

General Certificate of Education
June 2008
Advanced Level Examination



GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
**Unit 6 The Politics of Northern Ireland, Scotland
and Wales**

GOV6

Wednesday 18 June 2008 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 black ink or black 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 GOV6.
- 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 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.

Devolution for Scotland

Devolution is widely seen as democratic. This is how Donald Dewar, then Secretary of State for Scotland, and soon to become *Scotland's First Minister*, justified Labour's proposals for the establishment of the Scottish Parliament. The new system, he claimed, would 'strengthen democratic control' and 'make government more accountable'. Moreover, it would have been politically unrealistic to deny recognition to the Scots, whose wish for a change in their constitutional status had been so clearly stated in the General Elections of 1987 to 1997. Many Scots had long been dissatisfied with Westminster rule owing to the higher than average levels of unemployment and industrial decline. As a result of the passage of the Scotland Act 1998, a Scottish Parliament met in Edinburgh in May 1999 for the first time since the Act of Union was signed in 1707.

Nevertheless, opponents see devolution as fraught with danger. They often claim that, although there are many sources of unity in the United Kingdom, there is a danger that the state will splinter apart once parts of the whole are allowed to enjoy legislative devolution and a measure of self-government. Such fears were expressed by the Conservatives, who opposed New Labour's proposals in the 1997 General Election and subsequent referendum. They suggested that there was no real necessity for change and feared the ultimate break-up of the UK if parts were allowed to go their separate ways. They also feared that Scottish nationalists would not be satisfied with devolution but would demand full independence. Although the Scottish National Party (SNP) campaigned for devolution in the run-up to the 1997 referendum, it wanted more than it obtained. Indeed the SNP does its best to expose the flaws in devolution as introduced, in the hope that this will fuel pressure for separatism.

Source: adapted from D WATTS, *British Government and Politics: A Comparative Guide*, Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2006

- (a) Explain the term *Scotland's First Minister* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) Using the extract and your own knowledge, explain how the establishment of a Scottish Parliament was expected to 'make government more accountable'. (12 marks)
- (c) 'The devolution legacy of the Blair Government has been to make Scottish independence more, rather than less, likely.' Discuss. (20 marks)

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

- 2 ‘Welsh nationalism has no real significance in Welsh politics.’ Discuss. (40 marks)
- 3 Consider why the Northern Ireland ‘problem’ has proved so difficult to resolve for so long. (40 marks)
- 4 ‘Labour is no longer the dominant party in Scottish and Welsh politics.’ Discuss. (40 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS

There are no questions printed on this page

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