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UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

279 0080 ZB

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BSc degrees and Diplomas for Graduates in Economics, Management, Finance and the Social Sciences, the Diploma in Economics and Access Route for Students in the External Programme

Introduction to Politics

Tuesday, 9 May 2006 : 10.00am to 1.00pm

Candidates should answer **FOUR** of the following **NINE** questions: **QUESTION 1** of Section A and **THREE** questions from Section B. All questions carry equal marks.

PLEASE TURN OVER

SECTION A

Answer question 1.

1. Choose **any five** of the following **ten** statements. For each statement, write 'True' or 'False' to indicate your agreement or disagreement, and then briefly explain your answer. You will be awarded 1 mark for judging correctly whether it is true or false and up to 4 marks for your explanation.
- (1) All states have elected governments.
 - (2) Sovereignty is a key aspect of 'statehood'.
 - (3) Pluralists believe that citizens' ability to vote is seriously hindered by their lack of both competence and interest in politics.
 - (4) Mass media influence can only enhance, and never distort, democratic processes.
 - (5) Neo-pluralists believe that large corporations can, and often do, shape citizens' preferences.
 - (6) The new right see decentralisation as a way of preventing ever-increasing government spending.
 - (7) 'Polyarchy' means that interest groups find it difficult to form and gain political influence.
 - (8) The new right prefer markets over governments.
 - (9) According to Mancur Olson, the success of an interest groups depends on its being able to identify 'free riders'.
 - (10) In the Marxist view, capitalist control or influence over communication channels results in a 'dominant ideology'.

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SECTION B

Answer **three** questions from this section.

2. Has 'the state' become more, rather than less, important in contemporary politics?
3. What interests, if any, do bureaucrats represent in liberal democratic systems?
4. 'Some social interests do not mobilise, and those that do mobilise have unequal effects on public policy.' Discuss.
5. Do political parties follow what voters want, and hence all say the same thing? Or do they offer voters distinct choices?
6. 'Elite theorists insist that ordinary people's interests can never be secured.' Discuss.
7. What are the main Marxist criticisms of liberal democracy?
8. **Either** (a) 'Previous theories of politics have been "malestream".' Discuss.
Or (b) 'Any form of green political action would entail slowing down economic growth, or stopping it altogether.' Discuss.
9. **Either** (a) 'State sovereignty has been threatened as a result of current trends towards globalisation.' Discuss.
Or (b) Why are ethnic and national conflicts so difficult for democracies to manage?
Or (c) How is 'post-modernism' different from 'modernism' in the social sciences?

END OF PAPER