Question 2 **or** Question 3 **or** Question 4.

- 2 To what extent are the Liberal Democrats still committed to liberalism? *(40 marks)*
- 3 ‘The Conservative Party has always preferred pragmatism to political principles.’ Discuss. *(40 marks)*
- 4 Discuss the extent to which the major parties have ‘hijacked’ green ideas. *(40 marks)*

END OF QUESTIONS

There are no questions printed on this page