Pearson Edexcel Level 3 GCE

Tuesday 21 May 2019

Afternoon | Paper Reference **9HI0/1E**

History

Advanced

Paper 1: Breadth study with interpretations

Option 1E: Russia, 1917-91: from Lenin to Yeltsin

Extracts Booklet

Do not return this booklet with the question paper.

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Extracts for use with Section C.

Extract 1: From Catherine Merridale, *Red Fortress: The Secret Heart of Russia's History*, published 2013.

Yeltsin was building an independent power-base by appealing to ethnic Russian patriotism. In 1989 and 1990, nationalist demonstrations dominated the news. These demonstrations culminated in unilateral declarations of independence in the Baltic and armed uprisings in the Caucasus. Gorbachev's creation of a new post, President of the USSR, was intended to strengthen the Soviet Union and hold the republics together by giving them a single figurehead. However, spurred by the success of their neighbours in Eastern Europe, Soviet citizens increased their demands. Lithuania's campaign for independence was particularly vocal.

Protesters in Moscow called on Gorbachev to 'Remember Romania!', linking him with the detested Ceaușescu*, who had been executed following a popular uprising in December 1989. This was unfair, for it was Gorbachev who had unleashed the popular tide in Europe in the first place. In January 1991, Soviet troops moved into the Lithuanian capital, Vilnius. The demonstrations there were suppressed at the cost of fourteen lives. Thanks to Gorbachev's earlier reforms, the violence was televised and images of Soviet tanks loomed once again across Europe. President Gorbachev – and the Soviet Union – had lost the moral argument forever.

*Ceaușescu - ruler of communist Romania

Extract 2: From Archie Brown, *The Myth of the Strong Leader: Political Leadership in the Modern Age*, published 2014.

Gorbachev has been regarded by some as a 'weak' leader, or even a failure, because the country over which he presided – the Soviet Union – ceased to exist at the end of 1991. The USSR could have been held together for many more years had he not embarked on the liberalisation of the Soviet economy, the democratisation of the Soviet political system, and the transformation of Soviet foreign policy. The most dissatisfied Soviet nationalities – the Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians – saw the peoples of Eastern Europe achieving independent statehood in 1989. This raised their aspirations from seeking greater freedom within a Soviet state to demanding full independence.

Gorbachev consciously sought to prevent the dissolution of the Soviet state but he was not prepared to resort to the kind of sustained use of force that would have been required to crush independence movements once expectations were aroused. The fact that the Soviet Union was dissolved largely peacefully was in some ways an achievement on Gorbachev's part, although it was very much an unintended consequence of changes to the system. Most fundamentally, it was Gorbachev's liberalisation and democratisation that made the pursuit of independence possible. His 'guilt' in relation to the break-up of the Soviet state lay in replacing fear by freedoms and in his strong dislike of bloodshed.

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