

**Section B: American Option****The Origins of the Civil War, 1846–1861****The Dred Scott Judgement, 1857**

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

**Source A**

The main proposition decided by the Supreme Court is that under the Constitution of the United States a negro, descended from slave parents imported from Africa, is not and cannot be a citizen of the United States. We are told by the leaders of the Republican or Abolition party that this proposition is cruel, inhuman and infamous and should not be obeyed by any good citizen. Wherein is the cruelty, the inhumanity, the infamy? They quote the Declaration of Independence, which says, 'We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal' and insist that this language was intended to include negroes as well as white men. Did any of the thirteen states abolish slavery – much less place the negro on an equality with the white man? History records the emphatic answer – No.

*From a speech by Senator Stephen Douglas in Springfield, Illinois, 12 June 1857.*

**Source B**

Judge Taney, in delivering the verdict of the majority of the Court, insists at great length that negroes were no part of the people who made, or for whom was made, the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution of the United States. Judge Curtis, in his dissenting opinion, shows that in five of the then thirteen states, free negroes were voters and, in proportion to their numbers, had the same part in making the Constitution that white people had. The ultimate destiny of the black race has never appeared so hopeless as in the last three or four years. Now, to aid in making the bondage of the negro universal and eternal, the Declaration of Independence is assailed, sneered at and torn till, if its framers could rise from the earth, they could not at all recognise it.

*From a speech by Abraham Lincoln in Springfield, Illinois, 26 June 1857.*

**Source C**

The importance of the Dred Scott decision is greatly enhanced by its immediate effect upon two of the great political parties of the country. At a single blow it shatters and destroys the platform of the Republican party. It annihilates the issue which was made paramount in the recent presidential election and takes away from the Democratic party all the advantages of its advocacy of popular sovereignty. It leaves both of these great parties adrift, without a single plank of their late platforms on which to rest. In the recent election, while the Republicans demanded the restoration of the Missouri Compromise, the Democratic party strongly advocated the popular sovereignty doctrine incorporated in the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

*From the Louisville [Kentucky] 'Journal', 16 March 1857.*

**Source D**

The decision of the Supreme Court in the Dred Scott case will bring the enemies of the South face to face with the constitution of their country. They cannot escape the issue presented – the observance of the laws of the land or disunion. The leaders of the Black Republican party are denouncing the decision of the very tribunal to which they had appealed and are endeavouring to excite among the people of the North a bitter hostility to it. But as fanatical as the people of New England are, they will hesitate to enter the ranks of a political party organised for the express purpose of overturning a decision of the Supreme Court. Some of our Southern editors oppose the agitation to which this decision will give rise. But let it come. The fury of the storm has passed.

*From the Milledgeville [Georgia] 'Federal Union', 31 March 1857.*

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

- (a) Compare and contrast the interpretations of the Declaration of Independence given in Sources A and B. [15]
- (b) 'The Dred Scott judgement greatly benefited the Democratic party'. How far do Sources A to D support this assertion? [25]