

A Level History

Past Paper Questions

Evaluating primary sources

With reference to Sources 1, 2 and 3 and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying the US policy of containment.

SOURCE 1

From Winston Churchill's 'Iron Curtain' speech delivered in Fulton, Missouri, on 5 March 1946. Truman was sitting behind him on the platform while the speech was delivered:

From what I have seen of our Russian friends and Allies during the war, I am convinced that there is nothing they admire so much as strength, and there is nothing for which they have less respect than for weakness, especially military weakness. For that reason the old doctrine of a balance of power is unsound. We cannot afford, if we can help it, to work on narrow margins, offering temptations to a trial of strength. If the Western Democracies stand together in strict adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter, their influence for furthering those principles will be immense and no one is likely to molest them. If however they become divided or falter in their duty and if these all important years are allowed to slip away then indeed catastrophe may overwhelm us all.

SOURCE 2

Extract from Kennan's 'Long Telegram' to US Secretary of State James Byrnes advising on how to handle communist Foreign Policy, February 1945:

Soviet power, unlike that of Hitlerite Germany, is neither schematic nor adventurous. It does not work by fixed plans. It does not take unnecessary risks. It is impervious to the logic of reason, and it is highly sensitive to the logic of force. For this reason it can easily withdraw – and usually does when strong resistance is encountered at any point. Thus, if the adversary has sufficient force and makes clear his readiness to use it, he rarely has to do so. If situations are properly handled there need be no prestige-engaging showdowns. Gauged against the Western world as a whole, Soviets are still by far the weaker force. Thus, their success will really depend on the degree of cohesion, firmness and vigor which the Western world can muster.

SOURCE 3

Extract from a letter by General MacArthur to Joseph William Martin, Jr, the Republican leader in the House of Representatives, read aloud on the floor of the House on 5 April 1951:

It seems strangely difficult for some to realize that here in Asia is where the communist conspirators have elected to make their play for global conquest, and that we have joined the issue thus raised on the battlefield; that here we fight Europe's war with arms while the diplomats there still fight it with words; that if we lose the war to communism in Asia the fall of Europe is inevitable, win it and Europe most probably would avoid war and yet preserve freedom. As you pointed out, we must win. There is no substitute for victory.

Evaluating primary sources

With reference to Sources 1, 2 and 3 and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying Eisenhower's foreign policy priorities.

SOURCE 1

An extract from Eisenhower's Farewell Address to the Nation on 17 January 1961, broadcast on television. Three days later he left the presidency and was allowed to reinstate his rank of Five-Star General, the top rank in the US Army:

Until the latest of our world conflicts, the United States had no armaments industry. But now we can no longer risk emergency improvisation of national defense; we have been compelled to create a permanent armaments industry of vast proportions. Added to this, three and a half million men and women are directly engaged in the defense establishment. We annually spend on military security more than the net income of all United States corporations. This conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. The total influence – economic, political, even spiritual – is felt in every city, every State house, every office of the Federal government. In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can ensure the huge industrial and military machinery of defense serves with our peaceful methods and goals, so that security and liberty may prosper together.

SOURCE 2

An extract from a note by the Executive Secretary to the NSC on US Policy towards the Soviet Satellites in Eastern Europe, 3 July 1956:

Soviet domination of the Eastern European satellites remains firm and there appears little immediate prospect of basic change in this regard. While the satellite regimes have not been able to overcome widespread popular dissatisfaction with their communistic program and with their inclusion within

SOURCE 3

Extract from Eisenhower's Special Message to the Congress on the Situation in the Middle East, 5 January 1957:

Russia's rulers have long sought to dominate the Middle East. That was true of the Czars and it is true of the Bolsheviks. The reasons are not hard to find. The reason for Russia's interest in the Middle East is solely that of power politics. Considering her announced purpose of Communizing the world, it is easy to understand her hope of dominating the Middle East. It contains about two thirds of the presently known oil deposits of the world and it normally supplies the petroleum needs of many nations of Europe, Asia and Africa. It is now essential that the United States should manifest through joint action of the president and the Congress our determination to assist those nations of the Mid East area, which desire that assistance.

Evaluating primary sources

With reference to Sources 1, 3 and 4 and your understanding of the historical context assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying how Kennedy's foreign policy changed during his presidency.

SOURCE 1

An extract from Kennedy's inaugural address, 20 January 1961. A Kennedy aide was detailed to read all the previous inaugural addresses and focus on what made the memorable ones memorable:

In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger. I do not shrink from this responsibility – I welcome it. I do not believe that any of us would exchange places with any other people or any other generation. The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it. And the glow from that fire can truly light the world. And so, my fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country. My fellow citizens of the world, ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.

SOURCE 3

Extract from Kennedy's televised address to the American public, 22 October 1962:

I call upon Chairman Khrushchev to halt and eliminate this clandestine, reckless, and provocative threat to world peace and to stabilise relations between our two nations. I call upon him further to abandon this course of world domination, and to join in an historic effort to end the perilous arms race and to transform the history of man. He has an opportunity now to move the world back from the abyss of destruction by returning to his government's own words that it had no need to station missiles outside its own territory, and withdrawing these weapons from Cuba by refraining from any action which will widen or deepen the present crisis, and then by participating in a search for peaceful and permanent solutions.

SOURCE 4

Robert McNamara, Secretary of State for Defense talking in the 2003 film *Fog of War: Eleven Lessons from the Life of Robert McNamara* about the Cuban Missile Crisis. McNamara was part of the Ex-Comm group that advised Kennedy on how to handle the crisis:

I want to say, and this is very important: at the end we lucked out. It was luck that prevented nuclear war. We came that close to nuclear war at the end. Rational individuals: Kennedy was rational; Khrushchev was rational; Castro was rational. Rational individuals came that close to total destruction of their societies. And that danger exists today. The major lesson of the Cuban missile crisis is this: the indefinite combination of human fallibility and nuclear weapons will destroy nations. Is it right and proper that today there are 7500 strategic offensive nuclear warheads, of which 2500 are on 15 minute alert, to be launched by the decision of one human being?

Evaluating primary sources

Look back at Sources 1, 2 and 3. With reference to these sources and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these sources to an historian studying Kennedy's presidency.

SOURCE 1

An extract from the eulogy delivered by Supreme Court Justice Earl Warren, on 24 November 1963. Warren was appointed by LBJ to head the Warren Commission investigation into the death of Kennedy:

John Fitzgerald Kennedy, a great and good president, the friend of all men of good will, a believer in the dignity and equality of all human beings, a fighter for justice, an apostle of peace, has been snatched from our midst by the bullet of an assassin. What moved some misguided wretch to do this horrible deed may never be known to us, but we do know that such acts are commonly stimulated by forces of hatred and malevolence, such as today are eating their way into the bloodstream of American life. It has been said that the only thing we learn from history is that we do not learn. But surely we can learn if we have the will to do so. Is it too much to hope that the martyrdom of our beloved president might even soften the hearts of those who do not shrink from spreading the venom which kindles thoughts of it in others? We can all be better Americans because John Fitzgerald Kennedy has passed our way.

SOURCE 2

An extract from an interview with Carl Oglesby, a technical writer for the defence contractor Bendix Aerospace Systems Division. Oglesby later left Bendix and became the President of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), a student activist movement prominent between 1965 and 1969:

In this one office they had the scotch [whiskey] out. The ripple of excitement, the thrill that ran through Bendix Systems Division when the word came of Kennedy's death, and with it the implicit word that now we got Johnson. It was like – I don't know how to describe it. It was almost a physical tremor. Before, there was gloom, because for one thing Kennedy had cancelled out a big contract we had. We were building something called the Eagle Missile that was supposed to go on a certain airplane. Well, the airplane didn't exist, and it wasn't going to exist either. So Kennedy logically figured why build the missile? But this didn't seem reasonable to 'corporate headquarters', which was really fed up at having lost the Eagle Missile system. Well that was the mood people were in. The next minute Kennedy gets popped. A minute after that, the scotch is out, because the contracts are coming back. And they did! By God, they did. I couldn't shrug that off.

SOURCE 3

Taken from Betty Friedan's 1963 book, *The Feminine Mystique*, chapter one 'The Problem That Has No Name'. The publication of the book is often seen as the start of the Second Wave of feminism in the US:

The problem lay buried, unspoken for many years in the minds of American women. It was a strange stirring, a sense of dissatisfaction, a yearning that women suffered in the middle of the twentieth century in the United States. Each suburban housewife struggled with it alone. As she made the beds, shopped for groceries, matched slipcover material, ate peanut butter sandwiches with her children, chauffeured Cub Scouts and Brownies, lay beside her husband at night, she was afraid to ask even of herself the silent question – "Is this all?" The American housewife, freed by science and labor-saving appliances from the drudgery, the dangers of childbirth, and the illnesses of her grandmother had found true feminine fulfilment. But strange new problems are being reported in the growing generations of children whose mothers were always there, driving them around, helping them with their homework, an inability to endure pain or discipline or pursue any self-sustained goal of any sort, a devastating boredom with life.

Evaluating primary sources

With reference to Sources 2 and 3 and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these sources to an historian studying the problems facing Johnson in the 1960s.

SOURCE 1

An adapted extract from Rowland Evans and Robert Novak's 1966 book:
Lyndon B Johnson: The Exercise of Power:

Johnson's method for getting his way became known as 'the Johnson treatment' and took the form of supplication, accusation, persuasion, exuberance, scorn, tears, complaint, the hint of threat. It was all these together. It ran the range of human emotions. Its speed and force was breathtaking, and it was all in one direction. Interjections from the target were rare. Johnson anticipated them before they could be spoken. He moved in close, his face a scant millimeter from his target, his eyes widening and narrowing, his eyebrows rising and falling. From his pockets poured clippings, memos, statistics. Mimicry, humor, and the genius of analogy made The Treatment an almost hypnotic experience and rendered the target stunned and helpless.

SOURCE 2

President Johnson's commencement address at the University of Michigan, 1964. This was the first time he mentioned the 'Great Society':

It is harder and harder to live the good life in American cities today. The catalog of ills is long: there is the decay of the centers and the despoiling of the suburbs. There is not enough housing for our people or transportation for our traffic. Open land is vanishing and old landmarks are violated. Worst of all, expansion is eroding the precious and time honored values of community with neighbors and communion with nature. The loss of these values breeds loneliness and boredom and indifference. Our society will never be great until our cities are great. Today the frontier of imagination and innovation is inside those cities and not beyond their borders. New experiments are already going on. It will be the task of your generation to make the American city a place where future generations will come, not only to live but to live the good life.

SOURCE 3

Al From, the founder and former CEO of the Democratic Leadership Council in an interview in 2008:

The OEO principle of empowerment – we strove for maximum feasible participation of the poor – outraged America's mayors and created enormous political headaches for Sarge every day. The concept was simple: poor people had a right to one-third of the seats on every local poverty program board. The mayors went crazy. I was once asked by a mayor who had closed five neighborhood centers: 'Why should I open five organizations to campaign against me.' Sarge never buckled. He hated welfare and believed in community action. Even when Johnson effectively pulled the plug on the War on Poverty to fund the war in Vietnam, Sarge fought on and won. We didn't always get our paychecks on time because Congress delayed our funding – that's why I got an American Express Card in 1967 – but in the end Sarge won the battle and the anti-poverty program went on. It's not always appreciated today, but during the Shriver years more Americans got out of poverty than during any similar time in our history.

Evaluating primary sources

With reference to Sources 1, 2 and 3 and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these sources to an historian studying opposition to Johnson's policy in Vietnam.

SOURCE 1

Adapted extract from a speech by Johnson to the American people, 4 August 1964 after the Gulf of Tonkin incident:

In the larger sense this new act of aggression [the Tonkin incident], brings home to all of us the importance of the struggle for peace and security in south-east Asia. Aggression by terror against the peaceful villagers of South Vietnam has now been joined by open aggression on the high seas against the United States of America. The determination of all Americans to carry out our full commitment to the people and to the government of South Vietnam will be redoubled by this outrage. Yet our response, for the present, will be limited and fitting. We Americans know, although others appear to forget, the risks of spreading conflict. We still seek no wider war. I have instructed the Secretary of State to make this position totally clear to friends and to adversaries and, indeed, to all.

SOURCE 2

The end of Walter Cronkite's CBS News broadcast, 27 February 1968. Cronkite was the most respected news anchor on US TV and had previously suggested he was in favour of the war:

Tonight, back in more familiar surroundings in New York, we'd like to sum up our findings in Vietnam, an analysis that must be speculative, personal, subjective. Who won and who lost in the great Tet Offensive against the cities? I'm not sure. The Vietcong did not win by a knockout but neither did we. For it seems now more certain than ever, that the bloody experience of Vietnam is to end in a stalemate. To say that we are closer to victory today is to believe in the face of the evidence, the optimists who have been wrong in the past. To say that we are mired in stalemate seems the only realistic, if unsatisfactory conclusion. It is increasingly clear to this reporter that the only rational way out will be to negotiate, not as victors, but as an honorable people who lived up to their pledge to defend democracy, and did the best they could. This is Walter Cronkite. Good night.

SOURCE 3

Black Power Address at UC Berkeley by Stokely Carmichael in October 1966:

The war in Vietnam is an illegal and immoral war. And the question is, what can we do to stop the people who, in the name of our country, are killing babies,

Evaluating primary sources

With reference to Sources 1 and 2 and your understanding of the historical context, assess their value to an historian studying Malcolm X.

SOURCE 1

Extract from the eulogy at Malcolm X's funeral delivered by actor and activist Ossie Davis, 27 Feb 1965:

There are those who will consider it their duty, as friends of the Negro people, to tell us to revile him, to flee, even from the presence of his memory. Many will ask what Harlem finds to honor in this stormy, controversial and bold young captain – and we will smile. Many will say turn away – away from this man, for he is not a man but a demon, a monster, a subverter and an enemy of the black man – and we will smile. They will say that he is of hate – a fanatic, a racist – who can only bring evil to the cause for which you struggle! And we will answer and say to them: Did you ever talk to Brother Malcolm? Did you ever really listen to him? Did he ever do a mean thing? Was he ever himself associated with violence or any public disturbance? For if you did you would know him. And if you knew him you would know why we must honor him.

SOURCE 3

Extract from an article in The Baltimore Afro-American newspaper 25 May 1968:

The scenic side of the Lincoln Memorial's reflecting pool will be the home of some 10,000 poor people who have begun converging in Washington in protest against poverty. Planners were attracted by the availability of water, sewage, recreational and electrical facilities. But the present 'Resurrection City' is planned to accommodate only 3000 poor people – a figure far below what the SCLC expects. James Peterson, the Poor People's Campaign administrative assistant, said they have had good responses from middle class whites who have donated sums ranging from \$1000 and over. It might be a sense of guilt. They are beginning to feel that the world they are living in and the world of the poor people are quite different. They feel they have neglected their brothers and sisters and this campaign has given them the opportunity to assist the poor' he said. Peterson remarked that quite a number of white people are still adamant and not moved by the efforts of the poor people to communicate their needs to the entire nation.

SOURCE 4

Adapted extract from the Kerner Commission report, published on 29 February 1968 commissioned by Johnson to investigate the causes of the riots from 1965–67, and the Detroit riot of 1967 in particular:

The civil disorders of 1967 involved Negroes acting against local symbols of white American society, authority and property in Negro neighborhoods – rather than against white persons. Disorder generally began with rock and bottle throwing and window breaking. Once store windows were broken, looting usually followed. Disorder did not erupt as a result of a single incident. Instead, it was generated out of an increasingly disturbed social atmosphere, in which typically a series of tension-heightening incidents became linked in the minds of many in the Negro community with a reservoir of underlying grievances. The typical rioter was a teenager or young adult, a lifelong resident of the city in which he rioted, a high school dropout. What the rioters appeared to be seeking was fuller participation in the social order and the material benefits enjoyed by the majority of American citizens. Rather than rejecting the American system, they were anxious to obtain a place for themselves in it.

Evaluating primary sources

With reference to Sources 1, 2 and 3 and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying whether the American Dream was exposed as an illusion in the 1960s.

SOURCE 1

An extract from the Port Huron Statement, drafted by **Tom Hayden** on behalf of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), Port Huron, Michigan, 15 June 1962:

When we were kids the United States was the wealthiest and strongest country in the world: the only one with the atom bomb, the least scarred by modern war, an initiator of the United Nations that we thought would distribute Western influence throughout the world. Freedom and equality for each individual, government of, by, and for the people – these American values we found good, principles by which we could live as men. Many of us began maturing in complacency. Others declare that the people are withdrawn because compelling issues are fast disappearing – perhaps there are fewer breadlines in America, but is Jim Crow gone, is there enough work and work more fulfilling, is world war a diminishing threat, and what of the revolutionary new peoples? But why should business elites help decide foreign policy, and who controls the elites anyway, and are they solving mankind's problems? Others, finally, shrug knowingly and announce that full democracy never worked anywhere in the past.

SOURCE 2

Taken from an article in *New York* magazine by **Gloria Steinem** from April 1969 entitled, 'After Black Power, Women's Liberation':

At the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) Convention in 1967, women were still saying such integrationist things as 'The struggle for the liberation of women must be part of the larger fight for freedom.' Many Movement women still are. But members of groups like the Southern Student Organizing Committee and New York Radical Women [a loose coalition of various radical groups whose representatives meet once a month] withdrew to start concentrating on their own problems. They couldn't become black or risk jail by burning their draft cards, but they could change society from the bottom up by radicalizing [engaging with basic truth] the consciousness of women; by going into the streets on such women's issues as abortion, free childcare centers, and a final break with the 19th-century definition of females as sex objects whose main function is to service men and their children.

SOURCE 3

The Ten-Point-Program of the Black Panther Party 15 May 1967. All subsequent 537 issues of the *Black Panther* newspaper contained the party's ten-point manifesto and programme:

What We Want Now!

1. We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community.
2. We want full employment for our people.
3. We want an end to the robbery by the white men of our Black Community.
4. We want decent housing, fit for shelter of human beings.
5. We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present day society.
6. We want all Black men to be exempt from military service.
7. We want an immediate end to POLICE BRUTALITY and MURDER of Black people.
8. We want freedom for all Black men held in federal, state, county and city prisons and jails.
9. We want all Black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their Black Communities, as defined by the Constitution of the United States.
10. We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace.

Evaluating primary sources

Using Sources 3 and 4 and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these two sources to an historian who was trying to identify Nixon's Vietnam policy when he became president.

SOURCE 3

An extract from Richard Nixon's 'Silent Majority' speech, part of an Address to the Nation on 3 November 1969:

Let historians not record that when America was the most powerful nation in the world we passed on the other side of the road and allowed the last hopes for peace and for the freedom of millions of people to be suffocated by the forces of totalitarianism. And so tonight – to you, the great silent majority of my fellow Americans – I ask for your support. I pledged in my campaign for the presidency to end the war in a way that we could win the peace. I have initiated a plan of action which will enable me to keep that pledge. The more support I can have from the American people, the sooner that pledge can be redeemed; for the more divided we are at home, the less likely the enemy is to negotiate in Paris. Let us be united for peace. Let us also be united against defeat. Because let us understand: North Vietnam cannot defeat or humiliate the United States. Only Americans can do that.

SOURCE 4

From a letter to Richard Nixon signed by 32 US soldiers who had served in Vietnam, 26 November 1969:

As for those of us in the 'vocal minority' who have demonstrated for peace, most of us are neither basically anti-American nor even anti-Nixon. Despite the harsh language in your speech, we do not seek to 'defeat' or 'humiliate' America. We want our country to be strong. And we believe wholeheartedly that the policies we advocate will benefit America by extricating her from a war which is sapping both her international and domestic strength. Furthermore, we support your pledge to change the Johnson Administration's policies. We don't want our country to 'bug out' on her foreign commitments. We wish to affirm American support for free government and to continue our commitments to our allies if they are subject to external aggression. However we do not see how it is in our national interest to commit US troops for putting down internal rebellions or for supporting corrupt and repressive governments.

Evaluating primary sources

With reference to Sources 1, 2 and 4 and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying the 'American Dream' in 1968.

SOURCE 1

Richard Nixon's address accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Republican National Convention in Miami Beach, Florida, 8 August 1968:

America is in trouble today not because her people have failed but because her leaders have failed. The great question Americans must answer by their votes in November is this: Whether we shall continue for four more years the policies of the last five years. When the strongest nation in the world can be tied down for four years in a war in Vietnam with no end in sight; When the richest nation in the world can't manage its own economy; When the nation with the greatest tradition of the rule of law is plagued by unprecedented lawlessness; When a nation that has been known for a century for equality of opportunity is torn by unprecedented racial violence; And when the President of the United States cannot travel abroad or to any major city at home without fear of a hostile demonstration – then it's time for new leadership for the United States of America. The time has come for honest government in the United States of America.

SOURCE 2

Yippie Manifesto Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin, 1968:

Come into the streets on Nov. 5, election day. Vote with your feet. The American election represents death, and we are alive. Come all you rebels, youth spirits, rock minstrels, bomb throwers, bank robbers, peacock freaks, toe worshippers, poets, street folk, liberated women, professors and body snatchers: it is election day and we are everywhere. Freak out the pigs with exhibitions of snake dancing and karate at the nearest pig pen. Release a Black Panther in the Justice Department. Wear costumes. Take a burning draft card to Spiro Agnew. Stall for hours in the polling places trying to decide between Nixon and Humphrey and Wallace. Take your clothes off. Hold block parties. And then on Inauguration Day Jan. 20 we will bring our revolutionary theater to Washington to inaugurate Pigasus, our pig, the only honest candidate, and turn the White House into a crash pad. Every man a revolution! Every small group a revolutionary center! We will be together on election day. Yippie!!!

SOURCE 4

From a letter to Richard Nixon signed by 32 US soldiers who had served in Vietnam, 26 November 1969:

As for those of us in the 'vocal minority' who have demonstrated for peace, most of us are neither basically anti-American nor even anti-Nixon. Despite the harsh language in your speech, we do not seek to 'defeat' or 'humiliate' America. We want our country to be strong. And we believe wholeheartedly that the policies we advocate will benefit America by extricating her from a war which is sapping both her international and domestic strength. Furthermore, we support your pledge to change the Johnson Administration's policies. We don't want our country to 'bug out' on her foreign commitments. We wish to affirm American support for free government and to continue our commitments to our allies if they are subject to external aggression. However we do not see how it is in our national interest to commit US troops for putting down internal rebellions or for supporting corrupt and repressive governments.

Evaluating primary sources

With reference to Sources 2, 3 and 4 and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying Nixon's response to protests?

SOURCE 2

Nixon in an informal conversation in a corridor at the Pentagon on 1 May 1970, reported in *The Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Richard Nixon, 1970*:

You think of those kids out there. I say kids. I have seen them. They are the greatest. You see these burns, you know, blowing up the campuses. Listen, the boys that are on the college campuses today are the luckiest people in the world, going to the greatest universities, and here they are burning up the books, I mean storming around about this issue – I mean you name it – get rid of the war; there will be another one. Out there we've got kids who are just doing their duty. I have seen them. They stand tall, and they are proud. I am sure they are scared. I was when I was there. But when it really comes down to it, they stand up and, boy, you have to talk up to those men. And they are going to do fine; we've got to stand back of them.

SOURCE 3

Reply from Richard Nixon to student Randy J Dicks, 13 October 1969. Dicks had written to Nixon criticising the president's statement that he would not be affected by anti-war protests:

First, there is a clear distinction between public opinion and public demonstrations. To listen to public opinion is one thing; to be swayed by public demonstrations is another. A demonstration – in whatever cause is an organized expression of one particular set of opinions, which may or may not be shared by the majority of the people. If a President – any President – allowed his course to be set by those who demonstrate, he would betray the trust of all the rest. Whatever the issue, to allow government policy to be made in the streets would destroy the democratic process. It would give the decision, not to the majority, and not to those with the strongest arguments, but to those with the loudest voices. It would reduce statecraft to slogans. It would invite anarchy. It would allow every group to test its strength not at the ballot box but through confrontation in the streets.

SOURCE 4

Extract from Nixon's first inaugural address, 20 January 1969:

To lower our voices would be a simple thing. In these difficult years, America has suffered from a fever of words; from inflated rhetoric that promises more than it can deliver; from angry rhetoric that fans discontents into hatreds. For its part, government will listen. Those who have been left out, we will try to bring in. Those left behind, we will help to catch up. In this past third of a century, government has passed more laws, spent more money, initiated more programs, than in all our previous history. In pursuing our goals of full employment, better housing, excellence in education; in rebuilding our cities and improving our rural areas; in protecting our environment and enhancing the quality of life--in all these and more, we will and must press urgently forward. We shall plan now for the day when our wealth can be transferred from the destruction of war abroad to the urgent needs of our people at home.

Evaluating primary sources

With reference to Sources 1, 2 and 3 and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying Nixon's foreign policy.

SOURCE 1

Taken from the book *Nixon's Ten Commandments of Statecraft* by James C. Humes and Richard Nixon, published in 1998:

A president needs a global view, a sense of proportion and a keen sense of the possible. If I could carve ten rules into the wall of the Oval Office for my successors in the dangerous years ahead, they would be these:

1. Always be prepared to negotiate, but never negotiate without being prepared
2. Never be belligerent, but always be firm
3. Always remember that covenants should be openly agreed to but privately negotiated
4. Never seek publicity that would destroy the ability to get results
5. Never give up unilaterally what could be used as a bargaining chip
6. Never let your adversary underestimate what you would do in response to a challenge
7. Always leave your adversary a face-saving line of retreat
8. Distinguish between friends who provide some human rights and enemies who deny all human rights
9. Do at least as much for our friends as our adversaries do for our enemies
10. Never lose faith. Faith without strength is futile, but strength without faith is sterile.

SOURCE 2

Nixon's address to the nation on the situation in South East Asia, 30 April 1970 announcing the start of operations in Cambodia:

In cooperation with the armed forces of South Vietnam, attacks are being launched this week to clean out major enemy sanctuaries on the Cambodian-Vietnam border [...] During my campaign for the presidency, I pledged to bring Americans home from Vietnam. They are coming home. I promised to end this war. I shall keep that promise. I promised to win a just peace. I shall keep that promise. We shall avoid a wider war. But we are also determined to put an end to this war. I have rejected all political considerations in making this decision. Whether my party gains in November is nothing compared to the lives of 400,000 brave Americans fighting for our country and for the cause of peace and freedom in Vietnam. I would rather be a one-term President and do what I believe is right than to be a two-term President at the cost of seeing America become a second-rate power and to see this Nation accept the first defeat in its proud 190-year history.

SOURCE 3

Winston Lord, special assistant to Kissinger in 1972 and later US Ambassador to China, speaking in 1998:

First, an opening to China would give us more flexibility on the world scene generally. We wouldn't just be dealing with Moscow. We could deal with Eastern Europe and we could deal with China, because the former Communist Bloc was no longer a bloc. Kissinger wanted more flexibility, generally. Secondly, by opening relations with China we would catch Russia's attention and get more leverage on them through playing this obvious, China card. The idea would be to improve relations with Moscow, hoping to stir a little bit of its paranoia by dealing with China. Thirdly, Kissinger and Nixon wanted to get help in resolving the Vietnam War. By dealing with Russia and with China we hoped to put pressure on Hanoi to negotiate seriously. With Nixon going to China in February, 1972, and to Moscow in May, 1972, the Russians and Chinese were beginning to place a higher priority on their bilateral relations with us than on their dealings with their friends in Hanoi.

Evaluating primary sources

With reference to Sources 1, 2 and 3 and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying the consequences of the Watergate Affair?

SOURCE 1

Adapted from an interview by the British journalist David Frost with Richard Nixon, aired in May 1977. The Frost: Nixon interview, the first the disgraced president had given, became the subject of a stage play and film:

David Frost [initially addressing the camera]: The wave of dissent in America, occasionally violent, which followed the incursion into Cambodia prompted President Nixon to demand better intelligence about the people who were opposing him on the domestic front. To this end a series of meetings were arranged with representatives of the CIA, the FBI, and other police and intelligence agencies. These meetings produced a plan, the Huston Plan, which advocated the systematic use of wiretappings, burglaries, mail openings and infiltration against anti-war groups and others. Some of these activities were clearly illegal. Nevertheless, the president approved the plan. Five days later, after opposition from the FBI director, **J Edgar Hoover**, the plan was withdrawn, but the president's approval was later to be listed in the articles of impeachment as an alleged abuse of presidential power.

David Frost: [now addressing Nixon] Would you say that there are certain situations where the president can decide that it's in the best interests of the nation, and do something illegal?

Richard Nixon: Well, when the president does it, that means it is not illegal.

SOURCE 2

An extract from an Address to the Nation About the Watergate Investigations by Richard Nixon, 3 April 1973:

For the fact that alleged improper actions took place within the White House or within my campaign organization, the easiest course would be for me to blame those to whom I delegated the responsibility to run the campaign. But that would be a cowardly thing to do. I will not place the blame on subordinates. In any organization, the man at the top must bear the responsibility. That responsibility, therefore, belongs here, in this office. I accept it. And I pledge to you tonight, from this office, that I will do everything in my power to ensure that the guilty are brought to justice. Some people, quite properly appalled at the abuses that occurred, will say that Watergate demonstrates the bankruptcy of the American political system. I believe precisely the opposite is true. It was the system that has brought the facts to light and that will bring those guilty to justice. It is essential now that we place our faith in that system – and especially in the judicial system.

SOURCE 3

Adapted from a speech by President Gerald R. Ford – September 8, 1974:

The facts, as I see them, are that a former President of the United States, instead of enjoying equal treatment, would be cruelly and excessively penalized either in preserving the presumption of his innocence or in obtaining a speedy determination of his guilt in order to repay a legal debt to society. But it is not the ultimate fate of Richard Nixon that most concerns me, my concern is the immediate future of this great country. My conscience tells me clearly and certainly that I cannot prolong the bad dreams that continue to reopen a chapter that is closed. My conscience tells me that only I, as President, have the constitutional power to firmly shut and seal this book. My conscience tells me it is my duty, not merely to proclaim domestic tranquility but to use every means that I have to insure it. Now, therefore, I, Gerald R. Ford, President of the United States have granted a full, free, and absolute pardon unto Richard Nixon.

Evaluating primary sources

With reference to Sources 1, 2 and 3 and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying the problems facing Ford and Carter at home.

SOURCE 1

Extract from **President Gerald Ford's** obituary in the British newspaper, *The Guardian*, 27 December 2006. Ford served as president from 9 August 1974 to 20 January 1977:

Gerald Ford will be remembered for exposing an extraordinary constitutional weakness unforeseen by the founding fathers of the United States. Having been a notoriously mediocre congressman, he went on to fill the country's two principal executive posts without the benefit of a single electoral vote. When voters were eventually given a chance to legitimise his presidency, he became the first White House incumbent in 44 years to be defeated. Opinion polls showed that a critical factor had been his decision to issue the former president Richard Nixon with a 'full, free, and absolute pardon for all offences against the United States' committed during the Watergate cover-up. The seal was finally set on his presidency in the 1976 campaign against Jimmy Carter. In one of their televised debates he offered the unbelievable judgment that 'there is no Soviet domination of eastern Europe'. It brought home sharply to his audience how slim was his understanding of the world he was supposed to lead.

SOURCE 2

Jimmy Carter's 'malaise' speech, 15 July 1979. The speech was very popular and saw Carter's opinion poll ratings rise by 11 per cent despite its apparent criticism of Americans:

I want to talk to you right now about a fundamental threat to American democracy. The threat is nearly invisible in ordinary ways. It is a crisis of confidence. We've always had a faith that the days of our children would be better than our own. Our people are losing that faith. But just as we are losing our confidence in the future, we are also beginning to close the door on our past. In a nation that was proud of hard work, strong families, close-knit communities, and our faith in God, too many of us now tend to worship self-indulgence and consumption. What you see too often in Washington and elsewhere around the country is a system of government that seems incapable of action. You see a Congress twisted and pulled in every direction by hundreds of well-financed special interests. You often see a balanced and a fair approach that demands sacrifice abandoned like an orphan. You don't like it, and neither do I. What can we do?

SOURCE 3

Extract from 'Carter's Broken Lance' an article by William Safire for the *New York Times*, 21 July 1977. Safire won a Pulitzer Prize for the article which attacked the president's judgement:

Jimmy Carter is trying to sell the Senate a dubious bill of goods about his long-time friend, Office of Management and Budget Director Bert Lance. Here we have a situation in which the man in charge of the nation's books is deeply, dangerously, in hock; who goes home every night not knowing whether the Labor Department will find out about his teamster connections, or the SEC will look into his assurance to 45 people about a stock issue, or the bank examiners and First Chicago stockholders will expose a sweetheart loan, or the man on whom he depends for financial solvency will exert some subtle pressure for political advantage. Jimmy Carter's broken Lance is a walking conflict of interest. The complaisant Senate subcommittee now glancing at his wheeling and dealing should stop making an exception and start making an example.

Evaluating primary sources

With reference to Sources 1, 2 and 3 and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying the principles of Carter's foreign policy.

SOURCE 1

Jimmy Carter outlining the reasons behind his decision to change the nature of US foreign policy towards communist countries in a speech at Notre Dame University in January 1977:

For too many years, we've been willing to adopt the flawed and erroneous principles and tactics of our adversaries, sometimes abandoning our own values for theirs. We've fought fire with fire, never thinking that fire is sometimes best quenched with water. This approach failed, with Vietnam the best example of its intellectual and moral poverty. But through failure we have now found our way back to our own principles and values, and we have regained our lost confidence. Our rise to world eminence dates from 1945, when Europe and the old international order lay in ruins. Before then, America was largely on the periphery of world affairs. But since then, we have inescapably been at the center. Our policy during this period was guided by two principles, a belief that Soviet expansion was almost inevitable but that it must be contained, and the corresponding belief in the importance of an almost exclusive alliance among non-Communist nations on both sides of the Atlantic. That system could not last forever unchanged.

SOURCE 2

In his memoir, *Keeping Faith*, Carter reflects on how he felt when the hostages finally left Iran after 444 days in captivity, 30 minutes after Reagan had been inaugurated as President:

Of course, their lives, safety, and freedom were the paramount considerations, but there was more to it. I wanted to have my decisions vindicated. It was very likely that I had been defeated and would soon leave office as President because I had kept these hostages and their fate at the forefront of the world's attention, and had clung to a cautious and prudent policy in order to protect their lives during the preceding fourteen months. Before God and my fellow citizens, I wanted to exert every ounce of my strength and ability during these last few days to achieve their liberation. In spite of the fact that I turned over the reigns of a great nation, as President, to my successor, it [the release of the hostages] was one of the happiest moments, one of the happiest days of my life.

SOURCE 3

Carter's National Security Adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski in an interview with CNN, June 1997, describes the Carter government's reaction to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan:

We immediately launched a twofold process. The first involved direct reactions and sanctions focused on the Soviet Union, and both the State Department and the National Security Council prepared long lists of sanctions to be adopted, of steps to be taken to increase the international costs to the Soviet Union of their actions. And the second course of action led to my going to Pakistan for the purpose of coordinating with the Pakistanis a joint response, the purpose of which would be to make the Soviets bleed for as much and as long as is possible; and we engaged in that effort in a collaborative sense with the Saudis, the Egyptians, the British, the Chinese, and we started providing weapons to the mujahideen, including some Soviet arms from the Egyptians and the Chinese. We even got Soviet arms from the Czechoslovak communist government; and at some point we started buying arms for the mujahideen from the Soviet army in Afghanistan, because that army was increasingly corrupt.

Evaluating primary sources

With reference to Sources 1, 2 and 3 and your understanding of the historical context, assess the value of these three sources to an historian studying the changes to the position of African-Americans by 1980.

SOURCE 1

Extract from *The Declining Significance of Race: Blacks and Changing American Institutions*, by William J Wilson (1978). Wilson was a University of Chicago sociologist who put forward the controversial thesis that race was becoming less important than class in America:

In the first half of the twentieth century the efforts of whites to construct racial barriers profoundly affected the lives of black Americans. Racial oppression was easily documented, ranging from slavery to segregation, from the endeavours of the white economic elite to exploit black labour to the actions of the white masses to eliminate or neutralize black competition. As the nation has entered the latter half of the twentieth century many of the traditional barriers have crumbled under the weight of the political, social and economic changes of the civil rights era. A new set of obstacles has emerged from structural shifts in the economy. These obstacles may prove to be even more formidable for certain segments of the black population. Specifically, whereas previous barriers were usually designed to control and restrict the entire black population, the new barriers create hardships essentially for the black **underclass**; whereas the old barriers were based explicitly on racial motivations, the new barriers have racial significance only in their consequences, not in their origins.

SOURCE 2

A speech by Jesse Jackson to the Republican Party National Committee, 20 January 1978. Jackson was invited to address the convention to help the Republican Party in its plan to attract the black vote:

In thirteen short years, we have gone from 400 black officials to over 4000, but it is still less than half a per cent of all public officials. While much progress has been made to eliminate the external barriers denying our right to vote there are still some barriers remaining. The Democrats have no incentive to register us because we already comprise one-fourth of their total vote. The Republicans feel they have no incentive to register blacks because we tend to vote democrat. Since 1964 the Republican Party has turned its back on the black vote and black interests. Black people need the Republican Party to compete for us so that we have real alternatives for meeting our needs. The Republican Party needs black people if it is to ever compete for national office or, in fact, to keep it from becoming an extinct party. Hands that picked cotton in 1966 did pick the President in 1976. And they could very well be the difference in 1980.

SOURCE 3

Extract from the August 1980 edition of *Black Enterprise* magazine reporting a poll of 5000 of its readers:

A decade ago, our hopes for advancement seemed to lie in the hands of government, our allies, and ourselves. A Republican president had begun to dismantle the many programmes intended to help us progress towards an equality that often seemed as elusive as a phantom in a haunted house. Richard Nixon had adopted black capitalism as his solution to black oppression and our skepticism was nearly as deep as our dissatisfaction with government handouts. Our young people were dying in a war which seemed to have no purpose. Ten years later we find that our skepticism was justified but that we have made progress nonetheless – testimony again to the complexities of our times. Nixon and the war in South East Asia are now a part of our history but if many of us have moved forward into the American Dream more of us have slipped backwards into the American nightmare.