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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

Paper 2158/01

Paper 1

General comments

As in previous years, a fairly low number of candidates entered, and hence generalisation on the work needs to be guarded. The quality of many scripts was distinctly good. The answers of such candidates were informed, focused and directed to the questions set. Those whose answers were inferior were less well replete with knowledge and/or with skills in deploying it.

It may be helpful to indicate some particular areas where approaches were ill-judged, even though these were not typical of the majority of scripts. Focus on the wording of questions is vital. There was a tendency on the part of some candidates to reproduce learned notes that had some bearing on the subject under consideration but were not focused on the specific requirements of the question; the Examiner was left to sort out what was and what was not relevant. Such answers cannot score as highly as those which focus sharply and precisely on question requirements. Some candidates produced material that was highly generalised and hence failed to give the assurance that precision in the treatment of factual material can convey. A number of answers were poorly balanced. Thus in **Question 4** there was a tendency to focus on 1945 rather than on the decade 1945-1955; in **Question 2**, background on Hitler pre-1929 was too extensive.

Finally, all candidates will probably help themselves towards better order in their answers if they employ (as many do) the sub-letters (a) and (b) etc. in the margin if these occur in the set question. The final, analytical, part of the question should be tackled separately after the earlier narrative or descriptive part, and not taken in tandem with it.

Comments on specific questions

There were very few attempts at **Questions 5, 9, 10, 14, 16, 19, 20, 24, 25, 26, 29** and **31**.

Section A

General Problems

Question 1

Knowledge of the League was impressively detailed in many cases, yet its deployment was less satisfactory. Some candidates wrote at too great a length on the constitution instead of getting to practical instances of League work in the 1920-1936 period, while others somewhat surprisingly gave detailed accounts of the fairly minor episodes of League involvement in the 1920s, to the neglect of the major episodes of the 1930s. The last part was too often on League weaknesses in general rather than the required decade comparison.

Question 2

As indicated above, this popular question was often marred by excessive pre-1929 background, not really needed at all. The question was designed to focus on the crucial years of Hitler's ascent to power; often the concluding year of 1934 was neglected. The question clearly ended in 1934, but a number of candidates went on beyond that to write about the general style of Hitler's government after 1934. A very small minority of candidates approached this as a foreign affairs question, which it clearly was not.

Question 3

This was often well done, with perhaps less adequate material presented on **(c)** than on the other two options. Answers to the last part were often sound in scope and quite usefully sharp in references. Perhaps not quite so popular as the preceding question, yet irrelevance here was much less of a problem.

Question 4

The main difficulty that many candidates found in the question was to develop over the required decade. Again, as indicated earlier, there were too many who wrote in much detail on Yalta and Potsdam, but who did not get much further and who neglected to focus on 'relationship'. It was quite common for answers to end at the Berlin blockade and few got effectively into the early 1950s. Further, this was (as is appropriate in **Section A**) a global question and not just a European one, yet few developed answers thus.

Question 6

If there was some shortfall here it occurred in **(a)** rather than elsewhere, but both **(b)** and the final part were well furnished with Vietnam and US references, well focused on the question themes.

Section B

Western Europe

Question 7

As with **Question 2**, with which this question bore some similarity in approach, there was a tendency not to focus on the given dates, so that there was often excessive pre-1919 background, often Mussolini-focused, to the neglect of development of the years from 1922 to 1925. Few seemed to know of the consolidation of fascist control in the latter year. The last part was usually adequately addressed though few developed a very deep answer here.

Question 8

The last part was often well done here, with a number of themes related quite well together. But there was uncertainty in all of the three earlier options. In **(a)**, far too many spoke of the Holocaust and anticipated events of the 1940s in a question which clearly ended in 1939. Both **(b)** and **(c)** received rather vague answers, **(c)** surprisingly more so than **(b)**, where a number had knowledge of different approaches to the churches and the existence of the Reich Church.

Question 11

While not a particularly popular question, this was attempted by a fair proportion of candidates. Again, the problem seemed to lie in slack observance of the dates, with too much pre-1957 material, to the neglect of later developments; the extension of the EEC appeared not to be well known. There was also confusion with other organisations such as OEEC and NATO. But it was encouraging to see answers to this question.

Section C

The Americas

Question 12

This was another case in which the answer to the last part was rather better attempted than the answers to the earlier options. While there was recognition of each of the options, development in each was rather limited and, in particular, not well focused on the required period. Few appeared to have knowledge of legislative restrictions on immigration in **(a)**, while **(b)** was often set in a general rather than a more specific 1919-33 background. In many cases, **(c)** was the best attempted of the three.

Question 13

Some candidates showed excellent knowledge of the details of New Deal legislation and also an ability to convey an understanding of what the legislative detail meant in practice. The last part was also well done, which a variety of views on controversy put forward, often usefully set in the politics of the time.

Question 15

Answers here, by contrast, were rather disappointing and often distinctly limited. The question was designed to enable candidates to look both at the play of events in Watergate as well as at the practical outcome. Yet there was uncertainty, or at least slight development only on the former, and a virtually total avoidance of the latter. The last part was rather better done, though scope was often restricted.

Section D

USSR and Eastern Europe

Question 17

While some candidates entered well into the overall theme of this question, too often answers were poorly focused on the specific angle given for each decade. Sometimes the events of (b) were incorrectly anticipated in (a). The last part was usually understood, but not deeply explored. Reservations aside, there were a number of well informed answers on the politics of the USSR in (a) and on the purges in (b).

Question 18

Essentially the 1920s concerned NEP and the 1930s concerned collectivisation, yet many candidates blurred their approaches and often failed to signal the period of history to which their writing alluded. Many also failed to detect that the question was about agriculture and not industry, though some industrial allusion would have been appropriate in the last part.

Question 21

This was not a particularly popular question and answers to it were rather mixed. Most candidates needed to have rather more secure knowledge throughout, though there was a general recognition of the issues at stake in each of the parts of the question.

Section E

Africa and the Middle East

Question 22 and Question 23

In this generally unpopular section, these were virtually the only questions answered and these not by many candidates. Those who attempted them had a fair knowledge of the basic issues involved, yet few were able to develop their answers with real precision. Deeper and fuller development was needed in almost all cases.

Section F

Asia

Question 27

Attempts at the last part were disappointingly thin, but practical knowledge of Satyagraha earlier was not really sufficiently strong to provide a useful basis. Too often there was a general account of India during these years, with little regard for Gandhi's approaches or the reaction of the British authorities to those approaches.

Question 28

Most appeared to have a fair overview of these years, though there was a tendency for introduction back too far and accounts to go on into the 1940s. Detail could have been stronger and firmer in almost all cases. The last part was well done, indicating both Communist attractions as well as Nationalist detractors.

Question 30

Generally the options were quite well recognised and there was some useful supporting detail in many cases. The last part was usually quite effectively linked to the earlier options.