

General Certificate of Education
January 2008
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



HISTORY

Unit 2

Alternative U: Britain, 1929–1951

HS2U

Friday 11 January 2008 1.30 pm to 3.00 pm

For this paper you must have:

- a 12-page answer book.

Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes

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 HS2U.
- Answer **two** questions.
Answer Question 1 and **either** Question 2 **or** Question 3.
- In answering the questions you must use your own knowledge and understanding of the period.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 50.
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- There are 25 marks for each question.
- You will be marked on your ability to use good English, to organise information clearly and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Advice

- You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on each question.

Answer Question 1 and **either** Question 2 **or** Question 3.

- 1 Study the following source material and then answer the questions which follow.

Source A

A brief text extract from A D EDWARDS, *1931: The Fall of the Labour Government*, Edward Arnold, 1975, pp 4-5, discussing the formation of MacDonald's National Government in 1931 - not reproduced here due to third-party copyright constraints.

Source B

A brief text extract from E SHINWELL, *I've lived through it all*, Gollancz, a division of the Orion Publishing Group, pp 107-110, discussing the author's reaction to MacDonald's formation of a National Government - not reproduced here due to third-party copyright constraints.

- Source C** Despite assurances that there would be no immediate election, the National Government called an election in October 1931. It won convincingly. Labour's parliamentary representation fell from 288 MPs to just 52. However, in the election of 1935, Labour gained a higher percentage vote than ever before, though
- 5 under the first-past-the-post-system Labour's vote was not reflected in the number of seats, its total only going up to 154.

Adapted from D CHILDS, *Britain since 1939: Progress and Decline*, 2002

- (a) Use **Source A** and your own knowledge.

Explain briefly the meaning of 'bleak report' (line 2) in the context of the crisis facing the Labour government in the summer of 1931. *(3 marks)*

- (b) Use **Source B** and your own knowledge.

How useful is **Source B** as evidence about the attitude of Labour ministers towards MacDonald in the crisis of August 1931? *(7 marks)*

- (c) Use **Sources A, B and C** and your own knowledge.

'Labour's division during the crisis of 1931 was the most important reason for its continued weakness throughout the 1930s.'
Explain why you agree or disagree with this statement. *(15 marks)*

Turn over for the next question

EITHER 2 Read the following source and then answer the questions which follow.

As well as being the years of the slump, the 1930s also saw a remarkable degree of economic and social advance, with new industries, prosperous suburbs and, for some, rising living standards. However, many thousands of families suffered the miseries of mass unemployment.

Adapted from J STEVENSON and C COOK, *Britain in the Depression*, 1994

- (a) Comment on 'prosperous suburbs' (line 2) in the context of Britain in the 1930s. (3 marks)
- (b) Explain why many families suffered the miseries of mass unemployment in the 1930s. (7 marks)
- (c) Explain the importance of the National Governments' policies, in relation to other factors, in explaining the economic and social advances made in the 1930s. (15 marks)

OR 3 Read the following source and then answer the questions which follow.

More help was becoming essential from the United States as Britain reeled under the savage winter of 1947, and the problem of paying for imports in dollars became ever more acute.

Adapted from C J BARTLETT, *British Foreign Policy in the Twentieth Century*, 1989

- (a) Comment on 'paying for imports in dollars' in the context of Britain's economic difficulties after the end of the Second World War. (3 marks)
- (b) Explain why 'the savage winter of 1947' was such a setback to British economic recovery. (7 marks)
- (c) Explain the importance of Britain's economic problems between 1945 and 1947, in relation to other factors, in explaining why the Labour governments began to withdraw from overseas commitments in the years 1947 to 1951. (15 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS

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Source C: D CHILDS, *Britain since 1939: Progress and Decline*, 2002. Reproduced by permission of Palgrave Macmillan.

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