The Vietnam War

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- Geneva Accords
- Ho Chi Minh
- Ngo Dinh Diem
  - Abuses
- Vietcong

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- Gulf of Tonkin
  - Gulf of Tonkin Resolution

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- Fall of Saigon

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The Vietnam War

**Background**

- **French Control** - They ruled Vietnam until Japan took control during World War II. After the War, France and the Vietminh struggled and fought for power.

- **Geneva Accords** - Peace Agreement between the French and Vietminh that divided Vietnam in half (North and South).

- **Ho Chi Minh** - Leader of North Vietnam that instituted communism and supported the Vietcong.

- **Ngo Dinh Diem** - Leader of South Vietnam. He was against Communism; the US supported him.
  - **Abuses** - Imprisoned people who criticized his government; he restricted Buddhist practices and offered little to no land distribution to peasants.

- **Vietcong** - Group in South Vietnam who opposed/fought against Diem.

**Why did the US get involved?**

- **Domino Theory** - Stated that if one country fell to communism, its neighboring countries would likely fall as well.

- **Gulf of Tonkin** - A North Vietnamese patrol boat allegedly fired torpedoes at a U.S. destroyer. In response, Johnson responded with bombing raids on North Vietnam.
  - **Gulf of Tonkin Resolution** - Resolution passed by Congress which stated that “The President had the authority to take all necessary measures to repel attacks against the US.”
    - **Gave the President broad military powers/too much power**

**The End of US Involvement and the War**

- **Nixon and “Vietnamization”** - Nixon’s plan for ending US involvement in the war. He called for the gradual withdrawal of US troops (Make South Vietnam more responsible) and a massive bombing attack against North Vietnam.

- **Cambodia and Laos** - Bombing raids ordered by Nixon due to the face that he believed each of these countries were helping the Vietcong and had Vietcong military bases.

- **Paris Peace Accords** - Ended US involvement in the War.

- **Fall of Saigon** - N. Vietnam was able to capture the South’s capital, Saigon. Soon after, S. Vietnam surrendered. Vietnam becomes communist.

**Important Events**

- **Draft** - Required men 18 years or older to sign up for military service.
  - **Working Class War** - Nickname given to the Vietnam War due to the fact that if you were in college (wealthy) you could avoid the draft. A large number who fought in Vietnam were lower class whites or minorities.

- **Tet Offensive** - Vietcong launched a surprise attack on over 100 towns and cities in South Vietnam, as well as 12 U.S. air bases. It continued for about a month. It was a defeat for the Vietcong, but it shocked Americans because it showed that the Vietcong could launch a surprise attack and was “everywhere”.
  - **Hue** - North Vietnamese troops and the Vietcong killed between 3-5 thousand civil servants, military personnel and those who supported the US.

- **My Lai Incident** - US troops killed over 200 innocent Vietnamese villagers, most women, children and elderly men. 25 Army officers were charged but only their leader was imprisoned.

**US Involvement**

- **Ho Chi Minh Trail** - Network of paths running between North and South Vietnam; Ho Chi Minh (Communists Leader of N. Vietnam) used the trail to supply the Vietcong.

- **Operation Rolling Thunder** - Bombing campaign led by the US, it was meant to destroy N. Vietnam’s supply lines (Ho Chi Minh Trail).


**Weapons and Warfare**

- **Jungle Warfare** - Fighting in the Jungle; The Vietcong used the jungle to hide in as well as hide land mines and traps.
  - **Guerrilla Warfare (Hit-and-Run)** was used and effective because of the jungle.
  - The Vietcong also had tunnels that connected towns, which made it easier for them to launch surprise attacks.

- **Agent Orange** - Herbicide made to kill vegetation; was used to destroy the jungle and prevent surprise attacks from the Vietcong.
  - It killed crops (food) and also causes cancer. It ruined villages.

- **Napalm** - A gasoline-based bomb that set fire to the jungle. It was used to expose Vietcong tunnels and hideouts.
  - It would ruin villages and also stick to clothes, killing or burning them.

- **Search-and-destroy Missions** - Missions by US Soldiers in which they would destroy villages they believed supported the Vietcong.
### Impact of the War on the United States

**Television’s Impact on the War** – The war was covered on TV every night. Each night Americans watched the brutal scenes of the war on their television screens; Johnson had said that the US was winning the war, but according to the TV, it displayed an opposite story.

*Helped turn public opinion against the war*

**The Credibility Gap** – Situation in which the US public no longer believe the Johnson administration.

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<td><strong>What group primarily opposed the War in Vietnam?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pentagon Papers</strong> – Leaked document that revealed:</td>
<td><strong>26th Amendment</strong> – Allowed anyone that was 18 years old to vote.</td>
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<td>College Students:</td>
<td>1. The government had drawn up plans for entering the war even as President Johnson promised that he would not send troops to Vietnam.</td>
<td>Students had protested and marched on Washington – many argued that if they were old enough to die for their country, they should at least be able to vote on the issues and for who runs the country.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Many formed groups such as the SDS and FSM</td>
<td>2. That there was never any plan to end the war as long as the North Vietnamese persisted.</td>
<td><strong>War Powers Act</strong> – This law prevented the president from committing troops in a foreign conflict without approval from Congress.</td>
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<td><strong>Protested the War on College Campuses</strong></td>
<td><strong>“Revealed that the Executive Branch had lied to Congress about parts of the War”</strong></td>
<td>&quot;Limits the power of the president in terms of war&quot;</td>
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<td><strong>What effect did these protests have?</strong></td>
<td><strong>New York Times Co v. US Supreme Court</strong> – The Pentagon Papers was published by the New York Times.</td>
<td><strong>“Repeals the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution”</strong></td>
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<td>• Doves – Americans who called for the US to withdraw from Vietnam.</td>
<td>The Supreme Court ruled that the NY Times could publish the papers due to the 1st Amendment.</td>
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<td>• Hawks – Americans who supported the war effort.</td>
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<td><strong>Kent State University</strong> – College students were protesting after hearing about the My Lai Incident.</td>
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<td>The protest started to become violent: the students had set fire to the ROTC building on campus. To restore order the National Guard was called in.</td>
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<td>The protestors became throwing rocks and other objects at the National Guard; they ended up firing shots into the crowd - nine were wounded and four students were killed.</td>
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