

HISTORY (US)

Paper 0416/13

Paper 13

Key Messages and General Comments

There were many good responses to the questions on this paper with evidence of secure knowledge and understanding, underpinned by clarity of communication and accurate recall of historical details. It was encouraging to note that a significant majority of candidates were able to score highly on **part (a)** questions, providing short, descriptive answers, rather than explanation. It is worth emphasising that these opening questions should be answered with brevity and precision as over-lengthy answers will consume time which might be reserved for the higher-tariff questions.

The best answers to **parts (b) and (c)** questions focused on explanation and selecting information to meet the exact demands of the question set. Lower marks were gained by those candidates who confined themselves to just identifying causal factors, while more credit was given for developing each identified factor more fully, within the context of the question.

In **part (c)**, it was encouraging to read answers which argued and explained points both for and against the proposition offered in the question, followed by a good conclusion which contained an evaluation of 'how far' or 'to what extent'. Candidates should avoid descriptive narrative in **parts (b) and (c)** questions as only limited credit can only be given for answers of this nature.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A (Core Content)

Questions 1 to 3

The limited number of responses to these questions prevents useful comment.

Question 4

Good answers to **part (a)** identified the members of the Triple Entente and focused on its origin as a friendly agreement which sought to settle colonial disputes; it then evolved into a counterweight to the Triple Alliance. **Part (b)** could have been better answered, as a number of candidates overlooked that Turkey was the object of the Balkan League's attacks, mistakenly thinking that the First Balkan War was connected to the assassination in Sarajevo. There was a tendency in **part (c)** to produce generalised answers relating to German militarism (e.g. naval rivalry), colonial disputes, the alliance system and Austro-Serbian tension. Specific explanation of each of these points would have helped candidates to achieve higher marks.

Question 5

This question produced many responses. Answers to **part (a)** which went beyond general points such as 'It was meant to keep the peace' or 'It was an aim of the League', to then include more precise details about members working together against aggressors through economic or military sanctions or through moral condemnation, scored well. There were some good answers to **part (b)**, with the best of them developing reasons relating to membership, lack of military strength, slowness of decision making and the problems caused by British and French dominance of the League. In **part (c)** responses would have been stronger if there had been more detailed coverage of both successful and unsuccessful disputes, explaining in each case why the League achieved its aims or not. Those parts of answers which included material on the 1930s could gain no credit from this material since the stated period was the 1920s.

Question 6

Part (a) answers attracted good marks as credit was given for who signed the Munich Agreement and for references to the Sudetenland cessation. Some candidates wrote about 'peace in our time' which was a specific part of the Agreement. Stronger responses to **part (b)** focused on why it was important that Stalin should buy time to build up his military strength and why the Pact led to the outbreak of war. In the latter case, it was necessary to link the division of Poland by Hitler and Stalin to British and French guarantees of Polish independence. Less successful answers lost focus in describing the terms of the Pact in detail but not linking to 'importance' as defined in the question. In **part (c)** there was evidence of good knowledge of the consequences of appeasement, although it is important to explain both positive and negative aspects of the policy before arriving at a reasoned judgement. Some candidates attempted to explain why appeasement was followed rather than concentrating on how far the policy was a disaster.

Question 7

It was rare to see a weak answer to **part (a)**, although there was some confusion between the terms of Yalta (not asked for on the question paper) and Potsdam. There were some generalised answers to **part (b)**. Many candidates knew about the expansion of the Red army and the fear of the spread of Communism against the background of the Cold War. Better answers dealt with Yalta - which defined a Soviet sphere of influence, why Stalin wanted a 'buffer' zone, and made specific references to the creation of Soviet satellite states such as Poland, up to 1946. There were many strong responses to **part (c)**, covering details of the Marshall Plan and linking them to 'tension' as stipulated in the question. Those candidates who struggled to keep to the dates 1947-49 or who could not go beyond a narrative of events, found it difficult to attain the highest marks. While the inclusion of the takeover of Poland lay outside the parameters of this question, it was appropriate to draw on Czechoslovakia, Cominform, Comecon and events in Berlin leading to the creation of NATO.

Question 8

Part (a) could have been done better by a number of candidates who attempted it. Candidates were given credit for US support for Diem, the sending of 'advisers' and interventionist policies such as the Strategic Hamlet Programme. Answers to **part (b)** sometimes featured a narrative about US strategy versus guerrilla warfare. Better candidates were able to concentrate on why the tactics used by Vietcong were 'effective', making them the focus of their answers. **Part (c)** answers included good explanations of the reasons for US withdrawal; responses could have been better still if candidates had taken the important step of linking information about media coverage and protest to why pressure then increased on the Presidency to end the US involvement in Vietnam. Weaker responses often featured unbalanced answers since candidates appeared to find it more difficult to construct arguments around the costs of US involvement or the impact of the Tet Offensive.

Section B (Depth Studies)

Question 9

A majority of candidates scored well on **part (a)**. **Part (b)** gave an opportunity to explain why political groups opposed the Weimar republic. Most responses were confined to the Spartacists, although references to right-wing opposition, such as the Kaiser's supporters or the Nazis, would have served equally well. The key was to explain why they disliked Weimar so much, rather than to describe who they were and what they stood for. Answers to **part (c)** were often well argued, with good analyses of Weimar's successes and failures. While many concentrated on the 1920s, the question contained no date limits so material taken from the early 1930s was just as appropriate. Some candidates achieved high marks by attempting a judgement about how far Weimar had enjoyed relative success or failure.

Question 10

In **part (a)** candidates demonstrated secure knowledge of the role of women in Nazi Germany, although there were fewer detailed explanations of the reasons behind the Nazi Four Year Plan (**part b**). Most answers dealt very briefly with the need to prepare for war by stock piling raw materials and boosting heavy industry. Higher marks would have been achieved with explanations of the importance of autarky and of boosting agriculture. Descriptive answers to **part (c)** could not achieve the high marks. The best answers were able to explain opposition to the Nazis amongst, say, Jews and also workers, thereby producing a balanced answer.

Question 11

Candidates knew many aspects of the answer, usually by reference to promises of 'Peace, Land and Bread' in **part (a)**. **Part (b)** was well answered because many focused on the April Theses, the July days, Kerensky and the responses of the Bolsheviks. For **part (c)**, higher marks were attained by answers which drew on aspects of Lenin's astuteness, ability to adapt policies to changing circumstances or aspects of his work which were more, or less, successful. There were some good arguments which credited other Bolshevik leaders, such as Trotsky, with the foundations for Lenin's success as a leader. Some candidates provided only general descriptions of Lenin's rule.

Question 12

Part (a) produced some good answers. Candidates were rewarded for material on the exploitation of the illusion of democracy by Stalin, and the way the Supreme Soviet only met for two weeks a year - enabling Stalin greater powers via the Praesidium. The ways in which the Constitution gave Stalin total power was the starting point for developed responses. It was rare to read poor answers to **part (b)** and there was a great deal of sound knowledge related to Stalin's paranoia and the perceived threat from individuals in the Party such as Zinoviev and Kamenev. **Part (c)** specifically related only to Stalin's secret police and the use of propaganda, with a focus on control. Many reached a reasonable level with explanations of the work of the NKVD on the one hand, and the 'cult of personality'. Generalised comments about people's fear of being taken away and killed were commonplace and could not score high marks.

Question 13

This was the more popular USA question and **part (a)** was answered well, with candidates demonstrating good knowledge and understanding of a range of benefits such as increased employment, the stimulus to other industries, the affordability of cars and the changes to lifestyle and leisure time. However, **part (b)** proved more challenging to some because candidates did not always focus on the importance of the First World War in generating an economic boom and instead sought to describe or explain other factors contributing to the boom of the 1920s. More able candidates were able to explain how the war led to the US taking over Europe's markets, and the boost to US industrial production. Good answers to **part (c)** explained the problems caused by competition from Canadian farmers, the drop in European demand and the effects of the tariff system. Weaker responses tended to focus, in general terms, on overproduction or featured a narrative of the 1930s dustbowl, despite the question being limited to the 1920s.

Question 14

In answering **part (a)**, candidates were aware of the difficulties Roosevelt experienced with the Supreme Court and understood how he was intending to deal with it, although higher marks would have been awarded for knowledge of specific actions. There was good understanding of **part (b)**, with explanations of the concerns of the business community regarding higher taxes, union activity and the perceived desirability of 'rugged individualism'. **Part (c)** attracted good marks for balanced answers focusing on those who did and did not benefit from the New Deal. Greater depth was shown on the work of agencies to create employment and support farmers; knowledge of the ways the New Deal did not always benefit black Americans and women tended to lack depth.

Questions 15 to 19

The limited number of responses to these questions prevents useful comment.

Question 20

Candidates clearly knew a great deal of detail about the proposal for a national homeland for Jews, the persecution experienced by Jews in Germany, the demand for a homeland, Zionism, the UN Partition Plan and Jewish terrorism in **part (a)**. The more obvious reasons for Arab objections to the UN Partition Plan (**part b**) were known, such as the perceived inequalities in land distribution, the question of Jerusalem and the division of the Arab state. **Part (c)** saw many secure responses and effective, balanced arguments about Arab weaknesses, such as their weak and divided leadership, and Israeli strengths, such as their will to survive, US support and the ability of their armed forces.

Question 21

This was attempted by fewer candidates. **Part (a)** produced generalised points which relied on a photograph, and there were aspects of both **parts (b) and (c)** which could have been improved. There were opportunities to explain the military benefits of National Service, and more candidates could have touched on its social, cultural and educational importance (**part b**). In **part (c)**, answers tended to be generalised and would have been improved by specific references to the different views of Israelis towards the issue of how to deal with the Palestinians. The views of the Labour Party, Likud and more extreme groups would have provided a range of balanced explanations.

Question 22 – 25

The limited number of responses to these questions prevents useful comments.

HISTORY (US)

Paper 0416/23

Paper 23

Key Messages and General Comments

In overall terms the standard of answers continues to be encouraging and candidates are responding well to the demands of the paper. The understanding of the context of the sources was good and there was considerable evidence of background knowledge being used to help answer the questions being asked. All but a few candidates responded well to the precise details in the questions. For example, on the twentieth-century option **Question 2** the issue of surprise was addressed by many in their opening sentence; this is a strategy that works well. Candidates were better at interpreting and comparing sources, rather than evaluating them. Those who attempted to evaluate the sources with generalisations about source type did not score highly. Candidates need to go beyond accepting or rejecting sources at face value, or at the level of undeveloped provenance.

While many candidates did very well in response to **Question 6**, there were still some whose final mark was lower than it could have been as the sources were not used as the basis of their answer. Similarly, those who grouped the sources together and made general comments about the statement did not achieve as highly as they might, as they did not engage with the content of each source. Candidates need to use the sources to both support and disagree with the given statement and they can be sure that the sources provided will always enable them to do both, and consequently write a balanced answer.

Comments on Specific questions

Nineteenth-Century Option

Too few responses were seen for any meaningful comments to be made.

Twentieth-Century Option

Question 1

This question asked candidates to compare two sources and assess the level of agreement between them. Candidates needed to identify points of agreement and disagreement and illustrate these with content from both sources. Most candidates were able to explain the agreements well. For example, many responses explained that both sources agree Dubcek wanted to reform communism, not abandon it altogether. One point of disagreement centred on Dubcek's aims. In Source A he is certain about his intention to moderately reform communism, whereas in B this is less clear and he is referred to as being 'far from sure where to go'. Candidates must make sure that they explain points of disagreement, rather than simply describing differences between the sources. The highest marks were reserved for candidates who realised that as far as the overall big messages of the two sources were concerned, there is only an agreement – that both sources are critical of Dubcek and his actions, in particular his inability to judge the Soviets' response.

Question 2

This question focused on two written sources, the first, Source C, described a meeting in January 1968 and the second, Source D, was a letter from July of the same year. The question asked whether Source C makes Source D surprising. Many candidates were able to gain a reasonable mark by referring to details in the sources to explain surprise or lack of surprise. For example, many cited the 'gloomy faces' and Dubcek's realisation that he is not 'getting through to them' in C as reason for a lack of surprise at the Soviet hostility shown in D. A large majority of candidates were able to recognise that the time difference between C and D was a crucial element in the answer, but relied only on assertions that something must have happened during the intermittent six months to alter the Soviets' attitude. The best answers used accurate contextual knowledge of the period between the sources to explain the differences between them and consequently

concluded that there was no reason to be surprised. It is pleasing to note that with very few exceptions, candidates all actually answered the question as set, and clearly stated whether C makes D safe or not.

Question 3

In this question candidates were required to compare the messages of two cartoons. Consequently, candidates who only compared surface details or undeveloped provenance did not score highly. Encouragingly, very few candidates neglected to address the question, and clear attempts at comparisons were made in all but a few responses. The interpretation of the sources in some instances could have been better. While many candidates were able to compare valid sub-messages, fewer could compare the overall big messages – that attempts at reform had been met with repression by the Soviets. Many candidates also compared the sources for differences, regardless of whether this was valid or not. A few responses commented on the fact that both cartoons were British, but they would have been improved by developing this further. Consideration of the likely British attitudes towards events in Eastern Europe at this time could have led candidates to the similarity in the cartoonists' attitude; that is that they both approve of the Czechoslovakian reforms and/or disapprove of the Soviet repression.

Question 4

Questions such as this that ask why a source was produced require three explanatory elements in the response. Firstly it is necessary to consider the context in which the source was produced. Secondly, the message that the author was trying to get across must be understood and thirdly, the purpose the author had in relaying his message must be examined. With this in mind, there were some very encouraging responses to this question. Context only answers gave good detail about events preceding the Soviet invasion in August - some even recognised the importance of the Soviet manoeuvres on the Czechoslovakian border, but responses at this level did not engage with or interpret the cartoon. Many candidates, however, were able to go on to develop the big message of the cartoon; that the Soviets were preparing to attack Czechoslovakia whilst hiding their true intentions. A smaller number then were able to use their contextual knowledge and understanding to interpret the cartoon and work out the purpose behind its publication. The cartoonist was critical of the Soviets' obvious intentions and therefore wanted to create anti-Soviet feeling.

Question 5

Here, most candidates were able at least to compare the two sources and reach a conclusion about whether one was lying based on disagreements between them. Answers below this level tended to concentrate on the provenance of the sources, and candidates generally rejected source I without further development by stating the view that a Soviet news agency would be bound to lie. Some candidates made good use of their contextual knowledge, the information contained in the other sources or the background information. They used this as a point of cross reference and were able to conclude whether I was lying or not. While this approach worked well, those candidates who looked to the purpose of the sources in context and concluded that source I was lying were able to access the higher marks. These responses showed a clear understanding of relevant events and used this to explain that the statement made by the Soviet news agency was mostly likely to be untrue, and produced in order to justify their invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Question 6

Overall this was answered well and many candidates achieved good marks on this question by carefully explaining how some sources provide convincing evidence that the reforms in Czechoslovakia were a threat to Communism, and how others disagree with the claim. Candidates found it more straightforward to explain the sources that provide evidence that the Czechoslovakian reforms were a threat, rather than those that do not. The most successful answers examined the sources one by one and explained how the content of each supported or disagreed with the given hypothesis. Candidates should avoid grouping the sources together and making assertions about them as a group; this rarely works well. Answers need not include a summary of the source, nor should they involve generalisations about source type. More candidates would access the marks available for evaluation if they were to include genuine evaluation based on the source content, rather than simple statements involving undeveloped provenance.