QUESTION 3

 Study the interpretations below and then answer the question which follows.

 **Interpretation 1**

With the coming of National Socialism, the progress in women’s rights was reversed. The humiliation of women became a way of life. The Nazi desire for motherhood for all German women became the central issue and family was seen as the most important part of the volk, or people.

[Charu Gupta, a feminist historian, writing in an article The Politics of Gender: Women in Nazi Germany, published in a magazine in 1991]

 **Interpretation 2**

Many women supported the National Socialist Party because it urged returning to the family values of the past when women were encouraged to stay at home and concern themselves with taking care of the household. There were many women in Germany who had the desire to return to this simpler way of life.

[Anextract from Women in Nazi Germany, an article published on the websiteGermanCulture.com, a general information site]

Do the interpretations support the view that the lives of women worsened under the Nazis? [10] [In your answer you should refer to how and why the interpretations may differ. Use your own knowledge and understanding of the wider historical debate over this issue to reach a well-supported judgement.]

ANSWER:

Interpretation 1 clearly supports the view that the lives of women worsened under the Nazis. The historian claims that when the Nazis came to power that progress in women’s rights was reversed. She claims that women were seen only as mothers and homemakers.

The writer is correct in suggesting that the Nazis emphasised this primary role of women. There was a huge propaganda campaign to promote motherhood and large families through the 3Ks – children, kitchen and church. Certainly life did change for women under the Nazis as they were encouraged not to smoke, wear makeup or have sex outside of marriage. Many women were encouraged or even forced out of their jobs especially if they became pregnant which was a change from life in Weimar Germany.

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The author of interpretation 1 is a feminist historian called Charu Gupta who produced her article for a magazine published in 1991.

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Underline key words in the quotation and the question.

What is the examiner asking you to do?

Identify whether interpretation 1 supports or contradicts the focus of the question.

Explain and develop the main message of the interpretation

Consider the author, the type of publication and the intended audience

Interpretation 2 is more supportive/less supportive of the view provided in the question.

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Identify whether interpretation 2 supports or contradicts the focus of the question.

Consider the author, the type of publication and the intended audience

Provide a reasoned judgement that addresses the question