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FOREWORD

This booklet contains reports written by Examiners on the work of candidates in certain papers. **Its contents are primarily for the information of the subject teachers concerned.**

HISTORY (CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICA)

GCE Ordinary Level

Paper 2160/01

Paper 1

General comments

The entry was very low this session. Standards in some Centres were high, with a good proportion of excellent answers. Other scripts were varied and uneven, with indications of poorly chosen topics and an unsatisfactory distribution of time between the required three answers. (Two or three candidates answered only two or two and a bit questions.)

Answers were generally well-expressed in clear English, with good grammar and a fluent and well-organised arrangement of relevant material. However, the Examiner was a little surprised that certain popular topics (for example, those in **Questions 11, 13 and 14**) were barely known to some entrants.

Teachers in the Centres concerned are to be congratulated for preparing candidates so carefully and successfully.

Comments on specific questions

In **Section A** of the paper, few candidates responded to the topics offered; a superior answer was provided to **Question 3** on Buganda. Detailed material was accurate and relevant to the three main parts of the question.

In **Section B** all the topics were attempted with half the candidates responding to **Question 7** and nearly as many to **Question 11**.

Question 7

With one exception, all the answers were satisfactory or superior (none was distinguished). The routes of the migrations seemed more difficult than the more common question on causes. (One or two scripts were unfortunately focused only on 'causes' and could score very little.) New activities were well-described and covered the expected agricultural, cultural and social innovations.

Question 8

Few answers, hardly any of them substantial, were offered. They were limited, vague and disappointingly general in character. Perhaps inclusion of the phrase 'new technology' would have triggered a better response. (One superior script discussed this phrase.)

Question 9

A handful of candidates attempted this question but with very limited success. The answers were confused and lacked knowledge; the three headings in the second sentence of the question did not seem to help, though one script did mention 'Prazos'.

Question 10

Few answers were seen on this outstanding leader. One offered sound detail on both his career and his reforms and scored well.

Question 11

Half of the candidates choosing this well-established topic did very well (one near-maximum score was awarded), with excellent detail, clear provision of material and a valid opinion on the second part of the question: both 'beneficial' and 'harmful', as might be expected. Detail on the journeys was full but candidates who wrote four or more pages on the travels undermined their ability adequately to answer the other questions from the paper. Some essays confused the first two journeys and more than one script hopped erratically between the centuries, for example, 1652, 1852 and 1952.

Question 12

Few attempted this, but there was one detailed response to all aspects of this topic, from the earliest nationalist movements to the role of the 'front-line' and other external states.

In **Section C** of the paper nearly all the candidates attempted **Question 13** and many offered **Question 14** as well. No one answered **Question 17** and few candidates wrote on the other four questions.

Question 13

Nearly half of those who offered this very popular question scored highly, including a totally comprehensive essay which gained the maximum mark. Well done! (Others were very close to it.) Detail was excellent and well-organised, though some candidates wasted time on needless material (for example, physical attributes), or confused the two groups in various ways. Several essays wandered into the post-1652 era, and bought in the Dutch or even the English. The best answers concentrated on the differences (and similarities), as asked and were well-rewarded for the intelligence of their efforts.

Question 14

This topic produced a large response, which differed from **Question 13** in that the essays differed considerably in quality. A handful could be classed as 'superior' but others were worth only a few marks, with two unfortunate zeros. The main problem was a lack of organisation in answering, despite the three named parts of the question structure, as the wording clearly suggested. Answers dodged about here and there, with many imprecise statements. In contrast to the very good work seen in **Question 13**, this poor response was a surprise and a disappointment to the Examiners.

Question 15

Responses included one of a satisfactory comparative nature which concluded that Mswati made the greater contribution to nation-building, as most would agree.

Question 16

Few answers were seen.

Question 18

Few answers were seen.

Question 19

Responses included a superior answer which successfully covered most years of the historical account and recognised the request for discussion of South African influence on Namibia.

Paper 2160/02

Paper 2

General comments

The standard of English remains high and few candidates appeared to have any problem in expressing their ideas clearly and effectively.

This year the problem of time management has emerged again. A significant proportion of candidates clearly rushed to complete the final question. This is a matter that practice in examination technique can eliminate and teachers could assist candidates by giving attention to this matter.

Rubric infringement - a matter that has been commented upon in previous years - was virtually absent. This is a welcome development as it means that candidates are able to maximise their score.

Once again it is pleasing to report that there was little evidence of unprepared candidates being entered for the examination. This continuing maturity amongst those who manage Centres is to be applauded.

For teachers to spend time with candidates on examination skills is time well and wisely spent. An ability to enter an examination confident that the skills of presentation have been mastered, will give candidates a greater potential to score high marks.

Overall, the paper continues to give candidates the opportunity to gain the maximum marks commensurate with their historical knowledge.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

The Treaty of Frankfurt posed little problem to candidates, the majority of whom were familiar with its main terms. The actions taken by Bismarck to ensure French isolation, were equally familiar to candidates, though a significant minority continued to trace Franco-German relations beyond the Bismarck era. A popular question, usually well done.

Question 2

Not a popular question. Candidates were either well informed and scored high marks, or used this as a weak third question to attempt. There was a greater appreciation of the events prior to the abdication of the Tsar in 1917, than the events leading to the 1905 Revolution.

Question 3

A popular question that allowed candidates to write fully on the causes of the First World War. Many candidates, however, failed to appreciate the part of the Balkan Wars in 1912 and 1913 in raising tension, and very few candidates linked the Balkan Wars to the assassination of the Archduke. A few candidates focused almost exclusively on the second part of the question and thus limited the marks that they could gain.

Question 4

Another popular question. Few candidates defined trench warfare well, and especially the fact that it destroyed mobility, upon which the whole German strategy was dependent. Some very good responses were seen to the part of the question dealing with the defeat of the Central Powers. Similarly, the objections of Germany to the Versailles Treaty were well known and clearly expressed.

Question 5

The most popular parts of this "gobbit" question were (a), (b) and (d). A few candidates attempted (c) and a very few candidates selected options (e), (f) and (g). This clearly reflects an ongoing interest in and knowledge of, Mussolini's Italy.

Question 6

Few candidates attempted this question. However, for those that did make the effort it was a straightforward and rewarding question. Stalin is clearly now less popular with candidates than Mussolini.

Question 7

Disappointingly few candidates attempted this question. Those candidates who did attempt the question were very much stronger on the first and final sections of the question than the middle section. There were some very knowledgeable answers on the actions taken to overcome the Depression, distinguishing between the approaches of Hoover and Roosevelt and dealing with a wide range of the agencies set up by Roosevelt.

Question 8

No answers were seen to this question.

Question 9

There were a small number of high quality answers to this question, though the results of the war in Korea were seen as being very limited. No candidates commented upon the significance of the war in terms of the effectiveness of the UN.

Question 10

This was a popular question. Candidates continue to be confused between the functions of the Security Council and the General Assembly, but for those with clear and accurate knowledge this was a high scoring question. A few candidates quoted Korea as a successful UN action, but this was disallowed as the question specifically asked for actions after 1954.

Question 11

Only a very few candidates attempted this question and confined their attention to options (a), (b), (c) and (d). The more colourful characters of Khrushchev and Gorbachev were better known than Yeltsin and Brezhnev.

Question 12

The period of Chinese history following the death of Mao is clearly less well known and less popular than the preceding 27 years of Mao's rule. There were only a few, rather weak answers to this question, and very poor knowledge of the position of Hong Kong.

Question 13

Cuba under Fidel Castro was a popular choice, even though knowledge of his rule in Cuba was rather sketchy, focusing mainly on foreign policy at the Bay of Pigs and the Missile Crisis. No answers were seen on Chile and the war in the Falkland Islands.

Question 14

No answers were seen to this question.

Question 15

Whilst a good number of the candidates answering this question were well informed concerning the creation of India and Pakistan as separate states, very few had more than a passing knowledge of the creation of Bangladesh in 1971.

Question 16

No answers were seen to this question.

Question 17

The focus of the few answers to this question was on Angola and answers were often based on rather limited information. The problems of newly independent states were seen in very general terms, sometimes, it appeared, derived from personal experience.

Question 18

There were some well thought out answers to the options on the depletion of natural resources and pollution. A few candidates wrote about global warming, but no-one ventured to discuss genetic modification of crops. This question also attracted the weaker candidates seeking a third question that did not require them to have specific historical knowledge.