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# A-level HISTORY

Component 2G The Birth of the USA, 1760–1801

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Friday 9 June 2023

Afternoon

Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes

## Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 16-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 7042/2G.
- 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:
  - 1 hour on Question 01 from **Section A**
  - 45 minutes on each of the **two** questions answered from **Section B**.

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**Section A**

 Answer Question 01.
 

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**Source A**

From a personal letter to George Mason, a Virginian plantation owner, from Richard Henry Lee, President of Congress, 1784/85, 15 May 1787.

It has given me pleasure to be informed that General Washington and you, George, have gone to the Convention. We may now hope that advantageous changes from the failure of the Articles of Confederation will take place in our Federal Constitution. But I fear that the demand to give Congress more power and the cause of the present discontent is more because of vicious evil minds than actual mistakes in the present Constitution under the Articles of Confederation. 5

The current complaints about the present Constitution seem to be that Congress cannot raise money for debt payments, or for supporting the Federal Government. They cannot make treaties of commerce unless we grant unlimited power in regulating trade. I am concerned by the fraudulent purposes and risky plans to give Congress more power. 10  
I think, sir, that if the right to print money is given to Congress this will cause alarm in the national mind, weaken state governments and lead to conflicts among the people opposed to such a strong Federal Government.

**Source B**

From an official letter to the President of Congress, sent by George Washington, 17 September 1787.

It is unrealistic that the Constitution could enable the Federal Government to secure the rights and provide for the interests and safety of all states. Therefore, some states must give up a share of liberty to preserve the rest. The scale of the sacrifice of each state must depend on each situation and circumstance. It is always difficult to draw the line between those rights which must be surrendered, and those which may be retained. 5

The difficulty has been increased by the differences among the states in their situation, habits, and particular interests. That the Constitution will meet the full approval of every state cannot be expected. But each state will doubtless acknowledge that had only their interests been granted, the consequences might have been disagreeable or injurious to others. Thus, with few exceptions, we hope and believe that the Constitution may promote the lasting welfare of our country. Our most passionate wish is to secure our country's freedom and happiness. 10

**Source C**

From a speech to the Virginia Ratifying Convention, by Patrick Henry of Virginia, June 1788.

Does the Constitution say, 'We, the States?' Has an agreement been made between the States? If one had, this would represent a national unity between the States. The question therefore is on the expression, 'We, the People', instead of, 'We, the States of America'.

The plan in the Constitution is as extreme as anything that separated us from Great Britain. I need not take much trouble to show that the principles of this plan are unwise and harmful. In this system our rights and privileges are endangered, and the power and liberty of our States will be surrendered. This system will make insecure, if not remove, the rights of conscience, trial by jury, our free press, all our freedoms and charters, and threaten our human rights and privileges. 5  
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It is said that eight States have adopted this plan. I declare that even if twelve of the thirteen States adopted it, I would reject it, for maintaining the liberty of the States ought to be the direct purpose of our Constitution.

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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 ratification of the US Constitution.

**[30 marks]**

**Turn over for Section B**

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**Section B**

Answer **two** questions.

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**0 2** By 1760 to what extent did the thirteen American colonies share similar characteristics?  
**[25 marks]**

**0 3** 'The escalation of tensions between Britain and its American colonies, in the years 1774 to 1776, was due to the actions of the British.'

Assess the validity of this view.

**[25 marks]**

**0 4** How successful was George Washington as President in the years 1789 to 1796?  
**[25 marks]**

**END OF QUESTIONS**

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