

## Specimen Response for Study Theme 3B

### **STUDY THEME 3B: THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA**

#### **Question**

There is little demand for political reform because of recent gains from economic and social reform.

Discuss.

(15 marks)

#### **Response**

In China today there is little demand for political reform. People are happy to wait to get rich. The Communist Party of China (CPC) holds most of the power in China and have recently introduced a number of social and economic reforms to make sure they stay in power.

Since 1997 Hong Kong has been governed by a semi-autonomous Parliament. This means that 50% is elected and the remainder is CPC members. Hong Kong is different from the rest of China as policy ensures that wealth increases and people get rich. This means here most people are happy with the system and the CPC, and there has only been a few, small protests.

The CPC have taken action to ensure they remain in power. This includes the fact that whereas, once, only peasants and small businessmen were allowed to join the CPC now many big businessmen can join. This means the CPC have support from a very important group in China. It is said the CPC allow them to get rich. Furthermore, they have extended local democracy.

The Communist Party of China has also made social and economic reforms which have ensured the majority of people stay content with the CPC. This includes the 'market economy' which allows private business (people wealthier) and foreign investment such as IBM. The scrapping of the registration system (hukou) and greater social security means more people can live and work where they want. It also means migrant workers can work in the cities for low wages, something vital to the economy.

Social reforms have been introduced too. Women have better human rights nowadays, something which is vital in a place where males are valued more than females. The 'One Child Policy' has also been relaxed, particularly in the villages. These increased legal rights have eased the demand for reform.

The Communist Party maintain their power due to their harsh treatment of dissidents. Those who protest the CPC can be arrested, imprisoned and

monitored to ensure they do not cause anymore problems. Therefore, it can be said that many Chinese fear the CPC, but do not report it. There is no real opposition to the CPC, so there is no real voice. There is not fair elections. But people are not aware, or do not care about these problems as there is restricted internet access and media.

In conclusion, overall there is little demand for political change because the country is getting wealthier and the CPC are brutal in their view on political protest and dissidents.

## Marking Instructions for Study Theme 3B

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#### **Question**

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Discuss. (15 marks)

Developed, exemplified, balanced and analytical answers may refer to:

- ◆ social controls have been loosened and unprecedented economic freedom has been allowed
- ◆ increased legal representation
- ◆ reduction in waiting time for those qualified to have a second child
- ◆ dismantling of the *danwei*
- ◆ relaxation of work permit system (*hukou*)
- ◆ changes to economic structures/financial rules (e.g. access to capital)
- ◆ growing urban affluence
- ◆ growth of middle classes with accompanying lifestyles; right to own private property now written into Constitution; wealth creation is part of being a good Communist
- ◆ “Document Number One” aimed at boosting rural incomes (Dec 2004) called for an increase in subsidies and greater government investment in agriculture
- ◆ official aim to create “well-to-do-society” with per capita annual income of \$5000 by 2020; acceptance that this standard will not match West but nonetheless a huge advance as annual per capita income in 2003 was \$1090
- ◆ model of Russia’s transition to capitalism not seen as a good one
- ◆ carefully controlled experiments in democracy, e.g. in Ya’an – a municipality of Sichuan province – where party members allowed to select delegates to party congresses through secret ballots
- ◆ independent candidates allowed to stand in local elections in Beijing

However

- ◆ no mass movement for political reform in China but growing evidence that Chinese citizens are prepared to challenge the authorities
- ◆ urban protests have become increasingly common but politically organised opposition is tiny
- ◆ homes of dissidents under police guard
- ◆ Chinese Democracy Movement supporters are closely watched, phones bugged and Internet access denied
- ◆ village control has been returned to party secretaries from elected village chiefs
- ◆ media must not encourage “public intellectuals”
- ◆ Chinese Communist Party tolerates no opposition and relies on the support of the armed forces to maintain the status quo
- ◆ other relevant points.

‘Achieve’ answers must feature both knowledge and understanding and analysis.

## **Comments on Specimen Answer to Study Theme 3B**

The candidate clearly understands the question and answers it.

The reference to Hong Kong is relevant and current as is the reference to the changes in membership of the CPC. There is good reference to social reforms which placate the people and this is linked to the question. The candidate understands the power of the CPC but could have developed this and given more exemplification.

This is an A pass – with a little more development could have gained full marks.

**12/15**