

General Certificate of Education
June 2006
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
Unit 2 Parties and Pressure Groups

GOV2

Tuesday 6 June 2006 1.30 pm to 2.30 pm

For this paper you must have:

- an 8-page answer book

Time allowed: 1 hour

Instructions

- Use blue or black ink or ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The *Examining Body* for this paper is AQA. The *Paper Reference* is GOV2.
- Answer **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.
In Section A, answer **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.
In Section B, answer **either** Question 3 **or** Question 4.
- Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work you do not want marked.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 60.
- The marks for part questions are shown in brackets.
- You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers. All questions should be answered in continuous prose. Quality of Written Communication will be assessed in all answers.

Advice

- You are advised to read through the examination paper before you attempt the questions.
- You are advised to spend the same amount of time on each question.

Answer **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.

SECTION A

Answer **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.

Each question carries 30 marks.

EITHER

- 1 Study the extract below and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

Labour's Internal Power Structure

New Labour's emphasis on giving more power to ordinary members has, in fact, disguised a remarkable centralisation of decision-making. This was done in order to guarantee 'moderate' policy-making and 'sensible' campaigning methods. Suspicion that power in the Labour Party was passing upwards was not confined to policy-making. In *candidate selection*, too, there has been an erosion of constituency members' authority. Between 1994 and 1995, roughly half of those constituency parties in winnable seats but without a sitting Labour MP were ordered by the National Executive Committee to choose candidates from all-women shortlists.

Source: adapted from R KELLY, 'The Governing Parties' in R PYPER and L ROBINS (Eds), *United Kingdom Governance*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2000

- (a) Explain the term *candidate selection* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) 'Power inside both the Conservative and Labour parties is concentrated in their respective leaderships.' Discuss. (22 marks)

OR

- 2 Study the extract below and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

Parties at the European Level

Politically, the European Parliament is arranged into blocks of *ideological rather than national groupings*. The two most important groups are the European People's Party and the Party of European Socialists. Conservative Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) sit in the former group and Labour MEPs in the latter. Some of these groups are very broad and loose and there are tensions within them. They are therefore by no means as cohesive as national parties and, indeed, there is little formal party discipline within groups. A feature of the European Parliament is that, instead of operating on strict party lines, issues are handled by the formation of cross-party alliances.

Source: adapted from G PEELE, *Governing the UK*, Blackwell Publishing, 2004

- (a) Explain the phrase *ideological rather than national groupings* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) To what extent are Britain's major parties based on distinctive ideologies? (22 marks)

Turn over for the next section

SECTION B

Answer **either** Question 3 **or** Question 4.

Each question carries 30 marks.

EITHER

- 3 Study the extract below and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

Pressure Groups: Exerting Influence

Different methods are employed by groups that seek to influence government indirectly via the mass media and public opinion campaigns. Tactics here range from petitions, protests and demonstrations to *civil disobedience* and even the use of violence. Pressure groups use such methods for various reasons. For example, they may reflect the group's inability to gain direct access to policy-makers, they may follow from the nature of the group's activist membership or they may reflect the character of its ideological goals.

Source: A HEYWOOD, *Politics*, 2nd Edition, Palgrave Macmillan, 2002

- (a) Explain the term *civil disobedience* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) Why might different pressure groups use different methods in their attempts to influence government? (22 marks)

OR

- 4 Study the passage below and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

Pressure Groups and Democracy

Pressure groups can strengthen representation by focusing on particular interests or concerns that may sometimes be overlooked by politicians. For example, they may campaign on behalf of the homeless or those suffering mental health problems. Such areas are not 'vote winners' with the wider electorate and so may not receive the support they need from elected politicians. *Pressure group pluralism* also strengthens democracy in so far as a massive number of groups represent the diversity of values and interests found in wider society. The result is that pressure groups ensure that power is widely distributed so that no single group can dominate the others.

- (a) Explain the term *pressure group pluralism* used in the passage. (8 marks)
- (b) A Cabinet Minister once described pressure groups as creatures which strangle efficient government. How justified is this view of pressure groups today? (22 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS

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