

General Certificate of Education  
June 2008  
Advanced Level Examination



## **HISTORY**

### **Unit 6W**

**HS6L**

**Alternative L: The USA and Vietnam, 1963–1973**

Thursday 12 June 2008 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 HS6L.
- Answer **all** questions.
- In answering the questions you must use your own knowledge and understanding of the period.
- Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.
- You must answer the questions in the spaces provided. Answers written in margins will not be marked.

### **Information**

- The maximum mark for this paper is 40.
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- You will be marked on your ability to use good English, to organise information clearly and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

### **Advice**

- You are advised to spend about 45 minutes on part (c).

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Answer **all** questions.

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

**Source A** Adapted from a song created by American helicopter pilots in 1963

We were supporting the ARVNs,  
A group without guts,  
Attacking a village  
Of straw-covered huts.  
5 The VC's start shooting,  
They fire a big blast,  
We off-load the ARVNs  
They sit on their ass.  
An armoured battalion  
10 Just stayed in a trance,  
One captain died trying  
To make them advance.  
When the news was reported  
The ARVNs had won,  
15 The VC's are laughing  
Over their captured guns.

**Source B** The communists persisted in Vietnam despite the very high death rate, which was higher per head of population than that of Japan in World War II. The most important factor in the war was enemy determination. The North Vietnamese had decided that they were not going to be defeated. If US air strikes knocked down a  
5 bridge, hordes of peasants mobilized to repair the destruction caused by the bombs, to build fords or to put in an underwater bridge. The bombing in 1972 may have even strengthened the resolve of a people that were culturally used to adversity.

Adapted from JM STARR, *The Lessons of the Vietnam War*, 1991

**Source C** The massive bombing of South Vietnam was entirely unproductive. Any case for the efficacy of air power rests not on Rolling Thunder, but on Nixon's air campaigns: Freedom Train (April 1972), Linebacker I (May–October 1972) and Linebacker II (the 1972 Christmas bombing). Freedom Train, designed to break  
5 morale, failed. A case can be made for the effectiveness of the Linebacker attacks.

Adapted from J DUMBRELL, *Vietnam: American Involvement at Home and Abroad*, 1992

**Source D**

A brief text extract adapted from BUI DIEM, *A Viable State*, 1987, suggesting that the greatest mistake made by the US in relation to Vietnam was the manner in which they exited the country and the war. Not reproduced here due to third-party copyright constraints.

- (a) Use **Source D** and your own knowledge.

Assess the validity of the view in **Source D** about the US disengagement from the war.  
(10 marks)

- (b) Use **Source A** and your own knowledge.

How useful is **Source A** as evidence of US military views on the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN)?  
(10 marks)

- (c) Use **Sources A, B, C** and **D** and your own knowledge.

‘The main reason the USA failed to win the war was because it abandoned its ally, South Vietnam.’  
Assess the validity of this opinion.  
(20 marks)

**END OF QUESTIONS**

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**There are no questions printed on this page**

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Question 1 Source B: JM STARR, *The Lessons of the Vietnam War*, Center for Social Studies Education, 1991

Source C: J DUMBRELL, *Vietnam: American Involvement at Home and Abroad*, BAAS, 1992