

HISTORY (US)

Paper 0416/13

Paper 13

General Comments and Key Messages

A majority of candidates were able to use sound knowledge of their chosen topics to answer the questions set. Many candidates communicated detail clearly and accurately. This approach is particularly useful for part (a) questions where short, descriptive answers of probably no more than a paragraph in length allow the emphasis to be on the recalling of accurate details, rather than explanation.

Parts (b) and (c) require a demonstration of understanding, rather than lengthy description. They also demand explanation. Limited credit is awarded for narrative or 'setting the scene'. Candidates who performed strongly were able to keep to the point, apply their knowledge to the precise requirements of the question, and develop each of the identified factors fully. In part (c), candidates need to argue both for and against the focus of the question, and reach a valid judgement. This judgement should go beyond repeating what has already been stated, by addressing 'how far' or 'to what extent'.

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

It was rare to see a poor answer to **part (a)**; most candidates knew the names of the two major alliance systems and, in some cases, the member countries. In **part (b)**, many could identify the attitude of Austria-Hungary towards Serbia but more candidates could have developed their answers into a full explanation of its importance in international affairs. This could have included the dangers of Austria's relationship Germany and the quarrel with Russia over the Balkans. **Part (c)** responses tended to be generalised comments about Britain's treaty to protect Belgium's neutrality and these answers were often unbalanced. Alternative explanations, such as Britain's anger over the naval race or its commitment to France and the Triple Entente, featured in better responses.

Question 5

In **part (a)** many candidates were aware that Turkey was forced to pay reparations and demilitarise. Further specific knowledge would have improved many responses. Answers to **part (b)** were better, responses including Lloyd George's fears of German resentment and his aim to resume trade links; greater development would have improved some answers. The same is true of **part (c)** answers in which Wilson and Clemenceau's attitudes to the terms were correctly identified; these answers would have benefited from the inclusion of explanation. The best responses were able, for example, to say why Wilson was pleased by the creation of the League of Nations or why Clemenceau was dissatisfied with the reparations figure.

Question 6

Responses to **part (a)** demonstrated secure knowledge of Hitler's actions in breaking the Treaty of Versailles, although some answers strayed beyond 1935. Some candidates struggled with **part (b)** because they only included general points about Hitler trying out his new army or Luftwaffe in Spain, when precise details were required. Candidates performed more strongly on **part (c)** and presented a range of arguments about the benefits and disadvantages of appeasement. More candidates could have gone on to thoroughly analyse the 'how far' element of the question.

Question 7

Part (a) answers saw credit awarded for the division of Vietnam along the 17th Parallel, for the fact that Ho Chi Minh's government was recognised in the North, while Diem's government was accepted in the South, and for stating that independence from France had been gained. In **Part (b)** better responses were able to explain the Domino Theory in detail, as well as refer to specific issues such as the Gulf of Tonkin incident. The question posed in **part (c)** allowed candidates to select Cold War incidents across the period and explain the success or failure of containment. Some responses balanced both aspects and explained why, for example, Korea could be regarded as a partial success. These responses achieved good marks.

Question 8

There were a number of confident responses to this question. Oil became the focus of **part (a)** answers which described the involvement of the western powers in the Iran-Iraq war; candidates referred to the west supplying the Iraqi military and the presence of US warships in the Gulf. Candidates knew a great deal about the rule of the Shah (**part (b)**) and why it provoked opposition. The best responses noted the unpopularity of the Shah for his association with western powers and for his wealth, luxury and corruption. Quality answers to **part (c)** predominated; students displayed good knowledge of this topic and were able to apply it effectively. There were many balanced and analytical responses explaining whether Iraq had suffered more than Iran as a result of their war; generally, analysis of Saddam Hussein's regime was the stronger area of the two.

Section B – Depth Studies

Question 9

The best answers to **part (a)** made references to the opposing armies trying to outflank each other, as both sides moved towards the sea. For the British this meant securing Ypres and then the ports of Dunkirk and Calais in order to protect supplies of equipment and reinforcements. Candidates showed good understanding in **part (b)** of the importance of the Battle of Verdun, as a symbol of French pride and linking it to the advancement of the timetable for the Battle of the Somme. **Part (c)**, however, indicated that candidates had less secure knowledge of the changes made to the Schlieffen Plan by the German commanders. Some answers were unbalanced, and focussed on the intervention of the BEF and on the attacks made by the French on the Marne as 'other factors' which caused the failure of the German war plan.

Question 10

The limited number of responses to this question prevents useful comment.

Question 11

Many detailed answers to **part (a)** were seen, and candidates were able to identify a range of reasons for the lack of Nazi Party success before 1930 in **part (b)**. These usually focussed on the apparent prosperity of the Weimar Republic after 1924; some responses would have benefited from fuller explanation. It was important to link Weimar's recovery with the lack of appeal of extremism, and show why one led to the other. Lack of precise knowledge about the relevance of the election of 5 March 1933 in **part (c)** meant that some answers were unbalanced. They tended to rely on 'other factors' such as the Reichstag Fire and the Night of the Long Knives to explain Hitler's dictatorship. Better responses were aware that The 5 March 1933 election gave the Nazis control over the police, media and state governments, along with the ability to intimidate opponents despite not having outright power in the Reichstag.

Question 12

Part (a) was well done by those who attempted it, with detailed knowledge of Nazi election promises. Many knew that this related to creating a 'Greater Germany', destroying the Treaty of Versailles and remedying the Depression. **Part (b)** knowledge of Nazi youth policies tended to be generalised and drifted into narratives about how the lives of young people changed. More precision was needed to show why it was important to create loyal young Nazis, and why this was going to be of benefit to the regime in terms of impact. For **part (c)** stronger responses were characterised by evidence of planning and organising, a clear line of argument, offering precise explanations of why the Nazis benefited workers on the one hand or made them worse off on the other.

Question 13

Part (a): Some candidates were unsure about the reforms of the Provisional Government of 1917 in Russia. The best answers included the disbanding of the secret police, the granting of personal freedoms and the planning of elections for a Constituent Assembly. It seemed that candidates were more confident in **part (b)** when explaining the unpopularity of the Provisional Government. The best responses linked the demands for 'Peace, Land and Bread' to the unpopularity of the Government. **Part (c)** attracted some good answers, characterised by attempts to balance Bolshevik strengths with the weaknesses of the Whites.

Question 14

This produced some sound answers. Candidates were able to describe the effects of collectivisation in **part (a)**, with detailed narratives about the fate of the Kulaks. The reasons behind the first Five-Year Plans were often correctly identified in **part (b)** but not fully explained. It was important here to link, for example, Stalin's focus on heavy industry with the need for the USSR to protect itself against foreign threats. Some **Part (c)** responses would have benefited from greater detail, attracting generalised information about hardships endured instead of precise reasoning. Good answers balanced the discipline of factory life with social benefits such as education and medicine.

Question 15

In **part (a)** candidates were able to provide some detail about the social and economic benefits of car ownership. **Part (b)** proved more challenging. The best responses related to Republican policies in the 1920s such as a belief in laissez-faire, low taxation and import tariffs. **Part (c)** appeared more straightforward for candidates, with responses about the impact of racial discrimination on the one hand, balanced by the problems faced by poor farmers on the other. Fewer answers successfully evaluated by explaining which was more significant.

Question 16 to 20

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

Question 21

Answers to **part (a)** focussed on the British government's plans for Palestine after 1945. Candidates correctly described that it proposed one state shared by Arabs and Jews, and that Britain would continue to rule it as non-partitioned state with the hope that it would be independent within ten years. Opportunities to score highly in **part (b)** were sometimes missed as answers needed to focus precisely on the reasons why partition was recommended. **Part (c)** produced better responses, including Truman's attitude in favour of partition, assessed against 'other factors' such as Britain's post-World War Two debts and the problems faced by its troops in Palestine.

Question 22

Candidates were secure in their understanding of the Camp David agreement of 1978 (**part (a)**). The best answers to **part (b)** explained Israel's actions towards young Palestinians and why this brought international sympathy (including within the USA) for the PLO cause. Candidates who did well in **part (c)** understood both sides of the argument, explaining not only the opposition to the peace process from Hamas, but also a range of alternative factors. These included the building of Jewish settlements in occupied territories, Israel's refusal to recognise Palestine's right to independence and lack of leadership from both the UN and USA. Balanced approaches of this kind, which went beyond merely identifying factors to fully explaining them, gained good marks.

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Paper 23

General Comments and Key Questions

Most candidates responded well to the demands of the paper. The majority of candidates answered the questions on the twentieth-century option. The understanding of the context of the sources was good and there was considerable evidence of background knowledge being used appropriately to help answer the questions being asked. Candidates were better at interpreting and comparing sources, rather than evaluating them. Those who attempted to evaluate the sources with generalisations about source type limited the credit they could receive by adopting this approach. Candidates need to go beyond accepting or rejecting sources at face value, or at the level of undeveloped provenance.

Most candidates responded well to the precise details in the questions. For example, on **Question 3** in the 20th century option, the issue of surprise was addressed by many in their opening sentence. This is a strategy that generally works well. Some candidates, however, did not address the question as set. For instance, on **Question 2** in the 20th century option, some responses gave a perfectly valid interpretation of the cartoon, but at no point made any reference to the issue of utility. Answers that contain good analyses of the sources, but which do not actually answer the particular question set and reach a conclusion, do not achieve the highest marks available.

While many candidates did very well in response to **Question 6**, there were still some whose answers could have been improved by using the sources as the basis of their answer. Similarly, those who grouped the sources together and made general comments about the statement would have benefited from some engagement with the content of each source. Candidates need to use the sources to both support and disagree with the given statement. The sources provided will enable them to do both and consequently write a balanced answer.

Comments on Specific Questions

19th Century Option

There were too few responses for any meaningful comments to be made.

20th Century Option

Question 1

There was a wide range of answers to this question which asked candidates to compare two sources and assess the level of agreement between them. The best responses identified points of agreement and disagreement and illustrated these with content from both sources. Weaker answers summarised the sources without making specific comparisons. The agreements were easier to spot than the disagreements and many candidates were able to explain the former well. For example, many responses explained that both sources agree that the Marshall Plan would benefit the US and/or that Stalin rejected the Plan. One point of disagreement centred on why the Soviets did not accept the Plan. In A, the Plan is anti-Soviet and the American government clearly does not want the Russians involved and therefore gives them little choice but to refuse it. In B, the emphasis is placed on Stalin and it is his suspicions about American motives that lead to his rejection of the Plan. Candidates need to explain points of disagreement, rather than simply describe differences between the sources, in

other words disagreements must be about the same thing. Candidates who compared the overall 'big messages' of the sources - that is that in A the Marshall Plan was for the benefit of the US, while in B it benefitted Europe most or was for the benefit of both Europe and the US, performed very well.

Question 2

With the exception of candidates who did not address the issue of utility at any point during their responses and consequently could not achieve high marks, this question was generally answered well. Most candidates were able to use their contextual knowledge and understanding to interpret the cartoon and argue that its sub-messages, or overall big message - that the Marshall Plan was a device to exploit Europe, render it useful. Many responses were developed further still, and commented on the fact that the cartoon was published in Eastern Europe. This information was then used as the basis of a contextual evaluation that led to either a rejection of the source due to its bias or use as a propaganda tool, or an acceptance of the evidence as a clear example of the Communist view of the Marshall Plan. Both arguments were equally valid. The very best answers drew on contextual knowledge and recognised that the source is useful evidence, not just of the Soviet viewpoint, but also of Soviet actions at that time. In other words, the cartoon is useful because of its purpose; it shows us that the Soviets were trying to persuade people in Eastern Europe that the Marshall Plan was for the US good only and that therefore they should reject it.

Question 3

Candidates were asked to consider two conflicting written sources and conclude whether the content of one made them surprised by the other. Here, the evaluation of the sources could have been better. Many responses recognised that the provenance of the two sources was a crucial element in the answer, but some answers would have benefited from going further than stating that one being Soviet and the other American, or written by Truman, had led to their lack of surprise. Those candidates that were able to make a developed use of the provenance provided very strong responses. Candidates at this level used the purpose of each source in the context of the time as the basis of their reasoning for not being surprised.

While most candidates clearly stated whether or not one source made the other surprising, a small number were unable to address this vital element of the question and consequently limited the marks they could achieve. It is often a helpful strategy to begin an answer by using the key words from the question in order to help avoid an omission of this kind.

Question 4

In this question candidates were required to compare the messages of two cartoons. Consequently, candidates who compared surface details or undeveloped provenance only struggled to write strong responses. Very few candidates neglected to address the question, and clear attempts at comparisons were made in all but a few responses. Both cartoons share a similar message – that the Marshall Plan was good for Europe. Many candidates were able to interpret both cartoons in this way, and thereby provide a very good answer. The best responses were achieved by candidates who recognised that there were also differences in the cartoons. For example, in one there is opposition to the Marshall Plan in the US, and in the other, the cartoonist is critical of Stalin for having refused the Plan.

Question 5

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 tended to include information about the Cold War in general terms. Better answers at this level centred on more precise details about the Marshall Plan and some even focused on the significance of events in Greece and Turkey. What was common in all the context only answers was that they did not engage with the words of Vyshinsky's

speech, nor consider his purpose in making it. Many candidates however, were able to go on to develop their answer, interpreting the big message of the speech; that Vyshinsky was critical of the Marshall Plan because it would bring about US control, divide Europe and/or make Europe capitalist. A smaller number then were able to use their contextual knowledge and understanding to interpret the cartoon and work out the purpose of Vyshinsky's words; he was aiming to turn opinion against the Marshall Plan.

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 Marshall Plan was designed to benefit the US, while others say the benefit lay elsewhere, most often in Europe. The most successful answers examined the sources one by one and explained how the content of each supported or disagreed with the given hypothesis. Some candidates would have improved their responses by making it clear whether the source under discussion supported or disagreed with the given statement. Candidates should avoid grouping the sources together and making assertions about them as a group; this rarely works well and results in fewer marks being awarded. Answers need not include a summary of the source, nor should they involve generalisations about source type. Many candidates would benefit if they were to include genuine evaluation based on the source content, rather than simple statements involving undeveloped provenance.