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Examiner's Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced
Subsidiary

In History (WHI01) Paper 1B

Depth Study with Interpretations

Russia in Revolution, 1881-1917

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It is important that centres take on board some generic comments which are based on the marking of this summer's cohort, and consider and apply these when preparing candidates for future examinations in these options.

- WHI01 is both a study in depth and a study of interpretations, and it is necessary for candidates to do both, at all levels in the mark scheme, in order to score marks. Ignoring the stated view in the question, and merely writing information that may be relevant to the general focus of the question does not fully meet the criteria for Level 1, and consequently none of the other levels. Even at Level 1 the mark scheme expects simple or generalised consideration of the stated view in the question. Some candidates paid very little attention to the stated view (ignoring it completely or sometimes only referring to it in the conclusion) and narrated or described other information that was either relevant or not to the actual question.
- Across all of the options, in candidate responses, there was very little evidence seen of planning. As the examination is two hours long, implying that candidates might divide that time equally between the two essays they choose, it would seem sensible to devote some time (possibly no more than 10 minutes per question) to planning the structure of the answer to each question. That would hopefully ensure that when the answer is written the stated view is considered (Level 2, 3 and 4 all require, to varying degrees, understanding, analysis and exploration of the given view) and then other factors/views can follow, which will then allow the candidate to establish some criteria by which they are able to consider the importance, or not, of the given view and make some judgements. Those candidates who planned (this appeared on their examination script before they answered the question) invariably scored better than candidates who had not planned. Planned answers tended to score at the top of Level 3 and into, and including the top of Level 4, whereas unplanned answers meandered and judgements tended to be stated, rather than supported by valid criteria, and often achieved marks at the Level 2 and Level 3 boundary or below.
- The need to stress to candidates that in examination situations they must read the question carefully, and not take the question as an opportunity to write all they know about the topic, or answer a question they would have preferred that is near to the actual question, but not the actual question.
- There was some evidence of candidates running out of time, but they were very few. Impressing the need to plan essays in the examination is surely the remedy to this problem.

Option 1B Russia in Revolution 1881-1917

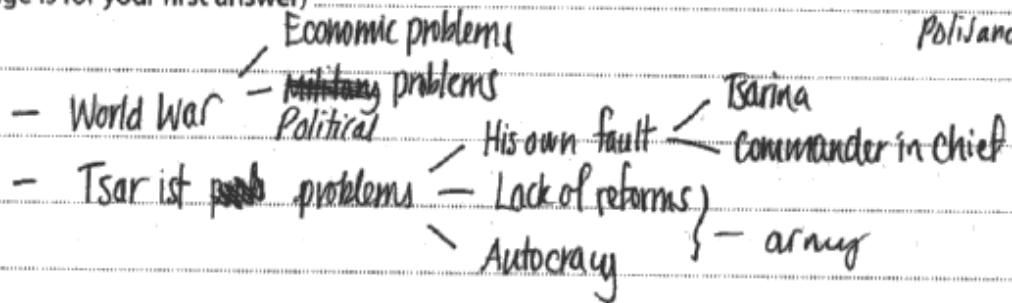
- Question 1, 2 3 proved to be the most popular.
- In question 1 some candidates were able to write in depth about the growth of railways and its economic impact, and judge this against other factors. However, some candidates offered comments that were generalised and non-specific.
- While question 2 was popular, many candidates discussed change but did not consider how 'significantly' the Tsarist system had changed or not.

- In question 3 many candidates were well versed on the wide ranging impact of the First World War and discussed if this was the key turning point that ended Romanov rule. However, some candidates saw the question as an opportunity to list the reasons for the February 1917 revolution. Below is an example of answer than gained a high mark in Level 4. The key issue is addressed throughout the answer, sufficient knowledge is deployed and criteria are established by which a judgement is then made.

Chosen question number: Question 1 Question 2
Question 3 Question 4

ill fated father
architect of his own

(This page is for your first answer)



Poljanov

It can be agreed that Russia's entry ~~into~~^{to} the First World War was the reason behind the end of Romanov rule in 1917. The First World War exacerbated Russia's political and economic situation, causing major unrest among not just the proletariat but also the peasants, and thus causing Tsar to become unpopular. However it can also be argued, ~~to~~ that the Tsar caused his own demise through his autocratic system of government that prevented any major reforms to be implemented that could have essentially gained him mass support. Without Tsar's own reckless decisions, such as appointing himself as the Commander in Chief of Russia's army during the war and leaving the deeply unpopular Tsarina behind, the Tsar may have possibly remained ~~the~~ the "Little Father" of Russia and survived the February Revolution.

The war was a major factor in causing the Tsar's overthrow as it exposed the ^{terrible} political situation of Russia and its ~~the~~ government which was inefficient and corrupt. The Tsar and his government

(This page is for your first answer) ~~They~~ ^{They} ~~believed~~ ^{believed} that Russia was politically strong to take ~~some~~ ^{something so} major ~~as~~ ^{as} the First World War. However they didn't realise that this was not the case. The ~~State~~ ^{State} ~~Starka~~ ^{Starka}, command centre of the army was very inefficient and slow. Apart from this, Russia, due to lack of artillery and modern tactics suffered major defeats such as the ^{Battle at} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~Marunian~~ ^{Marunian} Lakes in 1914, and Tannenberg which were indirectly caused by the Tsar appointed Generals, ~~such as~~ ^{such as} ~~Samsonov~~ ^{Samsonov}. The fact that Tsar appointed his generals due to personal liking rather than professionalism meant that to a great extent ~~they~~ the defeats during the war were unavoidable.

The war caused great political problems, especially the emergence of opposition groups such as the Bolsheviks and due to terrible loss of ~~so~~ casualties (1.6 million by 1915) major discontent and revolutionary spirit began to brew in the hearts of Russian people, who were seeing the Tsar's resignation as the only way that the current situation could be changed. The war exposed the political backwardness of the Tsar's system of government and thus could be seen as the reason behind his fall from power.

The war also exacerbated economic conditions in Russia, causing a fall in agricultural and economic output during the years. Russia ~~is~~ went into war, but it was not economically ready for such a huge feat. ~~Stolypin's~~ ^{Stolypin's} reforms which began years before predicted Russia catching up to other European Powers ^{economically and industrially} in the year 1917, three years after the start of the war. This only proves the ~~notion~~ ^{notion} that Russia was not ready for the war.

(This page is for your first answer) This can be illustrated when looking at the fact that ~~the~~ Russian army, which was the largest army in the world at the time lacked military equipment - soldiers had to be limited to ten bullets a day and there was widespread shortage of winter uniforms. Food shortages also became commonplace in industrial areas and cities such as Moscow and St Petersburg, with only 400 ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~of~~ wagons of grain reaching the ~~the~~ people. ^{in late war years} Transport was halted as all ^{of it} was used to transport soldiers to and from war fronts. Apart from this, 50 million men were recruited into the army from rural areas, meaning that there was virtually no one left to work the land. When coupled with 200% inflation due to governmental spending increasing eightfold during the war years, it can be agreed that together all these factors and more, contributed to mass anger from both the urban and rural population. Thus, it can be concluded that the War caused a major economic drop, which the government failed or even couldn't deal with, due to the circumstances, which worsened the lives of Russian populous, making them seek ^{political} change, and thus contributing to Tsar's overthrowal.

It was not just the war that caused the Tsar's abdication, as his own decisions, which were sometimes far too optimistic and ^{dissillusioned} ~~could be considered as not thought through~~, also caused his support ^{base} to deteriorate. One of these, as ~~is~~ ^{advocated by} ~~the~~ ^{pessimistic} historians was his choice to become commander-in-chief of the Russian army and

(This page is for your first answer) leave Tsarina in charge of Petrograd. Going to the front lines meant that Tsar would be held directly accountable for any defeats. Essentially the Tsar did not bring ~~any~~ ^{much} victory, ~~and~~ when in the later years Germany successfully occupied Russian Poland, ~~which~~ ^{German} made the Tsar seem like a weak leader. Furthermore leaving ^{German} Tsarina in charge of Petrograd ~~was not~~ ~~not~~ caused many people to see her as a spy, especially since she ~~was~~ was untrusting of political groups such as the Zemgor. ~~and~~ ~~the~~ Her alliance ~~with~~ ^{having an affair and} with Rasputin, caused many people to believe that she was ^{own} conspiring against Russian National interest, ~~and~~ which seemed to be ~~reconfirmed~~ reconfirmed when she dismissed liberal ministers such as Polivanov and ~~himself~~ ^{elected} in her ^{own} and Rasputin's conservative ones, ~~therefore, the Tsar's decision to become the commander in~~ Thus, the Tsarina and the Tsar became inherently unpopular among the masses, ~~and~~ ~~though~~ through their own decisions which could have clearly been avoided, and so it can be agreed, ~~that~~ the Tsar ~~indeed~~ ^{through his actions,} himself became the architect of his ill-fated future. rather than due to war

Lastly, the Tsar's strict autocratic system of government could also be in part to blame for his demise. The Tsar, just like his father and his grandfather ^{strictly} followed their autocratic system of government with ~~the~~ three key principles ~~of~~ ~~the~~ : Nationalism, Autocracy and Orthodoxy, just as he had been taught by conservative Pobedonostev. The Tsar refused to grant ~~any~~ many political freedoms, and even though ~~his~~ ~~grip~~ his grip on autocracy slightly loosened after the 1905 Revolution, many

(This page is for your first answer) political groups ~~held~~ held a collective opinion that he should be replaced. His ~~dis~~ dissolution of the First Two liberal Dumas and consecutive establishment of third and Fourth Dumas which were rightly called Dumas of 'Lords and Lackeys,' ~~were~~ were a clear sign for the Liberals to try and take over the power in the later years, since the overall society was progressing and a change was ^{seen as} necessary and required.

Furthermore, the October Manifesto did not completely silence other opposition groups such as SR's and SD's who were growing stronger and their voices were being heard by the masses with the less restricted censorship. Therefore, overall the Tsar's inability to fully compromise his ^{grip on his} autocratic system of government, ~~and~~ could be seen as another reason as to why he was forced to abdicate.

Russian people began seeing the fact that ^{liberal} change was necessary, for the welfare of Russia to be restored again.

In conclusion, the ~~war~~ war should be seen as a ^{catalyst} ~~event~~ factor that caused the Tsar to abdicate in 1917. It certainly exacerbated economic conditions of the Russian society, causing widespread ~~and~~ political unrest due to food shortages, ~~and~~ ^{and} misery both in urban and rural areas, and millions of deaths of the population. The Tsar's failure to deal with these problems effectively and his reckless decisions ^(becoming Commander in Chief) could be seen as aiding this popular unrest to worsen and spread. His ~~a~~ tight grip and will to maintain an autocratic state however, should be seen as perhaps the most important reasons for his failure alongside his disillusioned decisions. Were it

(This page is for your first answer) not for these factors that caused him widespread loss of support initially, perhaps even with the failures of ^{the} war, he would have been able enough to survive.

- In question 4 many candidates were well versed in the roles of both Trotsky and Lenin. While some candidates described what they did, higher scoring candidates were able to judge one against the other, and then reach a judgement which, invariably did not always agree with the question proposition.