

General Certificate of Education  
June 2008  
Advanced Level Examination



**HISTORY**

**HS6F**

**Unit 6W**

**Alternative F: The End of the Soviet Union, c1968–1991**

Thursday 12 June 2008 9.00 am to 10.30 am

**For this paper you must have:**

- a 12-page answer book.

Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes

**Instructions**

- Use black ink or black 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 HS6F.
- Answer **all** questions.
- In answering the questions you must use your own knowledge and understanding of the period.

**Information**

- The maximum mark for this paper is 40.
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- You will be marked on your ability to use good English, to organise information clearly and coherently and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

**Advice**

- You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on part (c).

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Answer **all** questions.

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1 Study the following source material and then answer the questions which follow.

**Source A** During the Brezhnev years there were clear limits to discussion of economic reform, and there were no references to political reform. Market-orientated systems were regarded as heresy. Yet the results of investment were disappointing. New sectors such as computer technology were neglected.

- 5 Industrial growth not only slackened, but declined sharply. Although personal incomes grew, the disparities between different regions also widened. There were few signs of the regime relaxing its hold on the population. Corruption was rife and unchecked, as long as leaders of the Soviet Republics satisfied Moscow by restraining nationalist discontent.

Adapted from J LAVER, *Stagnation and Reform: The USSR, 1964–1991*, 1997

**Source B** Brezhnev on ‘Developed Socialism’, adapted from an article written by Brezhnev in 1977

It is self-evident that a mature socialist society must rest on highly developed productive forces, on a powerful, advanced industry, and on a large-scale, highly mechanised agriculture built on collectivist principles. Such today is the Soviet economy. There has been a gradual destruction of any essential distinctions

- 5 between town and country, and between mental and physical labour, and all working people have adopted the ideological and political positions of the working class. As a result, the interests and goals of all people have drawn closer than ever before. The dictatorship of the proletariat has grown into a socialist state of all the people, redefining social relations on the collectivist principles inherent in
- 10 socialism. In Lenin’s words, this is the fully established socialism from which the gradual transition to communism begins.

**Source C**

A brief text extract adapted from J KEEP, *Last of the Empires*, 1996, discussing the opposition which Gorbachev faced when trying to liberalise the Soviet political system. Not reproduced here due to third-party copyright constraints.

- (a) Use **Source A** and your own knowledge.

Assess the validity of the view in **Source A** about the weaknesses of the USSR in the years 1968 to 1982. *(10 marks)*

- (b) Use **Source B** and your own knowledge.

How useful is **Source B** as evidence of the impact of Brezhnev's 'Developed Socialism' by 1982? *(10 marks)*

- (c) Use **Sources A, B and C** and your own knowledge.

'In the years 1985 to 1991, Gorbachev lacked the skill to reverse the stagnation and complacency which had held back the USSR since 1968.'  
Assess the validity of this view. *(20 marks)*

**END OF QUESTIONS**

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**There are no questions printed on this page**

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Question 1 Source A: J LAVER, *Stagnation and Reform: The USSR 1964–1991*, Hodder & Stoughton, 1997. Reproduced by permission of Hodder & Stoughton Ltd.

Source B: R DANIELS (ed), *A Documentary History of Communism, Volume 1*, I B Tauris, 1987.

Source C: J KEEP, *Last of the Empires*, OUP, 1996.