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# A-level HISTORY

## The American Dream: Reality and Illusion, 1945–1980

Paper 2Q

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Specimen 2014

Morning Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes

### Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 12-page answer book.

### Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is **2Q**.
- Answer **three** questions.  
In **Section A** answer Question 01.  
In **Section B** answer **two** questions.

### Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- 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:
    - 60 minutes on Question 01
    - 45 minutes on each of the two questions in Section B.
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**Section A**Answer Question 01.

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**Source A**

Adapted from Action for South Vietnam, a confidential assessment of conditions in Vietnam by a State Department adviser, Richard McNaughton, November 1964.

**US Aims:**

- a) To protect US reputation as a counter-subversion guarantor
- b) To avoid domino effect, especially in South-East Asia
- c) To keep South Vietnamese territory out of Red hands
- d) To emerge from the crisis without unacceptable taint from methods used

**Present situation:**

The situation in Vietnam is deteriorating. Unless new actions are taken, the new government will probably be unstable and ineffectual, and the VC will probably continue to extend their hold over the population and territory. It can be expected that, soon (6 months? Two years?), (a) government officials in the South, at all levels, will adjust their behaviour to an eventual VC takeover, (b) defections of significant military forces will take place, (c) whole integrated sections of the country will be totally denied to the GVN, (d) neutral and/or left-wing elements will enter the government, (e) a popular front regime will emerge which will invite the US to leave, and (f) fundamental concessions to the VC and the DRV will put South Vietnam behind the Curtain.

**Source B**

Adapted from A Policy of Sustained Reprisal, an appendix to McGeorge Bundy's confidential memorandum to President Johnson, 7 February 1965.

We believe that the best available way of increasing our chances of success in Vietnam is the development and execution of a policy of *sustained reprisal* against North Vietnam – a policy in which air and naval action against the North is justified by and in relation to the whole Viet Cong campaign of violence and terror in the South. While we believe the risks of such a policy are acceptable, we emphasise that its costs are real. It implies considerable US air losses, even if no full air war is joined, and it seems likely that it would eventually require an extensive and costly effort against the whole air defense system of North Vietnam. US casualties would be higher – and more visible to American feeling – than those in the struggle in South Vietnam. Yet, measured against the costs of defeat in South Vietnam, this program seems cheap. And even if it fails to turn the tide – as it may – the value of the effort seems to us to exceed its cost.

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**Source C**

Adapted from a statement to the American people by President Lyndon Johnson at a press conference, 28 July 1965.

There are great stakes in the balance. Most of the non-Communist nations of Asia cannot, by themselves, and alone, resist the growing might and the grasping ambition of Asian Communism. Our power, therefore, is a vital shield. If we are driven from the field in South Viet-Nam, then no nation can ever again have the same confidence in American promises or in American protection. In each land the forces of independence would be considerably weakened and an Asia so threatened by Communist domination would certainly imperil the security of the United States itself.

We did not choose to be the guardians at the gate, but there is no one else. Moreover, we are in Viet-Nam to fulfil one of the most solemn pledges of the American nation. Three Presidents – President Eisenhower, President Kennedy and your present President – over 11 years have committed themselves to help defend this small and valiant nation. Strengthened by that promise, the people of South Viet-Nam have fought for many long years. Thousands of them have died. Thousands more have been crippled and scarred by war. We just cannot now dishonour our word, or abandon our commitment, or leave those who trusted us to the terror and repression and murder that would follow.

That, my fellow Americans, is why we are in Viet-Nam.

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With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying the escalation of the US war effort in Vietnam in the years 1964 to 1968.

**[30 marks]**

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**Section B**

Answer **two** questions.

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**0 2**

'It was a time of abundant prosperity and unquestioning national self-confidence.'

Assess the validity of this view of the United States in the years 1945 to 1960.

**[25 marks]**

**0 3**

'In the years 1961 to 1968, the campaigns to advance the civil rights of African-Americans made only limited progress in the face of bitter opposition.'

Assess the validity of this view.

**[25 marks]**

**0 4**

'Richard Nixon proved himself to be a master of statesmanship in foreign affairs.'

Assess the validity of this view.

**[25 marks]**

**END OF QUESTIONS**

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