AP UNITED STATES HISTORY • EXERCISE SHEET

6.12 Controversies over the Role of Government in the Gilded Age

Name: ____________ Class: ________ Date: __________ **Total: 12 marks**

KEY WORDS laissez-faire argument 自由放任

Objective

Build the skills to explain the **laissez-faire argument** 自由放任.

You must be able to:

- state the laissez-faire position the CED gives
- state what its holders opposed
- state where foreign policymakers increasingly looked
- explain what 'in the long run' does in the argument

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

The position

Some argued that laissez-faire policies and competition promoted economic growth in the long run, and they opposed government intervention during economic downturns.

What they opposed

Government intervention during economic downturns. The opposition is specifically to intervention when conditions are bad, which is when intervention is demanded.

'In the long run'

The phrase concedes that the short run may be harmful and argues that the eventual outcome justifies it. That structure is what makes the position defensible and also what makes it hard to accept during a depression.

Foreign policy

Foreign policymakers increasingly looked outside U.S. borders in an effort to gain greater influence and control over markets and natural resources in the Pacific Rim, Asia, and Latin America. The same aim as 6.6's businesses, now pursued by the state.

2 Practice

2.1 State the laissez-faire position and what its holders opposed. [2]

2.2 Explain what "in the long run" does in the argument. [2]

2.3 Foreign policy followed business.

(a) State where policymakers looked. [2]

(b) State why the opposition to intervention is significant. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Laissez-faire advocates opposed government intervention [1]

- **A** during economic downturns
- **B** in wartime
- **C** in foreign policy
- **D** at all times equally

3.2 Foreign policymakers looked to the Pacific Rim, Asia and [1]

- **A** Latin America
- **B** the Arctic
- **C** central Africa
- **D** eastern Europe

3.3 An argument concedes short-term harm and promises long-term benefit.

(a) State the structure. [1]

(b) Explain why it is hard to accept in a depression. [2]

Solutions

2.1 that laissez-faire policies and competition promoted economic growth in the long run; they opposed government intervention during economic downturns.

2.2 it concedes that the short run may be harmful and argues that the eventual outcome justifies it.

2.3 (a) outside U.S. borders, to markets and natural resources in the Pacific Rim, Asia and Latin America. (b) the opposition applies exactly when intervention is being demanded.

3.1 **A**. during downturns.

3.2 **A**. Latin America.

3.3 (a) short-term cost for long-term benefit. (b) the cost falls on identifiable people now while the benefit is general and later, and may not reach the same people.