Pearson Edexcel Level 3 GCE

Tuesday 21 May 2019

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

History

Advanced

Paper 1: Breadth study with interpretations

Option 1F: In search of the American dream: the USA, c1917-96

Extracts Booklet

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Extracts for use with Section C.

Extract 1: From Richard M. Abrams, *America Transformed: Sixty Years of Revolutionary Change, 1941–2001*, published 2008.

Ronald Reagan presented himself as someone with a straight-shooting, down-to-earth attitude. Yet his remarkable inability to separate fact and truth from fiction and myth became legendary. He made up provocative stories to illustrate his opposition to social welfare and repeated them even after it became known that they were fictitious. To justify his opposition to environmental regulations, he proposed the absurdity that trees contributed more to pollution than did automobiles. He authorised a deliberate violation of law and public policy in the Iran-Contra affair, and several high officials in his government lied under oath about it. The gap between what the man publicly said, and repeated, and what the facts clearly indicated was often overwhelming.

By the mid-1990s this gap produced a woeful decline in standards within American political life. Curiously, Reagan's personal popularity was not matched by public approval of his policies. Contemporary polls repeatedly showed that most Americans supported policies sharply at odds with those Reagan pushed through a Congress that was intimidated by a President of such evident popularity. These included Social Security, environmental and consumer protection and taxation policies.

Extract 2: From Gil Troy, *The Reagan Revolution: A Very Short Introduction*, published 2009.

'They called it the Reagan revolution,' Ronald Reagan noted in his farewell address. 'Well, I'll accept that, but for me it always seemed more like the great rediscovery, a rediscovery of our values and our common sense.' Reagan's legacy continued to shape American politics, diplomacy, culture, and economics. Throughout the early 1990s, Ronald Reagan's historical standing plummeted. More people seemed to remember his mistakes not his gains, his losses not his wins. Ironically, the Democratic victory in 1992 helped resurrect Reagan's historical reputation. The Democrats' embrace of the booming 1990s made it harder to criticise Reagan Republicans for championing the booming 1980s.

The end of the Cold War loomed even larger as an achievement, as the economic growth of the 1990s minimised the significance of the once formidable Reagan-era budget deficits. Reagan had a quick wit, a silver tongue and a sunny vision. Reagan's revolution, restoration and rediscovery continued to shape the country. Americans were living in a Reaganised America. America had emerged as the world's only superpower, enjoying a capitalist resurgence at home and abroad. Reagan's sun-belt conservatism continued to shine – or cast a shadow, depending on one's perspective – in the courts, the Congress, and state capitals. Reagan revived Americans' traditional self-confidence, restoring their optimism about their country's future.

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