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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 (WORLD AFFAIRS SINCE 1919)

GCE Ordinary Level

<p>Paper 2158/01</p>

<p>Paper 1</p>

General comments

The standard of work varied markedly. At a number of Centres there was evidence of soundly held knowledge over a wide range of twentieth-century history and also an ability to deploy that knowledge according to the specific demands of the questions; answers from such candidates were informed and focused. But at other Centres the standard was often extremely weak. One of the most disturbing features of these weak scripts was the presence, in a not insignificant proportion, of work that was virtually incoherent. Such answers were often neatly written and showed an ability to use English with some accuracy in structure and spelling, yet what was written made no sense, often moving from one topic to another that had no linkage or writing out phrases from various questions in the paper. As a consequence of these two extremes, the number of scripts in the more central range, the ones that might deserve Grades C or D for example, were comparatively limited. Many however, did fit into that area, displaying answers that had basic direction and relevance, but which with firmer and fuller use of factual support might have achieved a better grade.

With the exception of the very unsatisfactory scripts alluded to above, most candidates had little difficulty in detecting the main thrust of most of the questions (with the exception of **Questions 5 and 14**) and total irrelevance among most scripts was not a major problem. Nevertheless, marks are still lost by the unwary candidate who fails to detect the specific trends in a question's demands by reason of superficial reading of it. But most of those who fell below the best grades might well have improved their prospects by a firmer concentration on factual material, ensuring both its relevance and also (so far as is possible at this level) its completeness.

On a practical matter, it is helpful both for the candidate and the Examiner to indicate the sub-question letters **(a)**, **(b)** etc. in their script and also to make clear where the last, analytical, part of the question commences. Most candidates, in practice, do this.

Comments on specific questions

There were very few attempts at **Questions 4, 10, 11, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 26, 30 and 31**.

Question 1

This was possibly the most popular question on the paper and often received good answers. There was often greater security on **(a)** and **(c)** than there was on **(b)**, where some candidates showed a lack of understanding of what a 'colonial empire' such as that held by pre-1914 Germany actually was. While knowledge was often impressive in **(a)**, a number of candidates displayed a weak geographical grasp in the mistaken identifications that they made. While the last part was often fairly argued, and few made no attempt at it, support was sometimes thin and the idea of 'how justified' was not always accurately interpreted.

Question 2

Answers to both parts often had good basic structure, but not enough factual development in the first part or analytical emphasis in the second. Many wrote excessively about pre-1936 instances of foreign policy. What was an unsatisfactory feature in a number of scripts was the virtual 'listing' of foreign policy points in the first half, with little inter-connection suggested or development allowed. The best answers in the last part balanced Nazi aggression with Western appeasement, but in almost all cases the analysis could have been taken to greater depth.

Question 3

(b) was distinctly better attempted than (a). Knowledge of the specialised agencies was often basically sound, but not as precisely developed as it might have been. In (a) many candidates appeared to have difficulties in selecting a viable example, while some neglected to observe that it was only one area of the world that was needed. Korea was the most obvious choice and many took it; Congo and Middle East figured less prominently. The last part often received well balanced though not always well developed attention to the League and the UNO, displaying useful knowledge of the structure and role of each.

Question 5

This was a relatively popular question, but one which attracted a disproportionate amount of irrelevance, by virtue of failure to detect that it was concerned with the 1960s and not with any other period of time. Many candidates embarked on this as if its start date was 1945 and too often much time and effort was wasted on pre-1960s descriptions which at best could muster only a mark or so as background introduction. Salient areas like the U2 crisis, Cuba and Berlin were missed. Inevitably with such irrelevance earlier, there was scarcely likely to be any relevance in the last part. Altogether this proved to be the most disappointingly attempted question in the paper.

Question 6

While this type of socio-economic question is often a refuge for unwary candidates – and it thus proved in this examination as well – it did attract some able and informed candidates who treated their two choices with information and with due emphasis on how each did represent a ‘problem’. Those candidates who neglected the rubric and wrote on all three did themselves little service, as only two were required and the work on those two is diluted if effort is fruitlessly put elsewhere. The last part secured some helpful observations, though they were not always very precisely linked to specific references.

Question 7

The first part permitted candidates to refer to foreign as well as domestic issues in Weimar Germany and many took that opportunity, providing well rounded histories of the years 1919-29. Others tended to produce less well balanced answers here, both in overall scope and in coverage of the specified years. The feature of ‘listing’, alluded to on **Question 2**, was apparent in some answers. It was a pity that few made reference to the constitution of Weimar, which might have formed a useful starting point in the first part. The last part was less well attempted, with rather too much generality here and a lack of precision in treating the factors that made for a threatening situation in these years.

Question 8

None of the options in the first part presented serious difficulty for most of the candidates, though in all of them there could have been rather sharper reference to events and instances. In (b) the ‘terms’ and in (c) the ‘policies’ might have been more sharply specified in most answers. There was often a failure to note the time sequence in the last part. The ‘early 1920s’ is essentially the time of Mussolini’s rise to power or his very early years of power; such features of fascist policy as developed later were not relevant here.

Question 9

There were rather few attempts at this question and those that there were held a generally rather feeble knowledge of the Spanish Civil War and the reasons for Franco’s ultimate success. Some wrote with irrelevance about the Russian Civil War.

Question 12

Few answers were seen and those that were, also were poor. Few got very much further than Wilson’s policies and failed to cover isolationism or the collapse of isolationism. Candidates who reproduced accurately all fourteen of Wilson’s Points evoked the admiration of the Examiner, but it was scarcely necessary (allusion to their general significance in a question such as this would have sufficed) and it contributed to ill-balanced answers.

Question 13

It was almost inevitable that there would be less material provided on Hoover than on Roosevelt, but the mark scheme took account of that imbalance. Nevertheless, many candidates could have provided rather more on Hoover's reactions to the Great Depression (it did, after all, cover the bulk of his presidency). Candidates often wrote well on early aspects of the New Deal in **(b)**, though some were insecure on the precise nature of its various components. The last part required a deeper penetration of the essential nature of the policies of the two presidents and rather few managed to measure this well.

Question 14

A significant number of those who attempted this modestly popular question neglected the US focus that was essential to it, and wrote generally on ills suffered by the three groups. Such answers cannot expect to score above a basic minimum. There was much to go for in each of the groups, yet few provided precise instances from US history of how they 'struggled' and how they achieved 'greater freedom'. The last part was very weakly attempted, with few penetrating government policy or the deep impact of protest in the 1960s.

Question 17

(a) and **(b)** were often quite well attempted, though the degree of factual support varied widely. Military detail and logistics were often too thin in **(a)**; **(b)** was rather better attempted, with most alluding to War Communism and the NEP in one degree or another. The last part was very poorly attempted by almost all candidates, many failing to get even to the Stalin v Trotsky divide, let alone the further ramifications of the heated political scene in the USSR in the mid-twenties.

Question 18

Though the question quite clearly indicated 'industry' as its focal theme, many candidates wrote also about agriculture and the purges. This kind of imbalance is too often to be found in answers to questions on Stalin's rule and such diversion represents wasted effort. But even within industry the degree of detail provided on the nature and on the scope of the various five-year plans was limited and often far too highly generalised. Most made at least a fair attempt at the last part, but it often lacked precision and very few developed it to suggest that there were some social and economic benefits in a period that is generally denigrated.

Question 19

Most candidates recognised the scope of **(a)**, **(b)** and **(c)**, but the degree of support was generally weak. **(b)** and **(c)** in particular spread quite broadly, yet few got beyond basic indications of movement. The last part afforded the opportunity to glance back at Stalin's rule and its effects in the USSR as well as at the particular impact of warfare on a vast scale, but responses were modest. It was generally a question that elicited disappointingly thin answers.

Question 20

Most kept to 'domestic' in the first part, but the degree of support here lacked both width and depth. The virgin lands seem well enough known as a title, but few developed the topic to show real understanding of what it meant. The seven-year plan, the regional councils and the more realistic approach to collectivisation got little if any mention. Most knew of de-Stalinisation, yet were unable to describe it with real purpose, while many over-emphasised the degree of freedom accorded by Khrushchev's policies. If anything, the second part was rather better attempted, though references to Cuba and China needed more specific focus for relevance in most cases.

Question 24

What ought to have been an orderly progress through three salient and consecutive wars too often turned into muddle between them and what happened in them. Candidates need to be assured that in a question such as this the material they present must link to the war specified by date in each of the three parts. Too often they were muddled. The Camp David agreements appeared to be known only in very general terms and lacked clear references.

Question 25

Apartheid was an imposed policy that had specific features to it in the social, political and economic experience of the inhabitants of South Africa. It was this that the first part of the question was clearly designed to elicit. But too often it did not. What was offered instead was a general condemnation of government policy on the grounds of injustice, without an indication in any clear way as to how that injustice was imposed. Generality abounded and could not score well. There is vast scope in the last part, both from within and from outside South Africa, yet few tapped into it.

Question 27

Answers to **(b)** were usually good in both descriptive detail and objective focus. **(a)** was usually recognised, but not placed in a firm enough context. Detail in **(c)** was often lacking and the answer both generally developed and inclined to merge into the last part of the question. The engagements and logistics of the Chinese Civil War needed clearer presentation. Peasant support was the bedrock of many answers to the last part, with very few looking at external factors that further assisted the Communist victory.

Question 28

Few got **(a)** basically wrong (though some considered it a US and even a USSR attack) and answers were often developed to a quite good level. Similarly with **(b)**, with some useful comment in some cases on the wider implications as well as the immediate context. **(c)** was quite well attempted, with some able to cast the net widely in describing the post-war revival. Such material was often – with purpose – revisited in the last part, though better candidates looked more widely than that to influences both within and outside Japan.

Question 29

This received rather few answers and was generally poorly done. Too many took it as a trigger to write about Gandhi, with much material that had specific pre-1935 relevance. The terms of the 1935 Act were scarcely alluded to – such would have made a sound starting point for a viable essay – and the war and post-war events were dealt with sketchily. More surprising was an absence of any knowledge on the religious friction in the late 1940s and its direct relevance to the question.