

Section C In the light of differing interpretations, how convincing do you find the view that, there had been a revolution on government finance 1688-1701?

To explain your answer, analyse and evaluate the material in both extracts, using your own knowledge of the issues.

Extract 1: From J Miller, The Glorious Revolution, published 1997. p 133

Having distinguished between the civil and military elements in the crown's ordinary expenditure, the commons increasingly took over responsibility for military and naval expenditure, voting money to pay the interest on debts incurred on the various branches of the ordinary revenue. Under the pressures of War, the old distinction between ordinary and extraordinary revenue became so blurred has to be meaningless. Some argued that the revenue is "in the crown as a trust" and that "what is given to the King is not as he is King but for support of the Nation". It was superseded by a more realistic distinction between civil and military expenditure. Such a distinction seemed particularly necessary in 1697-98 when many were unwilling to trust William with the army left over from the war, but it would probably have developed anyway. With the king giving a revenue adequate only for his civil expenditure, the tradition that he should "live of his own" which had received some mortal blows in 1689-90 was buried forever. From the reign of Anne, the monarchy was voted the civil list for life, while the army and Navy estimates were put before Parliament each year. The failure to grant William an adequate revenue in 1689-90 was deliberate. Dislike or distrust of William made the commons determined not to surrender the financial weapon placed in their hands by the Revolution. Whatever the motives, the destruction of all hope of an independent royal revenue transformed the crown's relationship with Parliament. Now the commons, if they chose, could force their wishes on the King by withholding supply.

Extract 2: From T Claydon, William III, published 2002. p134

William treasured the legislature as a fierce financial watchdog. Earlier Stuart Kings had faced calls for Commons control over how the court spent money. Fears of corruption and extravagance in the royal Household had sparked demands that parliament scrutinise and supervise public expenditure to ensure that all sums were used for the public good. Being Stuart Kings Williams predecessors had resisted these calls. They had taken the traditional line that money voted for the King became his private revenue, and insisted that parliamentary comments on the King's finances were unwarranted intrusions into the mysteries of the State. By contrast William saw a use for Commons mistrust. He knew that parliamentarians suspected that money was wasted and embezzled at court. At the same time, he was determined that money his legislators voted for the struggle with France should actually be used for that purpose. William therefore saw a central role for Parliament in ensuring financial probity. He also seems to have wider views on the usefulness of his assembly. He appears to have had a vision of it as a source of information and counsel which could provide an alternative to his own circle. He apparently believed that a Parliament which represented the nation and knew it's condition, should have a central role in formulating policy.

Key	
	Case for. Source. For example source 2 suggests " +S" . Use source as evidence and content
	Case for. Knowledge. This can be further supported by K
	Case for. Repeat this pattern 2 or 3 times integrating source analysis and knowledge
	Case for. Corroborate. Finally this is partially supported by sources 1
	Case against. For example source 2 suggests " +S" . Use source as evidence and content
	Case against. Knowledge. This can be further supported by K
	Case against. Repeat this pattern once integrating source analysis and knowledge
	Case against. Corroborate. Finally this view is also challenged by source 1 that suggests

Planning your Answer

Extract 1 supports the view that there was in fact a revolution of government finances "Now the commons, if they chose, could force their wishes on the King by withholding supply", whilst Extract 2 challenges this view and supports the notion that there was not a

revolution on government finances "William treasured the legislature as a fierce financial watchdog". It is argued that Extract 1 is the most convincing interpretation of events however Extract 2 does well to describe the situation at the start of the period of 1688-1701.

Extract 2 offers an over simplistic revisionist view of limited change in the financial governance of the country. This view as some minor evidence to support it. For example the Extract 2 suggests "William treasured the legislature as a fierce financial watchdog." William was certainly taking a risk by committing millions of pounds and thousands of troops in the war effort. This caused strain between William and Parliament in which he was primarily concerned that money would be raised to support his foreign policy decision. Furthermore it points out "At the same time, he was determined that money his legislators voted for the struggle with France should actually be used for that purpose". The average annual expenditure in the Nine Years War was just over £5.4 million, however the average tax revenue was just £3.6 million. William was able to achieve this level of revenue by **taxing items** such as tea, tobacco and alcohol. The most significant revenue stream was the land tax, a third of all required funds. Finally it argues "He appears to have had a vision of it as a source of information and counsel which could provide an alternative to his own circle". Finally this is partially supported by Extract 1 by suggesting that change was gradual "the commons increasingly took over responsibility for military and naval expenditure, voting money to pay the interest on debts incurred on the various branches of the ordinary revenue" However this view has some major limitations in terms of the evidence. In 1690, William had agreed to the Public Accounts Act and the first commission was set up in 1691, with nine commissioners voted to their positions by the MPs. For example Extract 1 suggests "Whatever the motives, the destruction of all hope of an independent royal revenue transformed the crown's relationship with Parliament". Furthermore this scrutiny was carried out with unprecedented attention to detail. Meetings took place daily and interviews were regularly carried out, although government officials would often obstruct the process. Finally The Bank of England was the brainchild of Whig Chancellor Charles Montagu and was supported by many Whigs and opposed by many Tories. A further settlement was established in 1698 when the **Civil List Act** was passed. The King was now given a 'civil list' of income estimated at £700,000 per year, with any surplus only granted with the consent of parliament. Clearly this view plays an important role in understanding the controversy over changes in financial governance in the Glorious Revolution in showing that it evolved over time, but it is not the most persuasive.

The most convincing view of this controversy is which is supported by Extract 1 which supports the Whig view that the financial changes were evolutionary and significant with a major role for Parliamentary scrutiny. This view as some major evidence to support it. For example Extract 1 suggests "the commons increasingly took over responsibility for military and naval expenditure". This therefore was different than the financial arrangements under previous Stuart Monarchs who under mounting financial pressure resorted to a series of forced loans as had Charles I indicating that it could not raise funds at rates it was either willing or able to pay. Furthermore it points out "Now the commons, if they chose, could force their wishes on the King by withholding supply.". Following the financial developments in the 1690's government became financially solvent and gained access to hitherto unprecedented sums for the government. This was enhanced because it was subject to Parliamentary scrutiny and underwritten by the Bank of England 1694. Finally it argues "Such a distinction seemed particularly necessary in 1697-98 when many were unwilling to trust William with the army left over from the war" Revisionist Steven Pincus goes even further to explain the financial revolution and suggests it was significant for the economy not because it solved a problem of credible commitment, but for two other reasons. First, because the institutional changes it led to meant that party political ministries, rather than the king's private advisors, now initiated policy. Second, because these ministries were dominated by Whigs with a specific program of economic modernization Finally this is partially supported by Extract 2 "William therefore saw a central role for Parliament in ensuring financial probity". However this view has some minor limitations. For example Extract 2 suggests "William therefore saw a central role for Parliament in ensuring financial probity", emphasising the continued role of the Crown in financial governance and that, "He appears to have had a vision of it as a source of information and counsel which could provide an alternative to his own circle." Clearly this view of a revolutionary change in financial governance is the most convincing in understanding the controversy.

It can be concluded therefore that whilst Extract 2 is important in explaining the continued influence of the Crown in partnership with Parliament in ensuring the financial probity of government finance it fails to address the revolutionary changes in emerging financial control by Parliament. This is alluded too in the more convincing perspective of Extract 1 which argues that in the context of William's wars in Ireland and France, Parliament was increasingly able through unprecedented scrutiny of government finance from 1690, the creation of the Bank of England in 1694 and a further settlement established in 1698 when the **Civil List Act** was passed to "force their wishes on the King by withholding supply".