



## SECTION A

Read the **two** passages and answer Question 1.

- 1 Evaluate the interpretations in **both** of the two passages and explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of the significance of the Fronde for the French state. [30]

**Passage A**

The Fronde were much more than a mere nuisance. They had undone some of the good work accomplished by Richelieu by reviving the power of the nobility and diminishing the authority of the Crown. On the other hand the irresponsible behaviour of the nobles had done much to alienate the bourgeois. Abroad they had interfered with the conduct of the war against Spain and had therefore reduced France's prestige. A Spanish advance towards Paris had obliged Mazarin to leave France, if only to prove to his enemies that it was not his continued presence which caused disorder. The prince of Condé went over to Spain. This provided an opportunity for the regent (Anne of Austria) and her young son Louis XIV, to re-enter Paris in triumph and revoke all the concessions granted to the parlements and to the nobles. In 1653 Cardinal Mazarin was once more re-seated at the queen mother's side.

France needed a period of economic and political rehabilitation. However, Mazarin never saw his task in economic terms, but in degrees of prestige and the extent of spheres of influence. For five years he had been haunted by the spectre of civil war. Freed from this, he was able to turn his attention to the employment of all means towards the subjection of the Spanish Habsburgs.

**Adapted from: V. H. H. Green, Renaissance and Reformation: a Survey of European History between 1450–1660, published in 1969.**

**Passage B**

Louis was profoundly influenced by the Fronde, never abandoning his belief in ordered authority as the antidote to chaos. He never forgot being hustled out of palaces in the middle of the night to avoid being kidnapped. He saw his mother humiliated by ambitious nobles, some of them his own flesh and blood. He saw Mazarin chased out of the country. He was aware that the royal family and the chief minister were lampooned in scurrilous rhymes. Royal power was questioned by insolent lawyers in the parlement of Paris. Above all, France was reduced to the chaos of civil war. The private armies of the nobility leagued with France's enemies, the Spanish. Louis retained to his life's end a concern for order, authority and national security as a result of the nightmare which he had to endure as a child-king.

Given the difficulties in governing so large a country as France, combined with the historical background in 1661, was there not a case for absolutism? Indeed, were there alternatives? Not even the leaders of the Fronde had suggested alternatives to authoritarian monarchy; they had merely proved the case for absolutism by their selfish irresponsibility. Nobody wanted a renewal of chaos and violence. Louis XIV and the vast majority of his contemporaries believed that even a tyrant was preferable to the collapse of law and order. So there was a strong case for Louis XIV to adopt a firm, reasonable, absolutist approach.

**Adapted from: R. Wilkinson, Louis XIV, France and Europe 1661–1715, published in 2002.**

**SECTION B**

Answer any **two** questions.

- 2\*** 'Finances and taxation were the most important factors limiting the power of the French monarchy in the period from 1610 to 1715.' How far do you agree? **[25]**
- 3\*** 'Throughout the period from 1610 to 1715, France was religiously divided.' How far do you agree? **[25]**
- 4\*** 'Peasant unrest was a greater threat to the power of the monarchy than noble unrest in the period from 1610 to 1715.' How far do you agree? **[25]**

**END OF QUESTION PAPER**

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