

MODERN HISTORY

Conflict in Indochina

Political, social and economic developments

North:

State of the North in 1954:

- With the Mekong Delta, the food bowl of Vietnam (mass rice), situated in the South, the issue of food was pressing.
- Japanese deprivation and exploitation between 1940 and 1945 had ruined much of the North's agricultural infrastructure. (lead to serious famine in 1945)
- Warfare with the French had further destroyed the economy of the North, leaving much in ruins.
- There was a need for capital
- Up to 1 million people had moved South (mostly Catholics who feared persecution), including technicians and professionals. This meant there was a need for skilled people.

Key figures:

- Ho Chi Minh – President
- Pham Van Dong – Prime Minister
- Le Duan – Leader of the Worker's Party
- Truong Chinh – Party Secretary
- Vo Nguyen – Minister of Defence
- Le Duc Tho – Negotiator for Central Committee

Political

- Division of Vietnam at the 17th parallel
- Ho anticipated economic and political downfall of the South
- North was not in the position to assume control (had to deal with internal issues)
- Large numbers of arms and ammunition was left behind in the South
- Quickly developed into a one party dictatorship.
- Democratic Republic of Vietnam- power rested in the Vietnam Worker's Party (Lao Dong)
- There was also mass associations that organised the population (peasant/youth associations etc.)
- Relied on USSR and China
- Divisions in government over how to go 'create a socialist society in the North':
 - Giap- moderate program of reform (radical policies will only make the situation worse)
 - Party Secretary Truong Chinh- Chinese model of rapid land reform (he won)
- Land reforms = destruction, terror, denunciation and death
 - Agricultural Reform Tribunals
 - Aim: 'supervise the redistribution of land'
 - Reality: purging of 'feudalists' = landlords, wealthy peasants, French collaborationists and anyone not 'enthusiastic' towards the new regime.
 - Accused → trial → re-education camp (some got no trial)
 - Over 100 000 people died

- Many denounced others to proclaim their own loyalty (or to settle personal scores)
- Those who helped fight the French were now subject to accusations.
- Food production declined
- June 1956 peasant uprisings
- November 1956- French-style methods used to put down peasant revolts.
- 1956- Ho: 'Mistakes have been made'
- 1958 Tribunals were abandoned for the moderate program of Co-operativisation Plans- the idea that villagers shared out the labour and the responsibilities.
- Truong Chinh lost his post as General Secretary
- Those in camps were released (many taking revenge on those who had denounced them)
- By 1960 85% of the peasant population were participating in Cooperativisation program.
- 1960 – Creative of National Liberation Front (NLF) (created and controlled by Central Committee)

Social

- Departure of 1 million (catholic, technicians, opposition) = no skilled labour
- To be a member of Vietnamese society:
- Had to have fought against French
- Jailed/tortured by the French
- Renounce legalities to family

Foreign

- Relations between DRV and US were tense as they did not see the DVR as an independent nation by merely a pawn in the game of worldwide communist insurgency being directed by Moscow.
- Ho was grateful for Soviet and Chinese aid but was not willing to do the bidding these two giants.
- Realising that a friendship with both giants would be needed is faced with conflict from the South and so he avoided taking sides in the Sino-Soviet split.

Economy

- Nationalisation of all previously French-owned companies (major coal, textiles, large businesses, banks, public utilities)
- Smaller businesses were allowed to continue under private control but the government imposed regulations (prices, wages, output).
- 1958- Three Year Economic Plan
- Significant economic aid was received from the USSR and China.
- Chinese rice imports (crucial during 1954-7)
- Soviet technological aid (vital to resurrect the DRV's industry)
- After 1957 reliance decreased:
 - Growth in industry
 - Growth in coal production
 - Transport (doubled by 1960)
 - Electricity
 - Highest economic growth rate of any Asian country (1960)

South:

State in 1954:

- Suffered humiliating defeat
- Bao Dai regime was not looking towards the US, this increased when Diem became PM
- Eisenhower had full faith that under Diem, the South would be strong enough to stand up to future communist expansion.
- Economic mess- destruction of roads, bridges, factories, plantations and irrigation systems.
- Diem:
- Not well known, no military backing
- Opposed by almost every group in the country- Bao Dai supporters, Buddhists, pro-French groups, religious sects (Cao Dai and Hoa Hoa), Ho supporters.

Social

- One million refugees coming from the North needed to be fed, housed and employed.
- Food shortages, unemployment, landless peasants moved to Saigon.
- Organised criminal gangs flourished.
- Diem tried to reverse some of the land reforms made by Vietminh and landlords were allowed to return and claim their lands along with past rents lost. Peasant lives again became difficult.
- Villages suspected of communist sympathies were relocated to 'government protected' sites known as Agrovilles, hoping to remove them from communist influence. This led to disaster because:
- Poor land = poverty
- Peasants drifted to the city with hope of a better life = unemployment, homelessness, prostitution, crime gangs.
- Removal from ancestral sites = bitterness and greatly upset villagers who had a strong connection.
- In fact made them turn communist
- Massive difference between life in cities and in the country
- Saigon = western luxury
- Countryside = poverty
- Catholics given best land and often allowed to escape obligations and tax payments.

Political (Under Diem)

- Support of Colonel Lansdale (US)- money, manpower, weapons, training, propaganda, political savvy (he got power by this) US only cared he was anti-communist.
- Appointed as Premier by Bao Dai
- November 1954- coup attempt against Diem led by General Van Hinh. Colonel Lansdale intervened and forced Hinh into exile.
- April 1955- Diem challenged power of organised crime gang, Bin Xuyen (controlled police force). Known as Battle of Saigon, Diem's forces prevailed.
- Combination of brute force, enlistment of militia into the ARVN and simple bribery removed the religious sects opposing Diem.
- Mid-1955- Diem put in place a widespread Denunciation Campaign that targeted anyone who fought the French, or was close to the resistance or sympathetic to the Vietminh. 90% of Vietminh cells were destroyed or forced underground. 80 000 people imprisoned.
- October 1955- national referendum was held to determine if the South should retain its emperor or become a republic. 98.2% voted for republic with 100% in Saigon, 2000 more votes were counted than voters. The clear rigging embarrassed the US but Diem was now President of the Republic of Vietnam.

- December 1955- Diem cut economic ties with French, left French Union and any remaining signs of French colonial rule was gone.
- The mid-1956 elections that were demanded by the Geneva conference was called off due to the realisation that he would lose so he stated that it was because the North could not be trusted to hold fair elections and that RVN had no signed the accords. The US backed this. Diem was in complete control.
- Diem lead to totalitarianism and his government showed nepotism (jobs given to family)
- Ngo Dinh Nhu- in charge of police (closest advisor)
- Ngo Dinh Can- economy
- Ngo Dinh Thuc- catholic network
- Nguyen Dinh Luyen- diplomat (SV ambassador in London for a while)
- Tran Le Xuan- first lady (sister in law), Women's Solidarity Movement (impose strict morality to limit divorce, access to contraception, prostitution, dancing and beauty contests.)
- Only one political party allowed- Can Lao or 'Personalist Labour Revolutionary Party.' Controlled by Nhu it became a secret police.
- 1958- over 40 000 political prisoners
- 1961- over 150 000
- August 1956- Ordinance 47 made it a capital offence to be communist or associate with communists.
- Strict censorship
- 1962- Civil service under military control.
- Assassinations of government officials were in their hundreds.

Economy

- \$322 million was granted, by 1960 economy was totally reliant on the US.
- New factories = textiles, cement and sugar; transport schemes developed.
- Saigon middle class doing well
- US money lead to corruption and Diem was unwilling or unable to prevent it.
- US aid didn't reach beyond the city

Buddhist protests

- May 1963- dispute in Hue over the Buddhist flag flying higher than the national flag, insulting the Diem regime. All Buddhist banners were ordered to be pulled down and all processions and celebrations cancelled. Leading Buddhist monk, Tri Quang mobilised supporters to descend on Radio Hue to present their case- 9 were killed, 14 wounded.
- 10 June- Tri Quang led thousands of Buddhist monks in protest to Diem's presidential palace. Markets closed down in sympathy. No violence but several arrests.
- Following day a 66 year old monk, Quang Duc decided to make the ultimate protest and lit himself on fire.
- "He pressed his palms together in prayer as a sheet of flame the colour of his orange robe enveloped him...By the time an ambulance arrived, the old man had fallen over, still burning as the fire consumed him."
- Many more burnings took place and images and footage sent around the world
- Nhu- "let them burn and we shall clap our hands", "We are not concerned about Buddhist barbecues".

Diem's assassination

- US said that it would take no part in any forceful removal of Diem, but neither would it stand in the way of any such action.
- Although the US did not plan the coup or take part in it, it would not have occurred without US approval.
- 1 Nov '63- army and air force officers staged the coup against Diem. Diem and his brother Nhu escaped to a church in Cholon.
- 2 Nov- Diem and Nhu surrendered and murdered.

After Diem

- Descended into further chaos and instability.
- Original impact- joy and celebration in the streets of Saigon and a desire for vengeance. Palace was sacked and mobs formed throughout the city.
- The next 18 months was full of coups and instability:
- General Duong Van Minh- 3 months, not a strong leader, not into tough politics, wanted to talk with NLF, not a view shared by the US. Removed 30 Jan '64
- General Nguyen Khanh- supported US air strikes against the North and ideas of invasion. Replaced Nov '64
- Tran Van Huong- Jan 1965
- Nguyen Xuan Oanh- one month
- Phan Huy Quat- June 1965
- Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky. Air Vice Marshal, September 1967.
- Nguyen Van Thieu- Late April 1975. Completely corrupt (control of drugs and brothels, sold US supplies to Vietcong, created 'ghost armies', built overseas bank accounts.)

Historiography/quotes

US towards Diem:

- Diem "the miracle man of Asia" (President Eisenhower 1957)
- "Diem is respected today for the miracles he has wrought." (LIFE magazine)
- Diem a "man whom freedom is the very breath of life." (Mayor Wagner of New York 1957)
- Diem "the Winston Churchill of South East Asia" (Johnson 1961- vice)
- "He is a true patriot, dedicated to independence and to the enjoyment by his people of political and religious freedoms." (US secretary of State, Dulles)

Historians:

- "... To "legalise" the situation, the infamous law 10/59 was passed. This provided two punishments only, death by guillotine or life imprisonment, for anyone suspected of harbouring an intent to commit a crime against the "security of the State"." (H G Slingsby: Rape of Vietnam)
- "Diem was opposed by virtually all elements of South Vietnamese society...what he did have was complete support of Colonel Lansdale and... the political savvy in the CIA's covert-action war chest." (McGhee)
- "The Diem Government was opposed...despised...rejected...hated...and totally lacking in mass support." (Buttinger)
- "Diem could not exist without US backing." (Karnow)
- The peasants "sympathised with neither Diem nor the Vietcong, only leaning to the side that harassed them less." (Karnow, Stanley Vietnam: A History)

US policy

Confinement

- Truman Doctrine 1947- help any country that was threatened by communist to prevent its spread.
- China fell to Communism → Cold war tensions (suspicion, fear, paranoia)
- “In American eyes, Ho was a mere communist puppet directed by his Soviet and Chinese masters.” (K. Webb)
- Eisenhower’s Domino theory- April 1954
“You have a row of dominoes set up, you knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is the certainty that it will go over very quickly.”
- Lead to an unquestioning support for the South
- By the end of the 1st Indochinese war the US was paying up to 80% of French war expenses.
- French decline, US escalate.
- Us refused to compromise with Vietminh or Chinese delegates at Geneva
- 1954- 600 US delegates in SV with the aim to train the new South Vietnamese army to fight the communists.
- 1955- US aid package of \$322 million
- Early 1960s SV was completely reliant on US
- Kennedy- “pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend... to assure the survival and success of liberty.”
- 1963- 16 700 US personnel in South
- Disastrous state of the South, if the US didn’t step in, South would be lost, the Vietminh was growing.

Idealism, self-interest and prestige

Idealism:

- Believe Vietnam would be a quick victory for their country and democracy.
- Walt Rostow, key adviser to Kennedy and Johnson, “We are the greatest power in the world.”
- “All this power intoxicated the Americans who initially went to Vietnam with a proud and overweening sense of confidence... they were certain that US omnipotence would triumph.” (Karnow)

Self interest:

- Loss = loss of investment (economic and military)
- Kennedy’s speech in 1956 assessed the issues in Vietnam “in terms of American lives and American dollars”.
- Prestige:
- A loss would damage their world-wide image.
- Assistant Secretary of Defence, John McNaughton wrote that the motivation for war in Vietnam was ‘70%- to avoid a humiliating US defeat!’
- Pentagon papers- highlighted plans to escalate in order to withhold the country’s image. Johnson

Personal prestige

- Came into power after Kennedy’s assassination with re-elections in November 1964.
- Could not be seen as another democrat to lose the war as Truman had lost China.
- Must appear strong in regards to Vietnamese policy but could not go into the war seen as a ‘war president’.

- “Johnson’s immediate motivation in Vietnam was political self-defence.” (Maclear)
- “Nothing could be worse than...being responsible for America losing a war to the Communists.” (Johnson)
- Believed in the need to wait to escalate after the elections, Pentagon papers drawn up waiting for the event that would allow the gov to put them into place- the Gulf of Tonkin incident provided this.
- Tonkin resolution gave Johnson the power to take all necessary measures (escalate) “A resolution that gives the President the power to make war without a declaration of war.” (S.W. Morse)
- After elections- Operation Rolling Thunder (1965) lead to the sustained bombing of North Vietnam.
- “If you let a bully come into your front yard one day, the next day he’ll be up on your porch, and the day after that he’ll rape your wife in your own bed.” (Johnson)

WHAM and Strategic Hamlet

- WHAM- winning hearts and minds

Purpose was to develop a social infrastructure for the South. This involved the provision of health services, education and subsidised rice.

- Strategic Hamlet (1960)
- Deny the enemy support of the civilian population.
- Convince villagers that the cause of the Vietcong is wrong by providing them with better welfare services and keeping them close to government administrators.
- Convince villagers that Vietcong is losing.
- Same problems as agrovilles- far from ancestral ground, built with unpaid peasant labour, virtual prison camps, strict rules imposed by ARVN, Vietcong joined villagers in the camps.
- Collapsed in 1964 and turned many peasants to the Vietcong.

The lead up to US involvement

- Gulf of Tonkin
- July 1964
- USS Maddox moved into North Vietnamese territorial waters and seen as a provocative act.
- North Vietnamese vessels attacked the Maddox.
- Two days later the Maddox and Turner Joy returned during a violent thunderstorm.
- Claims were made by US authorities that the US vessels had been attacked again.
- Could be a result of confusion in the storm or a deliberate lie by the US as an excuse to escalate.
- Air raids quickly followed against various NV targets including oil storage facilities in Haiphong harbour.
- This made Johnson seem as a firm decisive leader yet he did not take the action any further to risk it being a negative electoral issue.
- Lead to Tonkin resolution.
- 1 Nov '64- VC units attacked the American air base of Bien Hoa.
- 4 Americans were killed and over 70 wounded and several B 57 aircraft were damaged.
- Johnson showed restraint but in 3 days he was re-elected and put forward his plan to escalate.
- 7 Feb '65- VC attack at Plieku killed 9 Americans and wounded over 1000 Johnson launched Operation Flaming Dart, small scale specific air attacks on NV targets.
- Within a few weeks Operation Rolling Thunder was launched- sustained bombing of NV
- 8 March- first US combat troops landed at Da Nang (3500)
- July- Johnson announced increase to 125 000 men
- End of 1965 over 184 000 troops in Vietnam.

Impact of US military involvement

- Bombing lead decreased food production
- Agent Orange destroyed crops
- NAPALM
- More people turning against south
- Ho Chi Minh trail- went into Cambodia therefore bombing took place in Cambodia and effected peasants there (brought them into the war)
- South Vietnamese most vulnerable (suffered retribution from US, ARVN and Vietcong)
- Innocent were often the victim of soldier anger
- Strategic Hamlet had massive effects
- Billions of US dollars were transferred by SV criminals to foreign bank accounts as displaced peasants struggled to survive.
- South society broke down and delinquent gangs formed
- Around 100 000 died from the bombing of NV
- Almost every bridge was destroyed, roads and tunnels turned into mass craters, factories were destroyed.
- Every member of NV contributed to the war effort (Total war)- work teams (large composed of women) repaired railways and roads, peasants carried supplies, many constructed tunnels and trenches, war run of diesel-powered generators (electrical plants destroyed by bombing)

Strategies and tactics

- NLF- National liberation front (political body)
- Karnow "the communists saw the war as a continuation of 2000 years of resistance to Chinese and later French rule."

Vietcong

- Guerrilla fighters.
- 1960s- 80-90% of Vietcong were South Vietnamese.
- Unrecognisable (no distinction between villager of Vietcong- countryside never safe for ARVN or US)
- High morale and belief in their cause
- Easy to move (basic light arms)
- Familiar with the terrain
- Mobility (high fitness)
- Will and ability to endure extreme hardship
- Refusal to fight in conventional fore in conventional battles
- Use of ambushes, booby traps and hit and run tactics (designed to wound not kill- very demoralising for ARVN and US)
- Support from local populations (got shelter and food when passing villagers)
- Suffered high casualties but gained recruits as US troops destroyed peasant villages and killed civilians in 'search and destroy' missions and bombing raids, turning more to side with the VC.
- Cells: 3-12 guerrillas with only 1 in contact with higher ranks so during toucher they could not betray others. Some were involved in propaganda or village security (vital in creating support amongst peasants, considered highly important)
- Tunnels- hospitals, food stores, ammuniton, sleeping quarters
- Main source of supply from Ho Chi Minh Trail.

NVA

- Conventional army
- 1960- DRV imposed military conscription to expand NVA
- 1964- 250 000 soldiers
- From 1964- began moving south
- Increasing from 1965, the VC was supported by the NVA
- Supplied by China and USSR
- 1970- tanks
- After 1966- DRV sent around 100 000 south each year.
- Half million were killed over war.
- After Tet with massive VC loss, the bulk of the fighting was carried out by regular NVA troops
- By 1972 they were able to launch full-scale conventional campaigns

NVA and VC

- Avoid conflict when no means of escaping air attack
- Fight under the cover of night
- Fight close to the enemy (so airstrikes would kill them also)
- They were willing to suffer great loss for their cause
- Mental toughness due to the conviction that they were fighting as their ancestors had done to oust foreign invaders.
- Ideological discipline (Nationalism) maintained by cadres- mentors who lead by example (Com party members and veterans)
- Suffered larger casualties but willing to endure the war for as long as it took for victory.

US

- After 1965 most American soldiers in Vietnam were conscripts- average age, 19
- Inadequate training entered the war with no experience of jungle warfare and ignorant of Vietnamese culture and the political situation in Vietnam.
- Many responded with racism and were known to kill and mistreat innocent villages.
- Richard West, War and Peace in Vietnam, described the conduct of many US troops as 'brutal and arrogant towards the Vietnamese.'
- Suffered bad morale
- High drug use and frequent killings of their officers.
- Could not speak local language therefore could not gain support
- People against foreign powers.
- Slow and loud (elephant) Technological superiority and immense fire power (believed they could win through war of attrition due to this)
- US used VC and NVA 'body count' to show the US was winning.
- 1968
- 520 000 US
- 8300 Australians
- 4500 South Koreans
- 2500 Thais
- 300 New Zealanders
- Advantage in numbers, sophisticated weaponry and economic support.
- Depended on ability to wage war from the air
- Napalm, phosphorus and cluster bombs
- Operation Ranch Hand (1962) – destroy jungle, millions of litres of chemical defoliants (Agent Orange)
- 25% of SV were affected by chemicals

- Helicopters became a symbol of the war- gave troops mobility to gain knowledge of the countryside, allowed the quick removal of wounded from isolated areas, essential for search and destroy. Loud, VC dug pits with punji sticks in popular landing areas.
- Search and destroy:
- VC positions would be bombed and US and ARVN troops would then move into the area, fighting to wipe out enemy forces.
- Areas were held for a short time (pacified) but always taken back by VC and NVA
- US commanders failed to understand that winning battles did not win support of the people, especially those won on behalf of a corrupt government that failed to offer any hope of social, economic and political reform.
- Tactics had a more devastating effect on the SV villagers than VC and NVA = increased support against US
- Electronic devices- 'people sniffer'
- "Rarely in such an uneven contest had a major power achieved such limited success against a Third World enemy force while inflicting such immense suffering on the civilian population it claimed to be fighting to save." (Flashpoints)

ARVN

- Suffered approximately 10 times as many casualties as US forces.
- Ineffective with little support
- Poorly paid conscripts
- Deserted at a rate of 20% per year.
- Officers were corrupt- often stole wages of dead or deserted soldiers.
- Lacked morale and commitment.

Tet

- 1967- General Giap initiated plan, 'General Offensive, General Uprising'
- January 1968 (Chinese Lunar New Year holiday)
- North Vietnamese launched a major offensive
- Hanoi's plan:
- Attack more than 44 cities in SV
- Isolate and destroy ARVN units, forcing surrender.
- Gamble on humiliating US/ARVN forces = force a quick war.
- Provoke uprising among the population against President Thieu
- False fronts created to lure US troops
- Needed precise timing, unbroken lines of communication and enormous human resources.
- Over 85 000 NVA and VC troops involved
- Unprecedented due to the nature of it being infantry attacks on urban targets in the day (against what they are known for)
- US/ARVN intelligence has received indirect warning that something big was about to happen (October Hanoi released Resolution 13 that called for 'an immediate large-scale offensive to gain victory) but it was ignored and dismissed as propaganda.
- US and SV gov did not believe they had the capacity for such an attack.
- 29 October- Loc Ninh (north of Sigon)
- First false front to test Saigon's outer defence network.
- 31 October- Dak To (central highlands)
- Costliest single battle in the war.
- Seven days
- 1200 VC died
- 300 US died, 1000 wounded
- 21 Jan '68

- Khe Sanh (small base south of 17th parallel)
- (US and SV troops on leave due to new year- period of truce)
- US marines were besieged by NCA troops
- 31 Jan (Tet began)
- 6 major cities were attacked
- Hostilities did not commence in Saigon and other centres until 1 Feb due to poor communication.
- For nearly a week Saigon was in flames, fighting in the streets, US embassy temporarily occupied by VC
- Minor offensives between March and June
- NVA and VC withdrew
- Over 50 000 VC and NVA killed
- ARVN 2500
- US 1800 killed, 18 000 seriously wounded
- Why Hanoi loss? Quick victory did not occur, ARVN did not retreat as expected, uprisings did not occur.
- US and ARVA won militarily, Hanoi won politically

Impact

- Between 1965-1968 American television provided viewers with a distorted view of the war.
- “Heroic struggle of the American soldiers to defeat the communist menace in SV”
- People were lead to believe the US and its allies were winning.
- Feb (Tet) showed American and the world Saigon on flames, US embassy occupied and horrific fighting in the streets.
- Premeditated suspect of VC in Saigon by ARVN General Loan
- America’s position now seemed vulnerable and weak
- Anti-war protests began to rise, uni’s became centres of dissension
- US policy could only go one way: de-escalation and gradual withdrawal of US troops
- 31 March- Johnson’s speech:
- Renewed offer made in August 67 to end US bombardment of NV
- Prepared to start peace negotiations
- 90% of NV would immediately be spared from US bombing
- Would not run in the re-election.
- 10 May- official peace talks opened in Paris

Anti-war movements in the US

Reasons for anti-war movements:

US was not winning

- At the beginning of the war- few questioned the Tonkin incident, SV seemed like a worthy ally, Domino Theory was believed (containment), a belief that the war would be won.
- Tet showed they were not in the position the public was told to believe.

Media

- ‘lounge room war’
- Images of the effects of napalm and bombing
- ‘tally count’ of US deaths ticked over during shows
- Photographs of soldiers who had died in Life magazine
- Accounts of innocent villages being hit by ‘accidental’ attacks.

- Hand held cameras accompanied troops
- Showed individual soldier stories
- Tet was the media turning point
- My Lai massacre in March
- Early 1969 5000 were killed in Kien hao and reported on.
- Showed US invasion of Cambodia.

Questions

- What are we doing there?
- What is happening to our government?- They lied to us, harsh on protesters.
- What is the morality of war?
- It's a Vietnamese war, how does this involve us?
- What type of society is American becoming?
- How can US stand for freedom, democracy and human dignity, how is this shown in My Lai and napalm attacks on innocent Vietnamese?

Social inequality

- Martin Luther King:
- Saw the war was killing hopes for black people
- Saw the struggle of the black people in America as a world-wide struggle between poor and their oppressors.
- Disproportionate amount of black people, white collage boys could get out of the war much easier.
- Clear social bias- more working class men from less affluent communities (higher classes enrolled sons in collages)

Spirit of the 60s

- Free-spirited
- Radicalism of the civil rights
- Zeitgeists- went against the conformity and unquestioning acceptance of authority

Timeline

- August 64
- Small unimportant protests
- Easter 65
- Students for Democratic Society- small peaceful movement (30 000 by end of 66)
- 65/66
- 'sit-ins'
- burning of draft cards
- 'teach-ins' (uni of Michigan)
- Drafters fled to Canada and Sweden
- Black groups against war
- 67
- Some politicians were beginning to question Johnson's rights
- October- march on the Pentagon- peaceful but some restored to violence
- Vietnam Veterans Against the War
- 68
- Mayor Daly ordered police to treat anti-war protestors in the harshest manner.

- More violent
- Dominated by radical elements- long haired students, hippies, radical black groups (weakened anti-war movement)
- Many ordinary Americans wanted to protest but the movement had been hijacked by radical elements.
- Protests needed to be taken over by middle America and organised by people ordinary Americans trusted- lead to moratorium (stop work at a particular moment and protest peacefully in the streets)
- 69
- October, 50 000 took place in a moratorium march in Washington.
- November, 250 000 marched in Washington
- Following Nixon's invasion of Cambodia, major demonstrations took place.
- Kent State Uni (Ohio), 4 protesting students were shot dead by National Guardsmen.
- Sparked mass demonstrations across the country- 100 000 on Washington
- 100 000 in New York
- 71-72
- Dropped as the policy of Vietnamisation was introduced
- More troops were coming home, casualty figures were dropping.

Impact

- Lead to the end of the war
- Weakened morale as soldiers knew protests were taking place
- Unfriendly reception upon return home

Nixon (spread to Cambodia)

- 'Peace with honour'
- Viewed anti-war protesters as traitors
- 'Madman Theory'- NV should be told he was a mad anti-communists with his finger on the nuclear trigger, he would do anything
- Had to bring US troops home but convince President Thieu wasn't being deserted.
- Put pressure on NV to negotiate in peace talks (American mustn't seem to be weakening) but could not inflame anti-war protesters at home
- Put pressure on USSR and China to put pressure on NV

Vietnamisation

- To withdraw troops and transfer the bulk of the fighting onto ARVN
- Aim to keep US casualties to a minimum
- 8 June- Withdrawal of 25 000
- 16 September- Withdrawal of 35 000
- 15 December- Withdrawal of 50 000
- Still gave supply of weapons to South

Spread into Cambodia

- Most large VC and NVA regular units took refuge in Cambodia and Laos
- In early 69 NVA launched new offensive on the South, Nixon planned to sever links between NVA and supply roots.
- In March 69 Nixon ordered secret bombing of Cambodia with Operation Menu, aim:
- Destroy Communist headquarters

- Disrupt Ho Chi Minh trail
- Spring 1970- 30 000 ARVN and US forces invaded Cambodia to attack NV sanctuaries= widespread protest
- Pushed VC deeper into Cambodia
- Desertion rates for ARVN were 5 times in 71 than they had been in 66
- Operation Lam Son- Feb 71, 5000 ARNV troops sent into Laos to attack NVA supply lines, within two weeks half the force was dead.
- By the end of 71:
- ARVN unreliable as ever
- Hanoi refusing to compromise on letting Thieu stay in power
- Russians and Chinese failing to put pressure on Hanoi
- Nixon sinking in poles
- Unrest at home
- Easter Offensive- March 72 (most US troops had left), North launched a major offensive with Soviet tanks, crossing the DMZ and advancing on Saigon (aim- defeat ARVN, take over SV)
- Furious, Nixon ordered escalation of US air attacks on NV, he had extended bombing targets to supply and strategic centres in Laos and Cambodia even though bombing them was illegal. "The bastards have never been bombed like they're going to be bombed this time." (Nixon)
- Operation Linebacker (Dec 72)- series of coordinated attacks on Hanoi and Haiphong. In 12 days more bombs were dropped than in the preceding three years.
- Laos became the most heavily bombed place on Earth

Peace Treaty

- 15 January 73
- Immediate cease fire
- US forces withdrawn
- Bases dismantles
- Prisoners of war released
- International force would keep peace
- South Vietnamese had the right to determine own future
- 17th parallel would remain the dividing line until unity could take place through peace
- 27 Jan 73- end of bombing in Vietnam
- 15 Aug 73- end of bombing in Cambodia
- Late 73- Congress passed War Powers Resolution, limiting Presidents power to commit troops to foreign affairs
- Nixon resigned 8 August 74 in the wake of the Watergate scandal

Defeat of the South

Advantages for North:

- Guerrilla warfare tactics, ability to blend, support, nationalism, morale, aid from Soviet Union and China, Ho Chi Minh trail, patience

Disadvantages for US:

- Conventional tactics, lack of support, insensitivity and cruelty, bombing and defoliants, low morale , anti-war movements, Tet, Nixon

Disadvantages for ARVN:

- Corruption, nepotism, inefficiency, failure to take on fighting, relied heavily on US troops

After America withdrew

- 60 000 American deaths, expensive, division in American society, humiliation.
- ARVN had one million men, one of the largest armies and the fourth largest air force in the world.
- Capture of the South
- Late 74, NVA pressure on Northern provinces of SV, gains in Mekong Delta
- Jan 75, with ARVN troops stretched in the North, NVA attacked and seized Phuc Long province, 100km away from Saigon
- Us did nothing, USSR increased aid to North
- Thieu responded by abandoning the north and consolidate in southern areas.
- ARVN officers abandoned their men, soldiers removed uniforms, fearing retribution from advancing NVA
- Half a million refugees fled towards to coast in the hope of catching a boat south- 'convoy of tears': less than 150 000 survived Northern attacks and reached the coast.
- Huw was taken on 25 March
- Da Nang taken on 31 March
- 21 April Thieu resigned, ARVN collapsed, refugees poured into Saigon, NV circled capital
- Late April, airstrips were destroyed, US sought to implement Option IV and fly desperate Vietnamese out of the capital to awaiting US ships.
- 30 April- Saigon fell

Impact on civilians

- Social
- Arrival of US = westernised city society
- Western material/commercial values gained supremacy
- Western goods, cars, investment, fashion, music
- Seedy side of life- drugs, prostitution
- Decline of village life, movement into cities
- Cultural
- Americanisation of cities and breakdown of traditional village structures
- Strategic Hamlet- removal from ancestral sights
- Environmental
- Landscape- forest, bombing and agent orange = wastelands
- Irrigation systems destroyed
- Land impossible to cultivate
- Cities in ruins
- Economic
- 1970s South faced massive inflation and black market
- Bombing reduced food output
- Human
- Loss of life
- Sick, wounded, loss of limbs, traumatised
- Babies with defects from Agent Orange
- Cancers as a result of defoliants

Cambodia- rise of Khmer Rouge

Sihanouk

Domestic:

- Play boy, ladies man, French educated
- 2 March 55, abdicated and formed a political party, took position as PM (removed Cambodia from French Union). Father died in 1960 and he took on head of state as 'Prince Sihanouk'.
- His power was absolute and would tolerate no opposition
- Personality cult- due to his royal blood he believed he was the embodiment of the Cambodian state.
- '63- nationalised banks and import/export trade. Cancelled Us aid = annual revenue fell 15%, army became short of everything, lead to army corruption and opposition.
- Mid-60s economy was staggering and unrest in the countryside grew
- 67 and 68, army put down unrest, 10 000 were killed.

Foreign policy:

- Believed in neutrality of Cambodia
- He accepted aid from both US and China
- 1958- believed an assassination attempt by ARVN and CIA was made (Sihanouk grew concerned about American behaviour)
- '63, growth of US presence in Vietnam
- Feb 64, ARVN forces attacked VC units in Eastern Cambodia
- 65- diplomatic relations with US broken
- Moved closer to NV, Chinese supplies were allowed in via port of Sihanoukville.
- Allowed VC to establish based in Eastern Cambodia.
- Commander Lon Nol suppressed leftist groups.
- 1969
- Sihanouk became concerned with Vietnamese and the support they were giving to Cambodian communists.
- June, established diplomatic relations with US
- Saw Sihanouk becoming disengaged with his people, interested in film making and opening casinos.
- Operation Menu began = destruction, loss of life, turned many to KCP
- Kampuchean Communist (pre-66 was People's Revolutionary) Party fully engaged in armed struggle against the regime. By 1970, CPK was in control of a fifth of the country.

Coup

- Prime Minister Lon Nol had been in control of the brutal suppression of opposition. He was anti- Vietnamese and anti-communist
- Sihanouk visited Paris for medical treatment and later USSR and China (Jan 70)
- During this time Lon Nol:
 - Closed Phnom Penh casino (31 Jan)
 - Moved away from Vietnamese sympathies and towards US and SV
 - Nationalist Chinese and SV flags flew in Phnom Penh (would have angered China)
 - Arms shipments to VC held up
 - Changed countries bank notes so all money in VC hands was worthless.
- 11 March- Chinese and NV embassies were sacked
- 13 March- VC bases ordered to leave.
- 13 March- National Assembly declared Sihanouk was no longer head of state.

Under Lon Nol

- Sihanouk formed a United Front of Kampuchea with his old enemy, the Khmer Rouge, to fight Lon Nol. KR did not like him but knew it was great propaganda.
- Lon Nol against KR and wanted Vietnamese out of the country.
- NVA/VC were determined to keep bases and prepared to fight Lon Nol army and any other Cambodian forces (KR)
- US liked Lon Nol and wanted to sustain his regime.
- Cambodians hated Vietnamese
- 72, Sihanouk loudly proclaiming opposition to communism.
- Regime seen as a US puppet, many turned to KR
- Early 74- KR attacked Phnom Penh, it failed
- By 74 KR was dominant in rural areas
- Early 75- KR attacked Phnom Penh again, by early April it had cut all communication links with the capital and began to tighten
- 1 April- Lon Nol fled
- 17 April- KR gained control

Pol Pot

Evacuation of Phnom Penh

- Brutal and rapid
- Over 2 million were forced out, not allowed to take food or belongings, if they refused they were beaten or shot.
- Old, lame, children, hospital patients, pregnant, all treated the same as young healthy people.
- Up to half a million died

Aims

- Year zero
- Preservation of Khmer racial purity
- Preservation of Khmer cultural purity
- Development of a communal way of life
- Creation of a new Cambodian society
- Vietnamese (some living there for generations) were persecuted, “new arrivals” (i.e. Chinese) were driven out or killed, ancient minorities killed
- Eliminate modern influences- transport, economic institutions (banks, currency or trade), medicine, technology, electricity, farm machinery.
- Eliminate all foreign- language, ideas, material, education
- Traditional family structure was destroyed- first loyalty was to Angkor not parents
- No private life- sleeping, eating, getting married all carried out communally.
- Angkor was everything- it was the state not the individual that mattered.
- Create old time agricultural society to achieve harmonious living
- Confessing to being an intellect (i.e. Doctor) was at risk of death due to being a class traitor who has been tainted by foreign/ modern material.
- Child police checked hands- soft meant urban/ intellectual lifestyle, only peasants had a place in the KR world.
- Wearing glasses invited punishment
- However KR used modern weapons and received significant amounts of social aid from China.
- Up to 16 hour work days
- Family life and affection was frowned upon
- Everyone was under surveillance and able to be punished at any time.

- Evenings were spent giving political instruction and singing patriotic songs.
- Up to 90% of Cambodians were Buddhists and KR sought to destroy all remnants of Buddhism. Very few of Cambodians 82 000 monks survived.
- Destroyed evidence of all other religions and other minority cultures
- Ben Kiernan suggests 1.67 million died, 21% of the population. Others say 1.7-2.2 million
- 76- first major purge of the party- any disagreement and the person was killed.
- Isolated country (except with China) no one in, no one out.