



A-level HISTORY 7042/1LR

Component 1L The quest for political stability: Germany, 1871–1991

Mark scheme

June 2025

Version: 1.0 Final



Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from [aqa.org.uk](https://www.aqa.org.uk)

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Supporting Marking Guidance

A separate Supporting Marking Guidance document has been created for use in this series and any future series.

It has been written by the senior examining team. It applies to all A-level History options. The purpose of the guidance is to clarify key aspects of the mark scheme and further ensure consistency of approach across all options. The guidance does not reflect a change in the standard applied, but clarification and amplification of the standard. We hope that the guidance document will aid you in your understanding of how the standard should be applied and deepen your understanding of how the key aspects of the mark scheme work. The Supporting Marking Guidance should always be used in conjunction with the mark scheme, and any relevant examiner standardising and teacher training material.

Examiners can find the Supporting Marking Guidance on the associate extranet.

Teachers can find the Supporting Marking Guidance alongside the current mark scheme on Centre Services on results day. It will also be published with any future assessment materials on the public website.

Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity, you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level, you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly Level 3 with a small amount of Level 4 material it would be placed in Level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the Level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

Section A

- 0 1** Using your understanding of the historical context, assess how convincing the arguments in these three extracts are in relation to German political parties in the years 1871 to 1890.

[30 marks]

Target: AO3

Analyse and evaluate, in relation to the historical context, different ways in which aspects of the past have been interpreted.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Shows a very good understanding of the interpretations put forward in all three extracts and combines this with a strong awareness of the historical context to analyse and evaluate the interpretations given in the extracts. Evaluation of the arguments will be well-supported and convincing. The response demonstrates a very good understanding of context. **25–30**
- L4:** Shows a good understanding of the interpretations given in all three extracts and combines this with knowledge of the historical context to analyse and evaluate the interpretations given in the extracts. The evaluation of the arguments will be mostly well-supported, and convincing, but may have minor limitations of depth and breadth. The response demonstrates a good understanding of context. **19–24**
- L3:** Provides some supported comment on the interpretations given in all three extracts and comments on the strength of these arguments in relation to their historical context. There is some analysis and evaluation but there may be an imbalance in the degree and depth of comments offered on the strength of the arguments. The response demonstrates an understanding of context. **13–18**
- L2:** Provides some accurate comment on the interpretations given in at least two of the extracts, with reference to the historical context. The answer may contain some analysis, but there is little, if any, evaluation. Some of the comments on the strength of the arguments may contain some generalisation, inaccuracy or irrelevance. The response demonstrates some understanding of context. **7–12**
- L1:** **Either** shows an accurate understanding of the interpretation given in one extract only **or** addresses two/three extracts, but in a generalist way, showing limited accurate understanding of the arguments they contain, although there may be some general awareness of the historical context. Any comments on the strength of the arguments are likely to be generalist and contain some inaccuracy and/or irrelevance. The response demonstrates limited understanding of context. **1–6**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Students must assess the extent to which the interpretations are convincing by drawing on contextual knowledge to corroborate and challenge the interpretation/arguments/views.

In their identification of the argument in Extract A, students may refer to the following:

- the main argument of Extract A is that Bismarck's persecution of the socialists caused the SPD to become more united, organised and radical as a mass party representing the working class
- Bismarck's fear and persecution of socialism was irrational and completely failed to curtail the threat that socialism posed to the traditional ruling elites
- the SPD may well have not remained united as a party were it not for Bismarck's anti-socialist legislation which lasted for 12 years
- Bismarck's attitude towards socialism held back the integration of the working classes into the new German Reich.

In their assessment of the extent to which the arguments are convincing, students may refer to the following:

- following the 1875 conference, the SPD remained a single, united party in the Reichstag and won 35 seats in the 1890 election. This represented a failure of Bismarck's attempts to disrupt the party following the passing of his first anti-socialist legislation in 1878
- the SPD became a highly organised operation. In response to the anti-socialist laws, the party arranged for literature and newspapers to be published abroad and smuggled into Germany. In addition, secret meetings were held and financial contributions collected
- Bismarck failed to integrate the working class into the Reich. In 1890, 1.5 million voted for the SPD who were opposed to the existing social and political order. In addition, over 250 000 belonged to trade unions, despite these being banned, and strike action was increasing
- in opposition to the extract, it could be argued that Bismarck's policies towards socialism did not turn the SPD into a more radical party. The SPD's Erfurt Programme aimed to achieve socialist goals through legal and political means not revolution.
- in opposition to the extract, it could be argued that Bismarck did not completely fail to integrate the working classes into the Reich. Bismarck's policies of state socialism and welfare in the 1880s were welcomed by many and indicated what could be achieved if the representatives of the working class worked with the government rather than against it.

In their identification of the argument in Extract B, students may refer to the following:

- the main argument of Extract B is that the influence of the liberal parties in this period was limited and the decline of German liberalism accelerated after 1879
- the liberals had limited influence over Bismarck in the 1870s
- liberalism became increasingly divided from 1877 due to the strains caused by the economic depression
- the changes to economic policy in 1878/79 represented a significant shift in government policy to a more conservative basis and, as a result, liberalism was in decline in the 1880s.

In their assessment of the extent to which the arguments are convincing, students may refer to the following:

- the Liberals had wanted annual Reichstag approval of the military budget, but Bismarck was able to get them to accept a seven-year cycle, which significantly restricted parliamentary oversight of the military. This was a victory for authoritarianism over democracy
- the National Liberal Party split in 1878/79 due to the issue of protective tariffs. Those committed to free trade joined the Progressives, whereas the wealthier, business-owning liberals remained as the National Liberals in support of protection
- the influence of the liberal parties was limited in the 1880s as Bismarck relied more on the support of the conservative parties and the Centre. When Bismarck did court the support of the National Liberals, it was very much on his terms and in support of government policy
- in opposition to the interpretation, it could be argued that the liberals had more influence in the 1870s than the extract implies. The policies of further unification and the Kulturkampf were fully aligned with liberal principles and they played a significant role in their implementation
- in opposition to the interpretation, it could be argued that German liberals also had more influence in the 1880s than is implied. When Bismarck sought to make the anti-socialist laws permanent in 1890, it was liberal opposition in the Reichstag that prevented this.

In their identification of the argument in Extract C, students may refer to the following:

- the main argument of Extract C is that the parties in the Reichstag did not use their constitutional powers effectively to challenge the government
- the Reichstag parties had significant potential powers under the constitution to debate, vote on and reject laws
- members of the Reichstag did not have sufficient confidence to challenge Bismarck or the government on important political matters
- politicians, and therefore parties, served interests based on economic classes or religion and were therefore unable to work together effectively to challenge the government.

In their assessment of the extent to which the arguments are convincing, students may refer to the following:

- under the 1871 constitution, all laws had to gain the approval of a majority of members of the Reichstag. This meant that Bismarck had to negotiate and compromise with the political parties on a regular basis, giving them significant potential influence
- the political parties in the Reichstag were not very effective at preventing Bismarck from implementing the policies he wished to pursue. For example, once the National Liberals had outlived their usefulness in the 1870s, he was able to create a new alignment with the conservatives and Centre party in favour of protective tariffs
- the parties were largely sectional in nature – the conservatives representing the traditional landowning elites; the National Liberals representing the newer business-owning class; the Centre party representing German Catholics; and the SPD representing the workers
- in opposition to the interpretation, it could be argued that the parties in the Reichstag did challenge Bismarck effectively on a number of occasions. In 1881, Bismarck was opposed by three-quarters of deputies in the Reichstag and talked openly of arranging a coup to overcome the parliamentary opposition to government policy. He could not make the anti-socialist laws permanent in 1890 due to opposition in the Reichstag
- in opposition to the interpretation, it could be argued that the prospect of new elections was not something that the parties in the Reichstag always viewed favourably. Elections were used by Bismarck to manipulate public opinion, eg in 1878 against the socialists and in 1887 in favour of right-wing parties, and the parties were often wary of opposing Bismarck and risking a new election which could then work against them.

Section B

- 0 2** How important was violence in the Nazis' rise to, and maintenance of, power in the years 1923 to 1945?

[25 marks]*Target: AO1*

Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information will be well-selected, specific and precise. It will show a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement. **21–25**
- L4:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment relating to the question. The answer will be well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated. **16–20**
- L3:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information, which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. **11–15**
- L2:** The answer is descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way, although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6–10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1–5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Arguments supporting the view that violence was important in the Nazis' rise to, and maintenance of, power in the years 1923 to 1945 might include:

- the Munich Putsch was a violent attempt to seize power in 1923. Although a failure, it provided the Nazi movement with powerful propaganda and martyr figures to exploit in future years as it sought to overthrow Weimar democracy
- the SA used street violence and intimidation as their main modus operandi throughout the first decade of this period. SA violence against Communists was particularly significant in winning the support of the property-owning middle classes for the Nazis
- the consolidation of power relied on violent acts like the Night of the Long Knives to remove opponents
- violence was an ever present threat during the period of Gleichschaltung and was particularly effective in intimidating the other political parties into dissolving their organisations
- the Nazi police state relied heavily on the use of terror and violence to silence opposition through violent acts of torture, brutalisation in concentration camps and execution
- the Nazis used the violence of war to bolster their political power. Support for the regime was at its peak during the first two years of the war (1939–41). Even as the tide of war turned, from 1942 onwards, the Nazis were still able to use the war effort as the rationale behind violent repression of opposition.

Arguments challenging the view that violence was important in the Nazis' rise to, and maintenance of, power in the years 1923 to 1945 might include:

- the failure of the violence of the Munich Putsch caused Hitler to change tactics following his release from prison in 1924. The Nazis' main strategy for gaining power was now to win votes and become the dominant force through the democratic system
- the need to win votes enhanced the importance of propaganda in the Nazis' rise to power. Goebbels' skilful propaganda campaigns won the support of many Germans from different classes for the Nazis, helping them become the largest party in 1932
- the Nazis' economic promises and policies could be considered the most important factor. Millions of Germans voted for the Nazis due to the ravages of the Depression. Hitler's subsequent economic policies restored economic growth and prosperity to such an extent that many were genuinely supportive of the regime
- the Nazis' rise to, and maintenance of, power could be put down to the weakness of democracy in Germany and the desire of many Germans for a single, strong leader to restore German strength and pride. Hitler – as Führer – offered this. His successes in war, in the years 1939–41, seemed to confirm this
- ultimately, the Nazis' desire for war and their acceptance of violence as a political tool proved their undoing. As the war turned against Germany, opposition to the Nazi regime increased and eventual defeat in the war caused the downfall of the regime.

Overall, students may conclude that violence was central to both the rise of the Nazis and their maintenance of power. Intimidation of opponents was a consistent feature of Nazi actions throughout this period and won the Nazis many supporters, especially the communist-fearing middle classes, as well as silencing many opponents. However, alternatively, students may conclude that violence was only one method of a range that the Nazis employed. Their rise to power was achieved primarily through democratic processes and the Nazi dictatorship enjoyed significant genuine support from many Germans due to the apparent success of their economic policies and war strategy, at least until 1941.

- 0 3** 'The growth of the economy, in the years 1945 to 1965, was mainly due to the policies of the West German government from 1949.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1

Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Generic Mark Scheme

- L5:** Answers will display a very good understanding of the full demands of the question. They will be well-organised and effectively delivered. The supporting information will be well-selected, specific and precise. It will show a very good understanding of key features, issues and concepts. The answer will be fully analytical with a balanced argument and well-substantiated judgement. **21–25**
- L4:** Answers will display a good understanding of the demands of the question. It will be well-organised and effectively communicated. There will be a range of clear and specific supporting information showing a good understanding of key features and issues, together with some conceptual awareness. The answer will be analytical in style with a range of direct comment relating to the question. The answer will be well-balanced with some judgement, which may, however, be only partially substantiated. **16–20**
- L3:** Answers will show an understanding of the question and will supply a range of largely accurate information, which will show an awareness of some of the key issues and features, but may, however, be unspecific or lack precision of detail. The answer will be effectively organised and show adequate communication skills. There will be a good deal of comment in relation to the question and the answer will display some balance, but a number of statements may be inadequately supported and generalist. **11–15**
- L2:** The answer is descriptive or partial, showing some awareness of the question but a failure to grasp its full demands. There will be some attempt to convey material in an organised way, although communication skills may be limited. There will be some appropriate information showing understanding of some key features and/or issues, but the answer may be very limited in scope and/or contain inaccuracy and irrelevance. There will be some, but limited, comment in relation to the question and statements will, for the most part, be unsupported and generalist. **6–10**
- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1–5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Arguments supporting the view that the growth of the economy, in the years 1945 to 1965, was mainly due to the policies of the West German government from 1949 might include:

- from 1949, Adenauer and Erhard pursued policies to create a ‘social market economy’. This involved a compromise between free-market capitalism and state-management of the economy. The balance between market forces and state regulation proved to be a very successful one in generating consistent economic growth in the 1950s and early 1960s
- the Co-Determination Law of 1951 created the structure for constructive discussions between managers and unions. This effectively balanced the interests of the workers with the wider goal of achieving economic growth. Wage demands from the unions were modest and the number of strikes low, aiding growth
- as Minister for Economic Affairs between 1949 and 1963, Erhard introduced several policies which stimulated economic growth, for example subsidies to aid heavy manufacturing industry, trade agreements with other countries which reduced protective tariffs and banking controls to maintain a strong currency
- Erhard was prepared to deviate further from his reliance on the market when necessary, for example, he instigated government-sponsored work creation schemes in the 1950s, which reduced unemployment and stimulated economic growth
- Adenauer’s policy of pursuing closer ties with France had economic benefits. West Germany was a founder member of both the ECSC and the EEC in the 1950s, which stimulated economic growth in the member states.

Arguments challenging the view that the growth of the economy, in the years 1945 to 1965, was mainly due to the policies of the West German government from 1949 might include:

- during the period of Allied occupation, the British and Americans worked closely with German economics experts to stimulate growth in western Germany. Wage controls were removed, income tax reduced, credit schemes were established and industries were decentralised, all of which helped to bring about economic growth
- assistance offered by the Allies also included not demanding significant reparations from the western zones of occupation (unlike in the east). Further, the support offered through the Marshall Plan, currency reform and the creation of Trizonia in 1948 laid the foundations for economic growth
- the legacy of the war also provided favourable circumstances for economic growth. Many older factories had been destroyed by wartime bombing and could be rebuilt using modern technology. Demand for consumer goods – at home and abroad – following the privations of wartime created significant opportunities for German manufacturers
- West Germany’s international position also created an advantageous economic environment. The FRG did not have to spend any money on postwar rearmament unlike her major international competitors. When the Korean War broke out in 1950, West German manufacturers were able to take advantage of the fact that other advanced economies were focusing heavily on war production again
- West Germany also had a plentiful supply of cheap labour as refugees poured in from eastern Europe. A growing population also created a strong domestic market for manufacturers.

Overall, students may conclude that the growth of the West German economy in this period was largely down to the policies of Adenauer and Erhard after 1949. The concept of the ‘social market economy’, championed by both men, proved very effective at creating the conditions for growth by exploiting the advantages of both the free market and state stimulus. Alternatively, however, students may conclude that the conditions for growth were already well-established by 1949 and that West Germany enjoyed significant geographical and political advantages compared to its main competitors through the period. Assistance provided by the Allies between 1945 and 1949, and the unique position of West Germany within the context of the emerging Cold War, could be considered more significant factors than the policies of the West German government, which merely exploited favourable circumstances.

- 0 4** 'In the years 1966 to 1989, extra-parliamentary opposition was a more significant challenge to West German governments than opposition from within parliament.'

Assess the validity of this view.

[25 marks]

Target: AO1

Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Generic Mark Scheme

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- L1:** The question has not been properly understood and the response shows limited organisational and communication skills. The information conveyed is irrelevant or extremely limited. There may be some unsupported, vague or generalist comment. **1–5**
- Nothing worthy of credit. **0**

Indicative content

Note: This content is not prescriptive and students are not obliged to refer to the material contained in this mark scheme. Any legitimate answer will be assessed on its merits according to the generic levels scheme.

Arguments supporting the view that in the years 1966 to 1989, extra-parliamentary opposition was a more significant challenge to West German governments than opposition from within parliament might include:

- there was a sense of crisis in West Germany in the years 1966 to 1969 due to the wave of student protests, in particular the actions of the APO which organised widespread (sometimes violent) opposition to government policy, especially the new ‘Emergency Laws’
- in contrast to the wave of student protest between 1966 and 1969, there was no effective opposition within parliament due to the Grand Coalition of CDU/CSU and SPD. Indeed, one of the motivations for the APO was that parliamentary opposition was virtually non-existent.
- the actions of the RAF (Baader-Meinhof Gang) were considered a significant threat in the early to mid-1970s due to the extreme nature of their tactics and ideology, as well as their links to international terrorist groups such as the PLO
- from the mid-1970s, extra-parliamentary opposition was dominated by environmental groups and campaigns against nuclear weapons. These groups were well-supported and there were several violent clashes with police.
- although parliamentary opposition was stronger after 1969 due to the collapse of the Grand Coalition, the period up to 1989 is often depicted as one of consensus in relation to economic and welfare policy. Only one government was forced to resign – Schmidt in 1982 – due to the tactics of the opposition.

Arguments challenging the view that in the years 1966 to 1989, extra-parliamentary opposition was a more significant challenge to West German governments than opposition from within parliament might include:

- the APO protests of the late 1960s did not prevent the passing of the ‘Emergency Laws’ by the Grand Coalition. After 1969, the student protest movement lost its momentum due to internal divisions and the graduation of many of the original leaders
- Brandt and Schmidt both took determined action to prevent the escalation of terrorist activity in the 1970s. Public opinion was repulsed by the actions of the RAF. Therefore, despite some isolated high-profile incidents, the RAF did not pose a significant threat to the government
- the formation of the Green Party in 1980 marked a shift in tactics of the environmental campaign groups, who had come to the conclusion that promoting their cause from within parliament would be more effective than from outside
- opposition from within parliament was significant after 1969. The CDU/CSU were strident in their criticism of Brandt’s social welfare policies and his Ostpolitik. He only narrowly survived a vote of no-confidence in 1972 after a number of FDP deputies defected from the coalition
- in 1982, opposition from the CDU/CSU caused the collapse of Schmidt’s government as the FDP decided to join a new coalition headed by Kohl. The new coalition, however, faced stiff opposition from the SPD and Greens and, by 1989, Kohl’s government was unstable.

Overall, students may conclude that extra-parliamentary opposition was at its peak between 1966 and 1969, partly due to the lack of opposition in parliament itself. Furthermore, despite the restoration of the usual left-right division in parliament after 1969, there was still a strong consensus between the main political parties meaning that extra-parliamentary opposition retained its significance through to 1989, most notably in the hands of environmental and anti-nuclear campaigners. However, alternatively, students may conclude that extra-parliamentary opposition was never that significant, failing to influence government policy notably throughout the period. Instead, the nature of coalition government in

West Germany meant that successive governments had to be very sensitive to shifting opinions within parliament and, therefore, parliamentary opposition was more influential. Further, it was capable of bringing a government down, something that was never possible for the extra-parliamentary groups.