3.7 Revolutionary Socialism and Social Democracy: Tensions Within the Tradition: Test Pack

EDEXCEL 9PL0 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Short answer questions may be brief and use bullet points where appropriate. For levels-marked questions write a structured response with developed analysis and evaluation as required. The final 30-mark essay requires a clear judgement.

1 State, in one sentence, the revolutionary socialist position on the role of class struggle in transforming society, as originating in Marxist theory. Context: classical Marxist diagnosis of capitalism.

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

2 Identify one practical policy social democrats favour that shows their acceptance of a mixed or managed capitalist economy. Context: twentieth century social-democratic practice.

(Total for Question 2 is 1 mark)

3 Explain two features of the Third Way approach to socialism, as associated with late twentieth century social democracy. Context: policy orientation of Third Way social democrats.

(Total for Question 3 is 3 marks)

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4 Explain two reasons why evolutionary socialists argue that parliamentary democracy is the preferable route to socialism. Context: arguments for democratic gradualism and legitimacy.

(Total for Question 4 is 5 marks)

5 Explain three ways in which social democracy has historically combined state action with market mechanisms. Context: twentieth century policy instruments used by social-democratic governments.

(Total for Question 5 is 6 marks)

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Mark scheme · 3.7 Revolutionary Socialism and Social Democracy: Tensions Within the Tradition: Test Pack

Question 1

one accurate sentence stating that class struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie is the motor of historical change and will lead to overthrow of capitalism	**B1**

Answer: Revolutionary socialists, following Marx, argue that class struggle between the working class and capitalist class drives historical change and will culminate in the proletariat overthrowing capitalism.

Question 2

one accurate example such as a progressive tax system, or a comprehensive welfare state, or state regulation of markets	**B1**

Answer: For example, a comprehensive welfare state financed by progressive taxation.

Question 3

identifies one feature, e.g. acceptance of market mechanisms combined with targeted state intervention	**B1**
identifies a second feature, e.g. emphasis on individual responsibility, social investment and welfare-to-work policies	**B1**
brief development showing how these features differ from classic revolutionary aims	**B1**

Answer: Third Way social democracy accepts market mechanisms while using targeted state intervention to promote social goals, and emphasises individual responsibility and social investment, such as welfare-to-work and education policies, rather than seeking to abolish capitalism.

Question 4

identifies one reason, e.g. legitimacy and consent through elections	**B1**
develops that reason, e.g. democratic consent reduces coercion and builds durable institutions	**B1**
identifies a second reason, e.g. practical reduction of harm and maintenance of social order during transition	**B1**
develops that reason, e.g. gradual reform can secure rights and welfare without economic collapse	**B1**
optional further development, e.g. electoral route builds broader coalitions and can implement complex redistribution policies	**B1**

Answer: One reason is democratic legitimacy: winning power through elections gives reforms popular consent and democratic legitimacy, making them less coercive and more durable. A second reason is prudence and stability: gradual parliamentary reform reduces the risk of economic and social disruption, allowing complex redistribution and institutional change to be implemented while maintaining social order and protecting vulnerable groups.

Question 5

identifies one method, e.g. nationalisation of key industries alongside private sector activity	**B1**
develops with an example or explanation, e.g. nationalised utilities coexisting with private firms	**B1**
identifies a second method, e.g. regulation and redistribution through taxation and welfare	**B1**
develops with an example or explanation, e.g. progressive taxation funding universal healthcare and pensions	**B1**
identifies a third development, e.g. use of state investment to steer markets, such as industrial policy or public procurement	**B1**
briefly explains how these methods balance market incentives with social aims	**B1**

Answer: Social democracy has combined state ownership or strong public provision in key sectors with an active private sector, for example through nationalised utilities coexisting with private firms, and has used regulation, progressive taxation and redistribution to fund universal healthcare and pensions. It has also used targeted state investment and industrial policy to steer markets toward socially desirable outcomes while retaining market incentives.

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