**Which of the sources is more useful to an historian studying the Night of the Long Knives? [12]**

Candidate A

The Night of the Long Knives took place on 30 June, 1934 and is a major turning point in Hitler’s consolidation of power. Hitler was able to use the killings – more than 400 - to remove potential threats or opponents to his increasing power and vision. Some of the most important victims included Ernst Rohm, leader of the SA, and von Schleicher, one of the last ‘November Criminals and former Chancellor of Germany. He was also able to secure the support of the army – a crucial move in Hitler’s further consolidation of power.

Source C is Hitler justifying the brutality of the massacre to the Reichstag – the government now represented by just one party, the Nazis. He portrays himself as being the ‘hero’ of the German state. He explains the brutality was necessary to save Germany from revolution. Interestingly he mentions how he acted alone – saying he was ‘supreme Judge of the German People’ – or the dictator he wants to become. Hitler speaks with confidence in the knowledge his opponents have been removed. Hitler is using the speech as propaganda – it would be widely reported on and so help influence the German people into believing Hitler really is their saviour by removing threats to destabilise the country from within. He does not mention that the SA was in fact once his supporters or that this was a cruel betrayal of their trust.

Source D offers a different perspective of the killings as it is a cartoon published days later in the British press. Free from Nazi censorship and intimidation the cartoon shows how the Night of the Long Knives is an act of betrayal against those who helped Hitler come to power – the once loyal SA now left with nothing but broken promises on socialism for Germany. In the cartoon Hitler holds the smoking gun while Goebbels – the man in charge of the Nazi’s propaganda machine - is on all fours as if Hitler’s pet dog. Its message is that Hitler is prepared to take whatever action necessary to secure absolute power in Germany.

I believe Source D is more useful. It provides an uncensored view that violence and intimidation will be an important aspect of Hitler’s rule. It shows Hitler was prepared to kill those once loyal to him in order to gain power.