5.10 The Sturmabteilung and Nazi Party Organisation, 1921-1923: 30-minute Pack

EDEXCEL 1HI0 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. You are advised to spend about 30 minutes on this pack.

1 Name one factor that made ex-soldiers join the SA in the early 1920s.

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

2 Suggest one reason why Interpretations 1 and 2 give different views about the SA's importance to the Nazi Party up to 1923.

(Total for Question 2 is 4 marks)

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3 Explain why the SA recruited many ex-soldiers and Freikorps men between 1921 and 1923.

You may use the following in your answer:
- economic and social problems faced by ex-servicemen after the First World War
- the appeal of military-style organisation and belonging offered by the SA

You must also use information of your own.

(Total for Question 3 is 12 marks)

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4 How useful are Sources B and C for an enquiry into the role of the SA in intimidating political opponents between 1921 and 1923?

Source B: From a memoir written in 1935 by a local Social Democratic activist who survived an attack in 1923. He remembers that a band of 'brown-shirted men' surrounded the meeting, shouted over the speakers and finally seized the platform while the organisers were shoved aside. He wrote that the attackers did not wear officers' insignia and seemed to be young, untrained men.

Source C: From a short report in a national conservative newspaper, June 1922, summarising scenes at a recent Nazi rally. The report notes that SA stewards formed a disciplined cordon around the speakers and escorted them through hostile crowds. The paper praised the SA for restoring order, and suggested that left-wing agitators had been responsible for earlier disturbances.

(Total for Question 4 is 8 marks)

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Mark scheme · 5.10 The Sturmabteilung and Nazi Party Organisation, 1921-1923: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

unemployment after demobilisation (accept another valid factor, e.g. comradeship, military-style discipline, resentment at the defeat, hatred of communism, or pay and food) **B1**

Answer: Unemployment after demobilisation (or another valid factor, e.g. comradeship or resentment at the defeat).

Question 2

Level 1 Offers a simple, plausible reason why the interpretations differ, with little explanation. **1-2**

Level 2 Offers a clear reason and explains how this could lead to the different emphases, such as use of different sources or differing focus on political versus social factors. **3-4**

Indicative content:

- They may use different sources, for example Bauer relying on local police and party records showing street intimidation, while Mendel uses memoirs and organisational reports that stress weakness and local variation.
- They may adopt different priorities: one historian emphasises political action and control of public space, the other emphasises ideological appeal and leadership, producing contrasting conclusions about causation.

Question 3

Level 1 Identifies one or two simple reasons why ex-soldiers and Freikorps men joined the SA, with little or no supporting detail or explanation. **1-3**

Level 2 Identifies and begins to explain some reasons, supported by accurate detail, but explanation is limited. **4-6**

Level 3 Explains several reasons clearly, supported by accurate and relevant detail showing links between causes and recruitment. **7-9**

Level 4 Explains multiple reasons in a well-developed and analytical way, supported throughout by precise and accurate detail and showing how the reasons connect to produce recruitment to the SA. **10-12**

Indicative content:

- Economic hardship and unemployment after demobilisation made ex-soldiers seek paid or semi-paid roles; paramilitary groups could offer money, food or a sense of purpose.
- Many former Freikorps members already had experience of street fighting and a culture of political violence, so joining the SA provided continuity and an outlet for those skills.
- The SA's military-style structure, ranks and drilling appealed to men used to army life, offering discipline, camaraderie and status which civilian life no longer provided.
- Nationalist and anti-communist ideology attracted ex-servicemen who feared Bolshevism and wanted to defend what they saw as German order, aligning with the SA's role in breaking up left-wing meetings.
- Leadership and recruitment networks linked the SA to local Freikorps commanders and ex-officers, and figures such as Ernst Rohm used personal contacts to bring whole groups across into the SA.
- The social prestige of being part of a visible uniformed force at public rallies, combined with opportunities for violence and action, made SA membership attractive to those seeking masculine identity after the war.

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Question 4

Level 1 Offers a simple judgement about usefulness, with little supporting analysis of content or provenance. **1-2**

Level 2 Shows some evaluation of the sources, considering content and provenance, but assessment is not fully developed or lacks contextual support. **3-5**

Level 3 Offers a balanced and well-supported judgement on usefulness, analysing content, provenance and context, and showing how each source could be used or its limitations. **6-8**

Indicative content:

- Source B is useful for eyewitness detail about intimidation and violence, giving a personal description of brown-shirted men seizing a platform; however its memoir form, written in 1935, may be affected by memory and later political context.
- The claim in Source B that attackers were young and untrained could suggest that some SA groups were loosely organised, but this conflicts with other evidence of disciplined cordons, so the source should be compared with contemporaneous reports.
- Source C is useful for showing how conservative newspapers portrayed the SA as restoring order, and for revealing contemporary public opinion among some groups, but its political sympathy with the right makes it a limited or biased witness on whether the SA were aggressors or protectors.
- Provenance matters: Source B is retrospective and partisan, Source C is contemporary but politically partial. Together they allow a historian to cross-check descriptions of SA activity and to assess differing public perceptions, but neither alone gives an objective account.

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