Examiners' Report

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GCSE History 5HA02 2B

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Introduction

This year's paper seems to have been well-received by the candidates. There was no evidence to suggest that any of the questions were misunderstood or not accessible to the whole ability range. It was pleasing to see so few unfinished answers, which suggests that candidates are becoming more skilled at selecting appropriate information and presenting their arguments in a focused manner.

Overall examiners were very impressed with the standard of answers, with some excellent responses, particularly on Question 3. Comments on the individual questions are given below, but teachers may find the following list of common errors of use in preparing candidates in the future.

* 1a Candidates sometimes made inferences on Stalin, rather than the purges

* 1d A confusion over dates sometimes resulted in a discussion on the abdication of the Tsar

* 2a   There was sometimes overuse of pre-1917 material

* 2b   The New Economic Policy was not relevant to this question

* 3a   The purges were not relevant to this question

Question 1 (a)

Although some candidates chose to write about Stalin, rather than the purges, their comments could often be interpreted as relating to the purges themselves and so were rewarded at Level 3.Most candidates concentrated on the major impact of the purges (though care had to be taken not to suggest that *'they affected industrial expansion'* was an inference) and their comprehensive nature. Where support was given from the source (rather than general knowledge), full marks were awarded.

> I can learn that stalin wasted many good minds because of the purges and gulags which caused a rapid decrease in Industry. I know this because most of the people who were purged were 'scientists' and 'engineers'.
> I can also learn that stalin felt threatened by these people and that is why he purged them and he wasn't bothered what it would do to the economy. I know this because many 'politicians' were sent to gulags which left a 'huge gap in the government'.

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Examiner Comments

The example shown moves straight into an inference (*'wasted many good minds'*) and supports that inference by quoting from the source that scientists and engineers were purged. The second paragraph contains further inferences, but the marks have already been earned.

Candidates should make the inference in the first line of the response and make sure the support comes from the source, not general knowledge.

Question 1 (b)

It was pleasing to see how many candidates were familiar with the details of the Kornilov Revolt. Answers generally covered the causes of the revolt, its events and its consequences. Almost all candidates were able to see the long term consequences in as much as the revolt increased the popularity of the Bolsheviks - and armed them for future conflict with the Provisional Government.

One key feature of the kornilov revolt was the actions of Alexander Kerensky. Kerensky had been appointed leader of the latest provisional government, after two had already collapsed. He was the first leader to be part of the Duma as well as the Soviets. He appointed kornilov as the leader of the army as he was well known for his effectiveness. Kornilov began to persuade Kerensky to send out troops to bring down soviet groups. Kerensky was indecisive as he could not have loyalty from both the soviets and Duma at this point. He sent Kornilov with his army to handle the soviet uprisings.

Another key feature of the kornilov revolt was Kerensky's regret on his decision. Kerensky began to regret his decision on sending out Kornilov's army and began to backtrack, deciding he needed the Soviet's loyalty most. He armed the Red Guard (Bolshevik Army) who had been imprisoned since the July Days and ordered them to stop kornilov. Pro-soviets had already managed to peacefully stop kornilov and his army before the Red Guard arrived but

Karnilov and 7000 soldiers were stopped and Karnilov was arrested.

A final key feature of the Karnilov revolt is the Russian public's reaction. Kerensky began to present himself as saviour of a revolution and made himself seem as though he had stopped it. However, the Russian public saw the Bolsheviks as the saviour of the revolution and the Bolsheviks began to grow in popularity, eventually leading to a further failure of the provisional government.

Question 1 (c)

The terms of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk were well-known and many candidates gave impressive detail of the percentage of people, land and industry which the Bolsheviks surrendered to Germany. It was fascinating to read the different interpretations of the wider impact of the treaty. Some candidates argued that the Russian people were so angry about the concessions made that the Bolsheviks became extremely unpopular. Others believed that the First World War was so unpopular that leaving it brought immediate popularity to the Bolsheviks. Both interpretations have validity and each was rewarded.

What was not in dispute was the longer term impact of the treaty in 'saving the revolution' by allowing the Bolsheviks to focus their attention on fighting the civil war to maintain them in power. Many candidates explained this well and were rewarded in Level Three.

One effect on Russia of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in 1918 was the effect it had on Russia economically. The treaty, which was signed by Lenin, meant that Russia was withdrawing from world war one. It stated that Russia must give up 80% of its raw products - such as coal, 50% of Russia's industry, 26% of its land and people, and many other percentages on what it declared was a suitable to withdraw from the war. This, evidently, would have a major impact on the Russian economy, but Lenin declared ultimately this would be a smaller price to pay than if Russia stayed fighting in the war.

Another effect on Russia was the reaction it got from its allies in the war, and from the Russian population. Russias allies, which consisted of the USA, and Britain, and France, were angered at Russia's signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in 1918. This withdrawal meant that the German troops fighting Russia on the Eastern front would retreat, and Europe would feel the effects of Germany even harsher on the western front. This would ultimately lead to the allies joining forces with

the whites in the Russian civil war in fighting against Lenin and the Bolsheviks – the Reds. Reactions from Russia were not positive either. Even though about 20 million men Russian men had died in the effort to defeat Germany, Russians saw this signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk as defeat. Opposition groups didn't see the benefits that Lenin was trying to show Russia, and in turn may joined the whites in effort to overthrow the Reds in the Russian civil war.

In conclusion, the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk had major impact on the Russian economy. These percentages of industry and resources that Russia had to give up in order to leave world war one sparked opposition from people inside of Russia, who saw this as defeat. Also, allies in the war also turned against the Bolsheviks as they would now struggle more in the war as there was no battle on the Eastern front.

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Examiner Comments

This answer takes the 'negative' view of the wider impact of the treaty. After a paragraph explaining the economic impact, the candidate argues that the treaty angered the Allies and offended people in Russia. This led to support for the Whites in the civil war.

This argument was well-expressed and supported with contextual knowledge, resulting in a reward at the top of Level Three.

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Examiner Tip

To score at the highest level candidates need to explain the wider impact of the treaty. There were concessions made to Germany in the treaty; that is one effect. But what were the effects of those concessions?

Question 1 (d)

This question highlighted the importance of careful reading of the question and a thorough knowledge of the key dates in the specification. Some candidates took the 'change of government in Russia in October 1917' as a reference to the overthrow of Tsar. Unfortunately, examiners could not reward such responses.

In general, however, the topic was obviously one with which candidates were familiar. Answers usually focused on two areas - the weakness of the Provisional Government and the strength of the Bolsheviks. Some candidates made reference to the Kornilov Revolt which was a valid approach as long as the material presented was related to the question.

Some candidates knew the details well, but failed to take the final step of explaining why the reason they were explaining actually brought about the change in government. To argue that *'there was a change of government because the Provisional Government had weaknesses such as...',* was rewarded at Level Two. Where the answer went on to explain how this created unpopularity and lack of support, Level Three was given.

> The provisional government were a beacon of hope after the Tsar had fallen and people expected change but this didn't come. As the provisional government weren't elected they didn't have the power they needed to redistribute land to peasants, and the; They didn't leave the war because they didn't want to upset their war allies, this meant many Russians carried on dying in the war. People weren't happy with this and the provisional government lost support

> The main reason for change were the strength support and promises of the Bolshevik party but they wouldn't have gained this support without the failures of the provisional government.

This answer begins by suggesting that the weakness of the Provisional Government was a reason for the October revolution. The paragraph shown gives some explanation of that argument and the final sentences makes a reference (albeit, a weak one) to how the explained events brought about the change of government.

The answer is very much borderline Level 3 at this point, but further linking to the outcome in the remainder of the answer established the mark as firmly in Level 3.

Candidates need to remember to make sure that their explanation clearly links the explained reason to the outcome

In this case, failing to leave the war made the Provisional Government unpopular. But why did that lead to its downfall?

Question 2 (a)

Any question inviting discussion of the reasons for the fall of Tsar seems to trigger a need in candidates to explore in depth the long-term causes of the February Revolution. Such an approach was in evidence in many of the responses to this question. What examiners were looking for was a suggestion that at the beginning of 1917 there was still significant support for the Tsarist regime (though also considerable and growing opposition) but that events at Front, opposition agitation and continued poor government finally led to a hardening of discontent which resulted in the abdication of the Tsar. Such an approach was common, and resulted in high scoring. However, some candidates felt the need to describe in depth such events as the Russo-Japanese War and Bloody Sunday. Whilst some knowledge of the background to the opposition to the Tsar is useful in establishing the context of growing opposition, candidates must ensure they are aware that the specification starts in 1917 and events before then are relevant only in helping understand the position at the beginning of the year.

> The attitudes of many Russian people changed towards the Tsar in the early 1917's because of many reasons. One of them was he put himself in charge of the army fighting in world war one. They were not doing well so he got blamed. This was one of the main reasons why he became less popular. Another reasons was because of his wife, who was German, she had to make decisions in Petrograd because he was out fighting. So he also got blamed for alot of the decisions she made.

there were strikes in Petrograd and the police couldn't control them. So the Tsar told the army the strikes must be put down by force. 100's were shot, this made him even more unpopular. So the army mutinied and he was overthrown and later arrested.

Question 2 (b)

This question invited candidates to explain how Bolshevik rule was different under the Bolsheviks from what had gone before. Although the question was considerably less popular than 2A, those candidates who did tackle it generally knew the detail of the Bolshevik decrees well and could write in depth on War Communism. Some candidates remained in Level 2 by providing only detail, but others scored in Level 3 for an analysis of the extent to which these measures actually brought greater freedom. Most answers concluded that War Communism was as repressive as Tsarist rule. It was disappointing to see so many accounts of the impact of the New Economic Policy, which was not part of the chronological span addressed in the question.

Question 3 (a)

This question was the least popular of the two offered. However, it seemed to provide few problems for those who did attempt it. Details of Stalin's alleged tricking of Trotsky with regard to Lenin's funeral were common, as were discussions on how Stalin used his position to build relations with leading party members and how he outmanoeuvred them to bring about their dismissal. Answers were less secure on the cult of Lenin, with detail sometimes relating to Stalin's promotion of his own position in the 1930s. A similar error was seen in relation to the removal of opponents. Here there was sometimes discussion of show trials and purges. Certainly these showed how Stalin controlled opposition, but not within the chronological period of the question set.

The mistakes of Stalin's rivals play a fundamental role in him securing power. His main opponent in these years was Trotsky, an old Bolshevik and revolutionary. It was clear to Stalin that something must be done about the competition Trotsky posed, but Trotsky eventually created his own unpopularity. Trotsky endorsed the idea of a world revolution, which many russians did not support, and was also very arrogant, meaning people began to dislike him. He made a fundamental mistake not showing up to Lenin's

funeral, as it allowed many people to recognise Stalin's position as chief mourner and believed his close relationship with Lenin. There is some debate about whether Stalin tricked Trotsky, but either way it was his own mistakes that made Stalin prime candidate for the succession of Lenin.

Question 3 (b)

This was a popular and generally well-answered question. There was good knowledge on the Five Year Plans, collectivisation and the Stakhanovites, though the role of Gosplan was less well-known. Best answers were able to explain how each of the factors contributed to the Soviet Union's economic development. There were persuasive responses explaining how collectivisation brought food for the workers and foreign currency, Gosplan co-ordinated the policies, the Five Year Plans set targets and the Stakhanovites encouraged the workers. There was also some impressive argument around the limitations in the impact of each factor, though perhaps too much detail on peasant opposition to collectivisation.

> In conclusion the five year plans were more important than collectivisation, Gosplan and the Stakhanovites. The produced the most industrial output and were the main reason for the develop-ment of the Soviet Economy. They were also very important because they prepared the Soviet Union for WWII. They were more important than collectivisation because at times this hindered the Soviet economy and they were more important that Gosplan and Stakhanovites because these were only small parts of the big five year plans.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Make sure you are aware of the different skills tested in each question (eg Question 1d is always about causation).

- When making an inference, always support it from the source, not your knowledge.

- When considering effects (Question1c) or change (Question 2) always look for the wider implications. What did the surface changes cause to happen on a more general scale?

- Always take note of the dates given in a question (eg Question 3b). They are there for a reason.

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