

General Certificate of Education
June 2007
Advanced Level Examination



HISTORY
Unit 6W

HS6F

Alternative F: The End of the Soviet Union, c1968–1991

Friday 22 June 2007 9.00 am to 10.30 am

For this paper you must have:

- a 12-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 HS6F.
- Answer **all** questions.
- In answering the questions you must use your own knowledge and understanding of the period.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 40.
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- You will be marked on your ability to use good English, to organise information clearly and coherently and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Advice

- You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on part (c).

Answer **all** questions.

- 1 Study the following source material and then answer the questions which follow.

Source A The conspirators of August 1991 were without charisma and political sense. They had no political programme beyond a desire for the old Soviet order. Their press conference showed them as helpless, drunken and fearful men. The coup failed not because it met strong opposition, but because the

5 country was descending into anarchy and no political movement was able to marshal sufficient force. The weak struggled against the weaker. People feared that Gorbachev was becoming a dictator, but in reality the country was suffering from the absence of all authority. Gorbachev's government could not solve the ever worsening problem of the economy, the decay of

10 political institutions, and the forces of nationalism in this multinational union.

Adapted from P KENEZ, *A History of the Soviet Union from the Beginning to the End*, 1999

Source B

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Source C Gorbachev's policies were defective. Perestroika was built on false foundations. The Soviet Union was in a systematic decline when he took over, but he was unaware of this. The reforms accelerated decline. Removing the party from economic management was catastrophic – it had

5 been the glue keeping the whole system together. No alternative system was set up to replace it. Under Gorbachev, the Soviet Union hovered between the old and the new, between the past and the future.

Adapted from M McCAULEY, *Gorbachev*, 1998

- (a) Use **Source A** and your own knowledge.

Assess the validity of the view in **Source A** about the reasons for the failure of the August 1991 coup. *(10 marks)*

- (b) Use **Source B** and your own knowledge.

How useful is **Source B** as evidence of the motives of the leaders of the coup? *(10 marks)*

- (c) Use **Sources A, B and C** and your own knowledge.

‘The failed coup only accelerated the inevitable process of the disintegration of the Soviet Union.’

How valid is this interpretation of Soviet instability since the death of Brezhnev in 1982? *(20 marks)*

END OF QUESTIONS

There are no questions printed on this page

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