

2008 AP® UNITED STATES HISTORY FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

UNITED STATES HISTORY

SECTION II

Part A

(Suggested writing time—45 minutes)

Percent of Section II score—45

Directions: The following question requires you to construct a coherent essay that integrates your interpretation of Documents A-I and your knowledge of the period referred to in the question. High scores will be earned only by essays that both cite key pieces of evidence from the documents and draw on outside knowledge of the period.

1. Analyze the ways in which the Vietnam War heightened social, political, and economic tensions in the United States. Focus your answer on the period 1964 to 1975.

DOCUMENT A

Source: Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, 1964

Whereas the United States is assisting the peoples of southeast Asia to protect their freedom and has no territorial, military or political ambitions in that area, but desires only that these people should be left in peace to work out their destinies in their own way: Now, therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Congress approves and supports the determination of the President, as Commander in Chief, to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression.

DOCUMENT B

Source: Country Joe and the Fish, "I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-To-Die," 1965

Well, come on Wall Street, don't move slow,
Why man, this is war au-go-go.
There's plenty good money to be made
By supplying the Army with the tools of the trade,
Just hope and pray that if they drop the bomb,
They drop it on the Viet Cong.

And it's one, two, three,
What are we fighting for?
Don't ask me, I don't give a damn,
Next stop is Vietnam.
And it's five, six, seven,
Open up the pearly gates,
Well there ain't no time to wonder why
Whoopee! we're all gonna die.

Well, come on mothers throughout the land,
Pack your boys off to Vietnam.
Come on fathers, don't hesitate,
Send 'em off before it's too late.
Be the first one on your block
To have your boy come home in a box.

I Feel Like I'm Fixin' to Die Rag, words and music by Joe
McDonald. Copyright ©1965 renewed 1993 by Alcatraz Corner
Music Co. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

DOCUMENT C

Source: Martin Luther King, 1967

. . . it became clear to me that the war was doing far more than devastating the hopes of the poor at home. It was sending their sons and their brothers and their husbands to fight and die in extraordinarily high proportions relative to the rest of the population. We were taking the black young men who had been crippled by our society and sending them eight thousand miles away to guarantee liberties in Southeast Asia which they had not found in southwest Georgia and East Harlem.

DOCUMENT D

“Onward and Upward” (1967)



Bill Crawford © dist. by
Newspaper Enterprise Association.

DOCUMENT E

Source: Robert F. Kennedy, 1968

For years we have been told that the measure of our success and progress in Vietnam was increasing security and control for the population. Now we have seen that none of the population is secure and no area is under such control

This has not happened because our men are not brave or effective, because they are. It is because we have not conceived our mission in this war. It is because we have misconceived the nature of the war. It is because we have sought to resolve by military might a conflict whose issue depends upon the will and conviction of the South Vietnamese people. It is like sending a lion to halt an epidemic of jungle rot.

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DOCUMENT F

Source: James Fallows, writing about his 1969 draft board experience

. . . Even as the last of the Cambridge contingent was throwing its urine and deliberately failing its color-blindness tests, buses from the next board began to arrive. These bore the boys from Chelsea, thick, dark-haired young men, the white proles [members of the working class] of Boston. Most of them were younger than us, since they had just left high school, and it had clearly never occurred to them that there might be a way around the draft. They walked through the examination lines like so many cattle off to slaughter. I tried to avoid noticing, but the results were inescapable. While perhaps four out of five of my friends from Harvard were being deferred, just the opposite was happening to the Chelsea boys.

DOCUMENT G

Source: Richard Nixon, Address to the Nation, 1969

I know it may not be fashionable to speak of patriotism or national destiny these days. But I feel it is appropriate to do so on this occasion. . . .

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 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. . . .

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.

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DOCUMENT H

Source: George McGovern, 1972

What I propose is that we spend all that is necessary for prudent national defense, and no more. I propose that we conserve our limited resources:

- By no longer underwriting the appalling waste of money and manpower that has become such a bad habit in our military establishment;
- By rejecting the purchase of weapons which are designed to fight the last war better, with almost no relevance to today's threat;
- By refusing to maintain extra military forces that can have no other purpose than to repeat our experience in Vietnam, a venture which nearly all of us now recognize as a monstrous national blunder;
- By repudiating the false world of old discredited myths, made up of blocs, puppets, and dominoes, facing instead the real world of today and the future with multiple ideologies and interests.

DOCUMENT I

Source: The War Powers Act, 1973

SEC. 5(b) Within sixty calendar days after a report is submitted or is required to be submitted pursuant to section 4(a)(1), whichever is earlier, the President shall terminate any use of United States Armed Forces with respect to which such report was submitted (or required to be submitted), unless the Congress (1) has declared war or has enacted a specific authorization for such use of United States Armed Forces, (2) has extended by law such sixty-day period, or (3) is physically unable to meet as a result of an armed attack upon the United States.

END OF DOCUMENTS FOR QUESTION 1