



**GCE AS/A Level**

2100U60-1 – **NEW AS**



**HISTORY – Unit 2**

**DEPTH STUDY 6**

**France in Revolution c. 1774-1815**

**Part 1: France: The causes and course of revolution  
c. 1774-1792**

P.M. WEDNESDAY, 25 May 2016

1 hour 45 minutes

### **ADDITIONAL MATERIALS**

In addition to this examination paper, you will need a 12 page answer book.

### **INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

Use black ink or black ball-point pen.

Answer **both** questions.

### **INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES**

The number of marks is given in square brackets at the end of each question.

You are advised to spend around 50 minutes on answering each question.

The sources and extracts used in this unit may have been amended or adapted from the stated published work in order to make the wording more accessible.

## UNIT 2

## DEPTH STUDY 6

## France in Revolution c. 1774-1815

## Part 1: France: The causes and course of revolution c. 1774-1792

Answer **both** questions.

## QUESTION 1

Study the sources below and answer the question that follows.

## Source A

During the Night of the 4<sup>th</sup> August, a proclamation was read out to end the looting and burning of chateaux, and to order the payment of taxes, rents and dues. It stimulated an impressive debate and a scene which was unforgettable. It was noted that the refusal to pay dues and the burning of deeds derived from the hatred of the feudal regime and the burdens it imposed on country people. It was proposed to abolish feudalism.

Never before had so many bodies and individuals made such sacrifices at one time and in such generous terms and with such unanimity. We may view this moment as the dawn of a new revolution, when all the burdens weighing on the people were abolished and France was truly reborn. The feudal system which had oppressed the people for centuries was demolished at a stroke. More was achieved for the people in a few hours than the wisest and most enlightened nations had done in centuries.

[Jean Sylvain Bailly, a leading deputy at the National Assembly, writing in a private letter to a friend (9<sup>th</sup> August 1789)]

## Source B

Complaints are made openly against the decrees which require the payment of three *livres* in direct taxation to be an active citizen, as well as against many other decrees which injure or destroy the rights of the people. Is it lawful for the National Assembly to diminish the rights of people or take them away from a particular class to give them to another? Is it lawful to limit to wealthy people the right which all citizens have of electing their representatives? Can we allow the Assembly to snatch from the people the fruits of their victory?

You cannot consider the work of the National Assembly without your blood boiling at the sight of so many decrees coming from it which deviate from the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen and which challenge the freedoms of the people and which are designed to return absolute power to the monarch. These evil actions must arouse alarm in every mind and destroy forever all claims to our confidence. Yes, the worst has happened. The National Assembly will do no more for the happiness of the people and no more for the triumph of liberty.

[Jean Paul Marat, a leading Jacobin, in a speech delivered to the National Assembly (July 1790)]

**Source C**

They say that under the Constitution of 1791, Louis is still a King: but he is not. He no longer has royal authority because he is effectively kept a prisoner, suspended from his functions. The legislature will have all the state revenues at its disposal. It will be able to determine the number, state of advancement and position of troops on land and at sea. It will command the administration using unsanctioned constitutional police. By distributing rewards and honours it will buy influence; it will dictate negotiations for war and peace and use the armed forces for internal policy where necessary. It will be called by itself and cannot be dissolved. It will thus have the same power as the present Assembly and when it announces that it is the constitutional body, what force or authority will stop it? The King will have no power. What is the King's position? He is consenting to the loss of the monarchy. He is allowing the destruction of religion. He is abandoning the nobility.

[King Louis XVI, writing a private memorandum to some of his closest supporters criticising the Constitution of 1791 (November 1791)]

With reference to the sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying the development of the French Revolution, 1789-1791.

[30]

## QUESTION 2

Study the extracts below and answer the question that follows.

### Interpretation 1

The French Revolution was basically a power struggle between the monarchy and the nobility in defence of their respective rights and privileges. This struggle opened the floodgates and set in motion a conflict which would destroy both. France in the late 1780s was nearly bankrupt. Proposals were put forward by Calonne to fill this gap by increasing taxation. The drop in the income of the mass of the population – who already bore the burden of taxation – meant that little more could be raised from them. Calonne proposed to tax the nobles. They came into collision not just with Calonne but with his master Louis XVI. This collision was the real cause of the Revolution. Feeling the ground trembling beneath their feet, one section of the ruling classes urged reforms in order to prevent revolution from below. Another section, clinging on to the privileges of the *ancien regime*, urged further repression and greater taxation of the Third Estate. The pressure mounted.

[Peter Taaffe, a Marxist historian, writing in a general history, *The Masses Arise: The Great French Revolution 1789-1815* (1989)]

### Interpretation 2

Whilst the actual outbreak of the Revolution is linked to a combination of particular events, its fundamental causes were certainly deep-rooted in the weak structure of the *ancien regime* and its political system. The calling of the Assembly of Notables, and the preparations for the meeting of the Estates-General in 1789, revived and reinforced the complex social tensions concerning the management of property and access to political power and focused the discontent of the bourgeoisie, urban workers and the peasants on the aristocracy. The government's failure to cope successfully with the mounting debts had reduced its prestige while at the same time emphasising its ineffectiveness. This had the effect of increasing interest in proposals for constitutional reform. Support for the government from many of its traditional supporters declined, and with it, its capacity for either reform or repression. The mobilisation of opposition gathered apace culminating in the revolutionary overthrow of the *ancien regime*.

[Roger Price, a British academic historian specialising in French history, writing in a general history of France, *A Concise History of France* (1989)]

Historians have made different interpretations about the causes of the French Revolution. Analyse, evaluate and use the two extracts above and your understanding of the historical debate to answer the following question:

How valid is the view that the weaknesses of the *ancien regime* were mainly responsible for causing the French Revolution? [30]

**END OF PAPER**