

Section B: American Option

The Origins of the Civil War, 1846–1861

The Development of the Republican Party, 1858–1860

Read the sources and then answer **both** parts of the question.

When answering the question, you are advised to pay particular attention to the interpretation and evaluation of the sources, both individually and as a group.

Source A

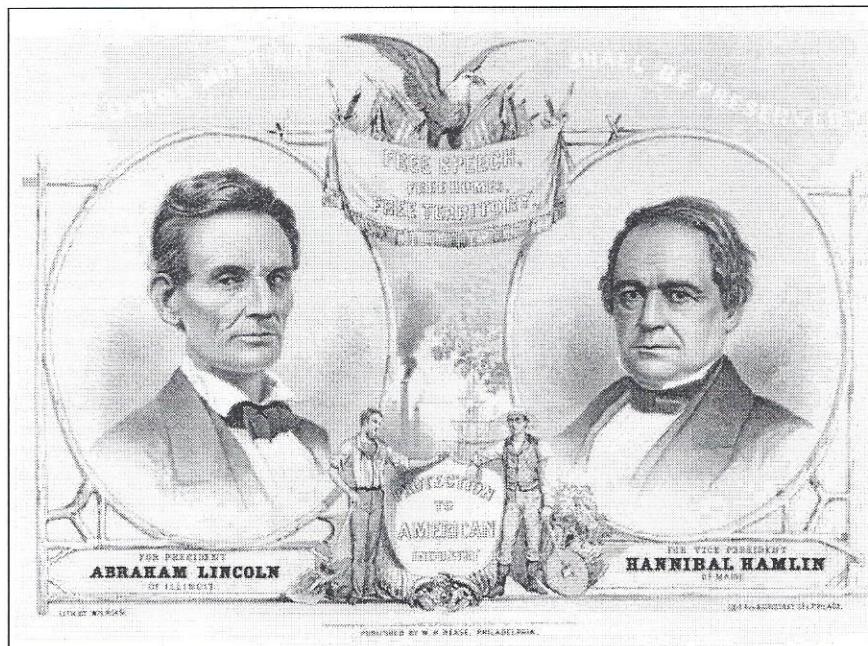
This platform was endorsed by Republicans at the meeting in Freeport on 27 August 1858. Let every man who refuses to endorse Abolitionism read this platform and then decide whether he can vote for the Republican ticket.

Resolved, That the continued and increasing aggression of Slavery in our country are destructive of the dearest rights of a free people and that such aggressors cannot be successfully resisted without the *united* political action of all good men.

Resolved, That we accept this issue, forced on us by Slave Power, and in defence of freedom will be known as Republicans, pledged to the accomplishment of the following purposes: To the repeal and entire abrogation of the Fugitive Slave law; to restrict slavery to those states where it exists; to prohibit the admission of any more slave states into the Union; to exclude slavery from all the territories over which the federal government has jurisdiction.

From 'The Republican Platform', published in Illinois, September 1858.

Source B



Republican Party poster for presidential campaign, 1860.

Source C

Aside from the position which the Republican party occupies on the great issue of the day – the extension or non-extension of slavery in the Territories – there is another good and sufficient reason why Lincoln should be elected. It is the unparalleled corruption and profligacy which have been proven [imposed] upon the democracy. No such deep-dyed corruption in high places has ever been known as that which has been brought to light by the investigating committees of the 36th Congress. President and officers of the Cabinet, Members of Congress and attachés [officials] have all participated in the general plunder, bribery and corruption.

But a change is demanded. The great mass of the people are honest and they will have a clearing out of the political leeches and corrupt officials at the federal capital. And no better man can be found to place in the White House than Abraham Lincoln. He is *honest*. Everybody knows he is honest. He is pledged by the Republican platform to a rigid economy and accountability of government and he is just the man to inaugurate the reform which is so much needed at this time. Elect Lincoln and the people are sure to have an honest administration. Elect another Democrat and who can doubt that the system of bribery and corruption will be continued for another four years.

From 'Why Honest Abe should be elected', published by the Young Men's Republican Union of New York, July 1860.

Source D

If anyone doubts the necessity for Southern union in the event the Black Republicans succeed in the November polls, let him read the following sketch of the address of D. Wilmot (of Wilmot Proviso notoriety) on taking the chair as presiding officer in the Chicago Convention:

Mr Wilmot addressed the Convention, briefly returning thanks for the high, undeserved honour. It was unnecessary for him to remind the Convention of the high duty devolved upon them. A great sectional interest had for years dominated with a high hand over the affairs of the country. It lent all its energy to the extension and naturalisation of slavery. It is the mission of the Republican party to oppose this policy and to restore to the government the policy of our Revolutionary fathers; to resist the dogma that slavery exists wherever the constitution extends.

From the 'Jackson Semi-Weekly Mississippian', 22 May 1860.

Answer **both** parts of the question with reference to the sources.

- (a) To what extent do Sources A and B agree on the issues on which the Republican Party fought as a national party in the period 1858–1860? [15]

- (b) 'The Republican party was first and foremost an anti-slavery party.' How far do these sources support this assertion? [25]