Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

HISTORY **9489/31**

Paper 3 Interpretations Question **October/November 2024**

1 hour 15 minutes

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You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **one** question from **one** section only.
  - Section A: The origins of the First World War
  - Section B: The Holocaust
  - Section C: The origins and development of the Cold War
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 40.
- The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets [ ].

This document has **4** pages.

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Answer **one** question from **one** section only.

Section A: Topic 1

The origins of the First World War

1 Read the extract and then answer the question.

The Franco-Russian alliance that was concluded by 1894 was transformed into an offensive organisation following 1912 through the cooperation of Izvolsky (the Russian ambassador in Paris) and Poincaré. Both recognised that the chief objects of Russian and French foreign policy – the seizure of the Straits and the return of Alsace–Lorraine – could only be realised through a general European war. From 1912 to 14 their joint plans had three aspects: exploiting the Balkan situation in such a way as to be able to take advantage of any crisis likely to provoke war; an arrangement to get Britain so involved that it would be bound to come in on the side of France and Russia; and a great increase in military preparations in France and Russia. It was decided that Serbia would be the most favourable area in which to create the desired incident in the Balkans. In early 1914 prominent officers in the Serbian army planned the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand. The Serbian government was aware of the plot for at least a month before it was carried out, but made no adequate effort to stop it or to warn Austria. When the assassination came, the French and Russians recognised that the impending clash between Austria and Serbia would be a highly appropriate moment at which to bring about the desired conflict. The year 1914 was a particularly favourable year because there was imminent danger that Britain might develop more happy relations with Germany, and that the French radicals might be able to secure the repeal of the French army bill. Poincaré went to St Petersburg, and, before knowing the terms of the Austrian ultimatum, renewed his pledge to support Russia, and indicated that the probable Austro-Serbian conflict would meet the conditions demanded by the French in supporting Russian intervention in the Balkans.

The Franco-Russian plan in 1914 was to show an apparent willingness to settle the dispute through diplomacy. Meanwhile secret Franco-Russian military preparations were to be continued which would ultimately make a diplomatic settlement quite impossible. Hence, Russia urged Serbia not to declare war on Austria, and, to ensure a sufficiently cooperative Serbian reply, the Serbian response to the Austrian ultimatum was drafted in outline in the French Foreign Office. Russia did not desire to have Serbia act too soon by declaring war on Austria, because this would have negatively affected European, and particularly British, opinion. It would also have brought about military activity too rapidly for Russia, whose mobilisation over a vast area would necessarily be slower than that of Austria and Germany.

On 24 July, the moment Russia and France learnt of the terms of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia, they began their dual programme of diplomatic activity combined with secret military preparations which made European war inevitable. Both countries began systematic preparations for war on 26 July, but by 29 July the time had come to begin a Russian general mobilisation, and the Tsar was persuaded to consent to this order. The French and the Russians had understood for a generation that once Russian general mobilisation was ordered there would be no way of preventing a general European war. The French authorities had been thoroughly informed as to the nature and progress of the Russian military preparations, but they made no effort to restrain them. They actually urged the Russians to speed up, but to be more secretive about their military preparations, so as not to upset the British or provoke Germany to counter-mobilisation.

What can you learn from this extract about the interpretation and approach of the historian who wrote it? Use the extract and your knowledge of the origins of the First World War to explain your answer. [40]

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Section B: Topic 2

The Holocaust

2 Read the extract and then answer the question.

Opinion polls showed consistently huge majorities against refugee immigration, indicating that something more than simple apathy underlay the American public's attitudes towards Jewish refugees. Public hostility towards increasing quotas was rooted firmly in social and economic conditions in the late 1930s and early 1940s. The Great Depression revived anti-foreigner emotions that had run high in the 1920s. Anti-Semitism, hanging heavy in the atmosphere of the period, intensified resistance to the admission of refugees. The common belief that each newcomer might put an American out of work generated strong pressures against increased immigration, and even posed a threat to existing quotas. By the time unemployment had ceased to be a convincing argument against immigration, widespread fear of foreign spies had grown, influencing large sections of the public, and through them, politicians. Congress had no shortage of active anti-immigrants along with many quieter but dependable isolationists. Anti-Semitism surfaced only infrequently, but it was certainly present, and no group in the nation could hope to surpass Congress on the issue of safeguarding the United States from foreign influences.

Limited to operating within the quota system, Roosevelt did make the quotas fully available to refugee immigration after early 1938, but in June 1940 the State Department halved the refugee flow by shutting off most immigration that came directly from Germany and the rest of central and eastern Europe. The half-filled quotas of 1940 and 1941, when refugee rescue remained entirely possible, symbolise 20 000 to 25 000 lives lost. This is a small number in relation to the total lost in the Holocaust. But the value of one life cannot be discounted because it was only one. Why, then, did Roosevelt allow this new policy to stand? There is no direct evidence of the President's thinking on this matter. Fear of foreign spies was definitely involved. These were also the months in which his thinking was primarily occupied with the collapse of France and the threat to Great Britain. Whatever the reason, Roosevelt left refugee policy almost entirely to the State Department. In the overall picture, the State Department compiled a depressing record. It discouraged or actively opposed virtually all efforts for a more generous policy. It obstructed the emergency visa programme for political refugees. And it tolerated officials whose anti-foreigner, anti-Semitic and politically conservative attitudes influenced their decisions in visa cases.

What can be said about the President who allowed the State Department nearly free rein in refugee affairs? Roosevelt played an inconsistent role in the refugee crisis. Sympathetic towards victims of Nazi terror, he opened the quotas to full use in 1938, reversing a Depression policy of minimum immigration inherited from the previous administration. Late in the year he granted long-term asylum to 15 000 fugitives then in the country on temporary visas. These moves substantially helped refugees. But they drew sharp criticism from restrictionists and Roosevelt did not try again. He consistently denied any intention of increasing quotas, preferring to shift the issue to the politically safe level of suggesting tropical or sub-tropical resettlement schemes for refugees. He refused in 1939 to support a bill to admit 20 000 German children. Convinced by 1940 that Nazi spies threatened the nation, he accepted the State Department's harsh tightening on immigration. One may accuse Roosevelt and Congress for failing to do more. But one must also blame the society which gave immigration policy its shape. Like the President, the majority of Americans condemned Nazi persecution but opposed widening the gates to Europe's oppressed. US refugee policy was essentially what the American people wanted.

What can you learn from this extract about the interpretation and approach of the historian who wrote it? Use the extract and your knowledge of the Holocaust to explain your answer. [40]

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Section C: Topic 3

The origins and development of the Cold War

3 Read the extract and then answer the question.

Truman had postponed the Big Three meeting in order to have his new weapon, the atomic bomb, ready when he left for Potsdam.

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Unlike Churchill and Attlee, Truman had not come to Potsdam to make deals with the Soviets.

What can you learn from this extract about the interpretation and approach of the historian who wrote it? Use the extract and your knowledge of the Cold War to explain your answer. [40]

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