



General Certificate of Education
Advanced Subsidiary Examination
January 2010

History

HIS2Q

Unit 2Q The USA and Vietnam, 1961–1975

Wednesday 20 January 2010 9.00 am to 10.30 am

For this paper you must have:

- a 12-page answer book.

Time allowed

- 1 hour 30 minutes

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Examining Body** for this paper is AQA. The **Paper Reference** is HIS2Q.
- Answer **two** questions.
Answer Question 1 and **either** Question 2 **or** Question 3.
- In answering the questions you must use your own knowledge and understanding of the period.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 72.
- There are 36 marks for each question.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Advice

- You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on each question.

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Answer Question 1 and **either** Question 2 **or** Question 3.

1 Study the following source material and then answer the questions which follow.

Source A Adapted from a letter President Kennedy sent to President Diem, 14 December 1961

We have been deeply disturbed by the assault on your country. Our anger mounted as the deliberate savagery of the Communist programme of mindless violence became clear. We are prepared to help the Republic of South Vietnam to protect its people and preserve its independence. We shall promptly increase our assistance to your defence effort. The United States remains devoted to the cause of peace and our primary purpose is to help your people maintain their independence. If the Communist authorities in North Vietnam will stop their campaign to destroy the Republic of South Vietnam, the measures we are taking to assist your defence will no longer be necessary.

Source B I think it highly probable that President Kennedy would have pulled us out of Vietnam. I think he would have come to that conclusion, even if he had thought that South Vietnam and, ultimately, Southeast Asia would then be lost to Communism. He would have accepted that cost. Kennedy would have agreed that withdrawal would cause the ‘fall of the dominoes’ but that staying in South Vietnam would ultimately lead to the same result, while exacting a terrible price in blood from young American soldiers.

Adapted from R S McNAMARA, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam*, 1995

Source C Kennedy viewed the conflict in Vietnam as communist aggression within the context of the Cold War. US Army Special Forces trained the South Vietnamese Army in guerrilla warfare. The USA also developed strategic hamlets, villages surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by troops, to isolate National Liberation Front (NLF) guerrillas from political recruits and other resources. In November 1961, Kennedy agreed to provide aircraft, intelligence equipment and additional economic aid. By mid-1963, of the 3 700 strategic hamlets, the NLF had destroyed 2 600 and they controlled a significant portion of South Vietnam’s villages and population. By the end of 1963, they were preparing for an offensive and uprising. Kennedy left to Johnson a US military force of 16 000 troops and a commitment to the growing Vietnamese war.

Adapted from M HALL, *The Vietnam War*, 2000

(a) Use **Sources A** and **B** and your own knowledge.

Explain how far the views in **Source B** differ from those in **Source A** in relation to Kennedy’s concern for South Vietnam’s independence. (12 marks)

(b) Use **Sources A**, **B** and **C** and your own knowledge.

How far was President Kennedy determined to use military force in South Vietnam in order to stop the spread of communism in Southeast Asia? (24 marks)

EITHER

- 2 (a) Explain why President Johnson began the mass bombing of North Vietnam. *(12 marks)*
- (b) 'In the years 1965 to 1970, the greatest influence on American public opinion towards Vietnam was the My Lai massacre.'
Explain why you agree or disagree with this view. *(24 marks)*

OR

- 3 (a) Explain why the Tet Offensive was launched in 1968. *(12 marks)*
- (b) 'In the years 1969 to 1973, President Nixon's policies towards Southeast Asia showed that he was only interested in a military solution to the Vietnam war.'
Explain why you agree or disagree with this view. *(24 marks)*

END OF QUESTIONS

There are no questions printed on this page

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Question 1 Source C: Adapted from M HALL, *The Vietnam War*, 2000, reproduced with permission of Pearson Education Ltd.

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SA0841/Jan10/HIS2Q