

VIETNAM WAR

I. Indo-China under French Rule

A. Annexed by France in 19th century

B. Basically agricultural area

C. Predominantly Buddhist population

D. During W.W. II, occupied by Japanese

E. Indo-Chinese Nationalists:

- 1. opposed to both Japan and France**
- 2. joined an independence movement called the Vietminh.**
 - a) controlled by Communists**
 - b) led by Moscow-trained Ho Chi Minh**

II. Communists Seek Control! (1946-1954)

A. Post WWII

- 1. France promised partial independence to Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam**
- 2. Vietminh rejected French offer and gained popular support by appealing to: 1) the feeling of nationalism 2) land hungry peasants, take land from rich and give to the poor**
- 3. Civil War rages for 8 years**
 - a) Tide of battle turned in favor of the Vietminh**
 - b) Won crucial battle in 1954 at Diem Bien Phu**

III. Geneva Agreements: Truce for Indo-China (1954)

A. Representatives of eight states at Geneva

- 1. Britain and Soviet Union (co-chair)**
- 2. U.S., Red China, France, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam**
- 3. Agreements NOT signed by the U.S. or Vietnam**

B. Provisions of Agreements

- 1. Laos and Cambodia independent, to remain neutral in Cold War**
- 2. Vietnam divided at 17th parallel**
 - a) North under communist gov't in Hanoi**
 - b) South under French-sponsored anti-Communist gov't. in Saigon**
- 3. People of North & South to vote by mid-1956 for a single all-Vietnam gov't.**

IV. Developments (1955-1973)

A. Communist North Vietnam

- 1. dictatorship under Ho Chi Minh**
- 2. increased army's manpower**
- 3. eliminated most private enterprise**
- 4. much Russian & Chinese aid**
- 5. sought control of South Vietnam**

B. South Vietnam

- 1. An independent and anti-Communist regime**
- 2. Under President Ngo Dinh Diem (1955-63)**
- 3. Fully independent of France**
- 4. Diem rejected plans for all-Vietnam elections, saying honest elections were impossible in the Communist north**
- 5. Communist guerrilla warfare was used against the South**
- 6. The Vietcong terrorized villages**
- 7. The Saigon gov't. requested American economic and military aid and it was first granted by Eisenhower and later increased by Kennedy.**
- 8. America feared the domino effect.**

C. Escalation of the War

- 1. By 1964 limited numbers of American troops in South Vietnam**
- 2. American naval units patrol international waters of Gulf of Tonkin**
- 3. North Vietnamese torpedo boats attacked American destroyers and President Johnson ordered an air strike against North Vietnam's naval bases.**
- 4. GULF OF TONKIN RESOLUTION**
 - a) Congress supported the President**
 - b) The bombings escalate**
- 5. In 1965, major American bases in South Vietnam were attacked by the Vietcong**
- 6. Johnson retaliated with continuous air strikes against North Vietnamese military targets.**
- 7. The U.S. increased its forces in South Vietnam eventually to over 500,000**
- 8. Hanoi sent more supplies and troops into the South; Moscow and Peking continued to supply the North.**

V. Debate Over War (In America)

A. "Hawks"

- 1. Wanted increased military action to halt Communist aggression and contain it.**
- 2. Wanted to increase military pressure on Hanoi, even risking enraging Red China and the Soviet Union**

B. "Doves"

- 1. Wanted the U.S. to seek peace by reducing its military activities in Vietnam**
- 2. Argued that we have no vital interests in Vietnam, were risking war with Red China, were expending funds needed for domestic programs.**

VI. Peace Talks

A. Unsuccessful Peace Efforts

- 1. From 1965 to 1968, Pres. Johnson made many efforts to bring the issue to the conference table - - all failed**
- 2. In 1965, he halted air strikes against North Vietnam for 37 days**

B. Paris Peace Talks

- 1. In 1968, Johnson halted bombing of most of Vietnam; Hanoi agreed to peace negotiations**
- 2. The two nations met at Paris**
- 3. After an 'informal understanding' with Hanoi setting limits on Communist military activity, Johnson halted ALL bombing of the North.**
- 4. Then the peace talks were expanded to include the Saigon gov't. and the Vietcong.**

VII. Nixon Administration and Vietnam

A. Diplomatic Stalemate

- 1. Pres. Nixon wanted free elections for South Vietnam and Freeing of POW's**
- 2. Hanoi wanted complete withdrawal of American forces, the end of the 'puppet' Thieu regime, and the unification of Vietnam under Communist control.**
- 3. The talks were deadlocked.**

B. Vietnamization

- 1. Shifting of the burden of fighting the war to South Vietnamese forces**
- 2. By 1972, Nixon had withdrawn over 500,000 men, leaving only 27,000 American troops.**
- 3. Hanoi's Military Offensive**
- 4. In 1972, with American strength down, the North began a massive military offensive**
- 5. They occupied much territory before they slowed down.**
- 6. Nixon renewed bombing of military targets in North, mined the North's harbors.**

C. Secret Peace Talks

- 1. In early 1972, Nixon revealed secret talks had been going on for 30 months.**
- 2. Henry Kissinger - - U.S. national security adviser and Le Duc Tho met until Jan., 1973 until they hammered out an agreement to end the war.**

VIII. Paris Peace Agreement (1973)

A. Major Provisions

- 1. Military**
 - a) U.S., N. Vietnam, S. Vietnam, Vietcong agreed to a cease-fire.**

- b) U.S. to withdraw remaining forces and dismantle bases.
- c) Hanoi and Vietcong to return all POW's and account for MIA's.
- d) All foreign troops withdrawn from Laos and Cambodia.
- e) No more troops and military supplies to be brought into South.

2. Reunification

- a) To be achieved only by peaceful means.
- b) Pending reunification, both sides will respect the 17th. Parallel demarcation line.

3. Political Arrangements for South Vietnam

- a) The Saigon Gov't and the Vietcong each shall keep the areas under their control at time of cease-fire.
- b) The people of South have a right to decide their own political future through free and democratic elections under international supervision.

B. Observations

1. The agreement was a compromise.
2. The U.S. did not get withdrawal of 145,000 northern troops from the South.
3. Hanoi did not get the overthrow of Thieu regime in Saigon.
4. The war cost the U.S. \$140 billion over an 11-year period, 300,000 wounded, 46,000 killed – 58,000 when all accounted for.

C. One of the costliest wars in U.S. history. 1975 – ALL OF VIETNAM FALLS TO THE NORTH - COMMUNIST