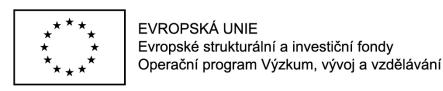
5HD450 Chapters in History of the Cold War

7. Vietnam War.





Before the war ...

- Originally French colony / area
- 1950 two governments in Vietnam resulting from the World War II
 - Democratic Republic of Vietnam communist country, capital of Hanoi
 - State of Vietnam backed by the French, led by Emperor, democratic country, capital of Saigon
- Military advisors, weapons, and money coming from China, USSR, U.S.
- Americans considered using nuclear bombs and sent troops to Vietnam
- 1954 France defeated and Vietnam temporarily divided along 17th parallel, free elections within 2 years
- Suppresion of opposition in both countries, elections not unbiased
- 1955 new authotarian Ngo Dinh Diem's government in the south, stronger communist Ho Chi Minh's government in the north





The resistance war against America

November 1955 – April 1975

• A proxy war during the Cold War – ideological involvement of the U.S.

and USSR

- Oficially fought between North Vietnam (supported by the USSR, China, other communist countries) and South Vietnam (supported by U.S., South Korea, others)
- A war of South Vietnam against North Vietnamese Army + local communist organization of the Viet Cong (their aim was to reunify Vietnam)
- After 1960 North Vietnam more involved in the communist movement in the South, invasion of Laos and Cambodia to supply arms and soldiers to the Viet Cong (Ho Chi Minh's Trail)

Outbreak

1961 U.S. determined to keep communism within then borders, but South Vietnam had
to defeat guerillas on their own x 1961, 1962 trippling of U.S. troops in SV (domino
theory)

Kennedy: "Now we have a problem making our power credible and Vietnam looks like the place."

- South Vietnam not able to defend
 - poor army leadership, corruption, nepotism
- 1961–1962 Strategic Hamlet Program
 - to solve problems with peasants, uresettling of peasants in the South
- 1963 Diem's overthrowning caused chaos
 - more support for communist guerillas
- 1964 North Vietnam attacked South Vietnam
- 1964 Gulf of Tonkin Resolution American President can run military operations in Southeast Asia without declaring war

Escalation

Aim was to force North Vietnam to stop support of Viet Cong in the South, to destroy infrastructure
of Viet Cong

"we're going to bomb them back into the Stone Age"

- Johnson: "... the battle against communism ... must be joined ... with strength and determination."
- 1965–1968 over 1 mil. bombs, missiles, and rockets in North Vietnam
- 1965 U.S. Marines sent to defend to South Vietnam Americans involved in ground war American
 public support
- Americans predicted the end of the war in 1967
 Westmoreland: "... where the end comes into view."
- 1968 Tet Offensive suprising Viet Cong's attemp at national uprising, huge offensive in urban areas, Allies won – turning point in American public support
- No more American troops sent to Vietnam
- 1968 peace talks between U.S. and North Vietnam (U.S. stopped bombing North Vietnam)
- McNamara: "the dangerous illusion of victory by the United States was therefore dead."



Vietnamization

- Nixon Doctrine "to return" the war back to the Vietnamese, it is not American war
- President Nixon promised to withdraw troops began in 1969
- 1969 My Lai Massacre, Green Beret Affair
 - American public more aggravated
- 1972 U.S. North Vietnam peace agreement,
 South Vietnam against it Nixon pushed
 South Vietnam and North Vietnam to sign it



- 1973 Paris Peace Accords to end to war and restore Vietnam, cease of fire, territorial integrity of Vietnam, national elections, withdrawal of American troops
- 1973 last American soldiers left, naval and air forces stayed in the Gulf of Tonkin

Final stage

- South Vietnam kept rolling back the Viet Cong supported by the North
- North Vietnam prepared a massive invasion to the South expected 1975–1976 (Saigon must fall before 1st May)
- Viet Cong resumed control over the territory it lost before
- 1974 war started officially again, Americans cut their financial and material support, South Vietnam very well armed suffered from oil shock, North Vietnam victorious along the borders
- 1975 third biggest city of Hue defeated by North Vietnamese Army, fall of South Vietnamese capital of Saigon – Operation Frequent Wind
- Vietnamese war was over on 30th April 1975



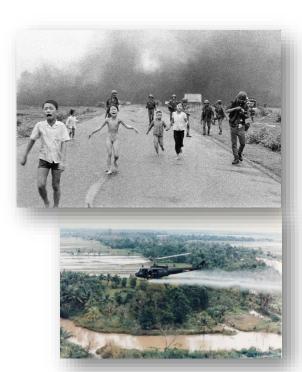


Aftermath

- 1976 emergence of Socialist Republic of Vietnam
- Thousands of refugees leaving Vietnam "boat people"



- U.S. Vietnam Syndrome the reluctance of the American public and politicians to support further international interventions after Vietnam
- First war very well covered by media (TV)
- About 1 mil. casualties, over 250 ths. South
 Vietnamese soldiers, 450 ths. North
 Vietnamese military, about 60 ths. American
 troops, the rest were civilians mostly from South
 Vietnam
- Controversies Agent Orange, carpet bombing, napalm

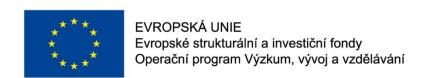


Readings & videos

- Documentaries
 - BBC The Cold War Vietnam, Make Love Not War
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6s0Z2mwTrXY
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0SSToQvJeA&index=13&list=PLPJ9LLQi9
 QhP3X73RLUI9SS RfWSFzvMI

Cold War History Videos

- http://www.history.com/topics/cold-war/cold-war-history/videos
- http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/coldwar/
- Specialized Resources / Collections / Cold War Files
 - https://www.wilsoncenter.org/program/cold-war-international-historyproject
 - http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/collections
 - http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/themes/world_politics/cold_war/default_.stm
 - https://web.archive.org/web/20080411004848/http://www.coldwarfiles.org/https://www.coldwarfiles.org/<a href="mailto:index.cfm]
 - http://www.avclub.com/special/cold-war/timeline





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