

General Certificate of Education
June 2005
Advanced Level Examination



GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
Unit 7 Ideas in Contemporary British Politics

GOV7

Tuesday 28 June 2005 Morning Session

In addition to this paper you will require:
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.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- Mark allocations are shown in brackets.
- You will be assessed on your ability to use an appropriate form and style of writing, to organise relevant information clearly and coherently, and to use specialist vocabulary, where appropriate. The degree of legibility of your handwriting and the level of accuracy of your spelling, punctuation and grammar will also be taken into account.

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 passage below and answer parts (a) to (c) which follow.

Contemporary Liberal Democratic Beliefs

In the Spring of 2004, a Daily Telegraph article claimed that the Liberal Democratic Party lacked a clear identity, “one minute Lib, the next Dem, sometimes neither; they repeatedly espouse mutually inconsistent philosophies”.

Yet the Liberal Democrats clearly do possess a number of core beliefs. The party places a strong emphasis on individual and minority rights. It is more radical than New Labour on constitutional reform and is a serious champion of local democracy and the decentralisation of power. It is in favour of a locally-raised income tax as an alternative to the property-based council tax system and it has long advocated the need for additional spending on education with the extra money to be raised through an increase in general taxation and a higher rate of tax for higher earners.

The party is also far ‘greener’ on environmental issues than either Labour or the Conservatives. It does nevertheless share many social policy beliefs with New Labour, such as its commitment to a more inclusive society where citizens possess a clear sense of their civic and individual responsibilities; it is also a strong advocate of the *mixed economy*.

At times, however, the Liberal Democrats do send out confusing messages. In its 2004 Spring Conference, the party voted, on the one hand, to ban smoking in public places and, on the other, to reduce the legal age for viewing pornography to 16, inviting critics to claim that the party could not really decide whether it was socially authoritarian or socially liberal.

History reveals that liberalism in Britain has never been a totally coherent political philosophy. A hundred or so years ago, the Liberal Party was clearly divided over whether it was committed to the classical variant of liberalism or to the New Progressive beliefs associated with the likes of Lloyd George. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that the radicals in the Liberal Democratic Party take a more libertarian line on moral and social issues than their more traditional colleagues.

- (a) Using the passage, explain the term *mixed economy*. (8 marks)
- (b) Using the passage and your own knowledge, discuss why and how liberalism is strongly associated with the decentralisation of power. (12 marks)
- (c) To what extent do the key beliefs promoted by the Liberal Democrats represent a combination of New Labour and Liberal thinking? (20 marks)

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

- 2 'Environmentalism is not a distinctive political ideology.' Discuss. *(40 marks)*
- 3 To what extent does the contemporary Conservative Party promote traditional conservative values? *(40 marks)*
- 4 To what extent is New Labour committed to the traditional socialist goal of equality? *(40 marks)*

END OF QUESTIONS

THERE ARE NO QUESTIONS PRINTED ON THIS PAGE

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