

General Certificate of Education
June 2006
Advanced Level Examination



GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
Unit 7 Ideas in Contemporary British Politics

GOV7

Tuesday 27 June 2006 9.00 am to 10.30 am

For this paper you must have:

- an 8-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 GOV7.
- Answer **Question 1** and **one** other question.
- 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 80.
- The marks for questions (or 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 **Question 1** and **one** other question.

Each question carries 40 marks.

1 Study the extract below and answer parts (a) to (c) which follow.

Conservatism

Edmund Burke (1729–1797) was one of the first individuals to set out conservative beliefs and values in his work ‘Reflections on the Revolution in France’. At the heart of ‘Burkean’, or traditional, conservatism lies a sceptical view of human nature; that human beings are not fully rational and that governing should be left to a *political elite* which possesses both wisdom and cleverness. Basically, Burke believed that:

- people could not live contentedly if society lacked a stable structure. Although it needed to be possible for able people to rise from humble origins to positions of power, social order depended on the preservations of a hierarchy in which key positions were taken by those of aristocratic birth;
- people needed a focus for their loyalty and, although they would identify with their own families and local communities, the ultimate source of community was a strong nation-state.

Burke’s ideas had the greatest appeal for those who believed that aristocrats should hold the preponderance of political and economic power. Burkean conservatives are highly sceptical about the likely results of democracy because they think that people who have a limited understanding of politics will be swayed by false promises.

If one examines the stated principles of today’s Conservative Party, there is little evidence of any Burkean influence. The predominant influence is that of ‘laissez-faire’ liberalism and a belief in a more inclusive, meritocratic society. Indeed, if the Conservatives still followed Burkean principles, they would stand no chance at all of holding power. Election candidates would attract little support if they owned up to the view that most people should be deprived of the vote.

Source: adapted from M GARNETT, ‘Ideology: Conservatism’, *Politics Review*, Philip Allan Updates, November 2004

- (a) Explain the term *political elite* as used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) Using the extract and your own knowledge, explain the key differences between traditional conservative beliefs and values and those held by many Conservatives today. (12 marks)
- (c) Discuss the view that in recent years British Conservatism has lacked ideological coherence. (20 marks)

Answer **either** Question 2 **or** Question 3 **or** Question 4.

- 2 'New Labour's interpretation of equality, market economics and social justice owes little to traditional socialism.' Discuss. *(40 marks)*
- 3 'The Liberal Democrats no longer occupy the ideological centre ground of British politics.' Discuss. *(40 marks)*
- 4 'Green politics has been described as 'new politics' insofar as it does not fit into a conventional ideological framework.' Discuss. *(40 marks)*

END OF QUESTIONS

There are no questions printed on this page