

## Chapter 29 The Vietnam War

### Section 1 The Roots of America Intervention

#### Geography

- Long & narrow 4/5 size of California
- Annamite Mt. make up most country
- 2 major river vallies Mekong (S.) & Red R. (N) Deltas  
→ Bread Baskets

#### Occupation

- 2,000 yrs ago China took over  
→ Want rice fields  
→ Last 1,000 yr rule & Viet. adopt much Chinese culture  
→ 900's gained freedom & agreed to pay tribute
- 1500's Fr. Appear & agreed to pay tribute  
→ Fr. Convert only 5/8  
→ Take land & begin cash crops
  - Farmers now tenant farmers & pay 1/2 crops as tax
- Fr. Take Indochina- Vietnam/ Laos/ Cambodia- Fr. Indochina
- Also bring alcohol and opium w/ state sanctioned selling
- Viet. try several rebellions b/c Fr. Corruption
  - put down harshly
  - 1940's begin plans for another revolt
    - led by Ho Chi Minh
      - Communists & studied in Fr., Ru., & China
- But Jp. Invades & outs Fr.  
→ Minh form League for the Independence of Vietnam
  - Vietminh
- Began guerilla war w/ U.S. intelligence officers help
- WWII over 11-2-45 & lg. Hanni celebration
  - Star Spangled Banner played & Minh read own Dec. of Ind.
    - Based on U.S version
  - Truman not recognize gov. b/c fear of com. In E. Euro & Asia
    - Fr. retakes country
- Fr. Indochina War
  - China sends arms to Vietminh
  - Truman support Fr. b/c Vietminh puppet of China & Soviets
    - By 1954 U.S funding 80 % of War
  - Fr. Underestimate
    - 13,000 Fr. Soldiers sent fort Dienbienphu
      - 50,000 Vietminh assault for 2 months
      - Fr. Surrendered Dien. & begin peace talks
    - Ike rejects military intervention
      - take too long to get ready & helpful

### Section 2 Vietnam Divided

#### The Split

- Peace talks in Geneva  
→ Minh wants whole country
  - China & Soviets force compromise b/c cold war tension

- split at 17<sup>th</sup> parallel
  - Hanoi capital in N. & Saigon in S.
    - S. gov. led by anti-com.
      - Ngo Dinh Diem
        - (NOH DIN Dee- EM)
- Division to last 2 years and then country vote

#### The No Vote

- U.S. not allow elections b/c majority want com. Gov.
  - Once com. Gov. in total power then be undemocratic
    - cited HO's land reform campaign (like collectivization)
    - Also totalitarianism

#### U.S. Supports Diem

- Diem ed. In W. and Catholic
- Anti-Colonial and anti-com.
  - U.S. believes will create nationalism
    - Instead is corrupt- unpopular- dictatorial
      - arrests critics
      - Arrests and kills Vietminh
      - No dem. Reforms
    - Same story in recent history
    - U.S. still support w. money and military b/c not com.
      - If Vietnam falls to com-be like dominos (the theory)

#### Rise of Vietcong

- Former Vietminh guerrillas begin rev. movement
  - 1957 recruit in S. Vietnam
  - Both com. and non-com.
- 1960 form National Liberation Front (NLF)
  - Diem calls them Vietcong and brands them all com.
  - Have rural support and begin insurgent attacks
    - Against Gov. Officials and military

#### Kennedy Steps Up

- 1954-60 Ike sent over billion \$ and not working
- 61 Kennedy take office and warned if not act then S.V. lost
  - Feared Ru. And China get directly involved if U.S. begin lg. scale
  - Not want to lose S.V. b/c of political damage
  - Send advisors and less than 2 yrs 1,500 to 16,000

#### Overthrow of Diem

- Diem anti Buddhist and attack temples and arrest monks
  - Several monks set themselves on fire and TV spread
- S.V. generals plan coup and U.S agree to provide aid
  - 11-1-63 happen and Diem executed
    - Kennedy then ass. And Johnson inherit
      - Military gov. doing no better than Diem
      - LBJ. Not want to be the one to lose S.V.

## Section 3 American Escalation

### Gulf of Tonkin Incident

- Destroyer Maddox on intelligence mission in Gulf
  - U.S. leading raids on northern coastal villages (secret)
  - N.V. torpedo boat launched torp. & boat destroyed
  - Next day bad weather and report of another boat with torps
    - No evidence
    - Pilot James Stockdale flies over an hour and sees nothing
    - later that night ordered on 1<sup>st</sup> bombing mission
    - To retaliate
- LBJ “wags the dog” b/c falling behind in polls
  - Rep. saying he soft on com.
  - Ordered N.V. naval bases bombed- bump in polls
- Delivers Gulf of Tonkin Resolution to congress and pass
  - Take all necessary measures to repel attacks and prevent aggression
  - allowed LBJ to send troops w/o dec. of war

### Friends and Enemies

- Propaganda war to tell public that U.S. fighting com.
  - Not true but too complicated for gen. public to understand
- S.V. gov. not stable and several coups occur
- NVA use Ho Chi Minh Trail in Cambodia and Laos for safe passage
- ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) and U.S. fighting ghost war
  - Hide and seek – hide among villagers and digging tunnels

### Escalation

- More troops & tech. sent but trying fight unconventional war conventional
  - Not working
  - Bombings in N.V. increasing w/ operation Rolling Thunder
    - strengthens NVA resolve
  - Secret missions to Ho Chi Minh Trail unsuccessful
- Pop. Tired of 30 yrs. Fighting
  - U.S. not viewed as liberators
- NVA and Vietcong wage war of attrition
  - Also waging defensive war and know own land
  - Good at improvised munitions
  - “Cling to the belt of the enemy”
    - Fight close to prevent superior U.S. tech.
    - Air support /MIG vs. AK / surprise
  - But U.S. commander of forces – Gen. William Westmoreland
    - dedicated to fight war of attrition as well

### Civilians caught in middle

- Enemy hiding in plain site and civ. not say
  - U.S. soldiers frustrated and contempt rises
  - U.S begin forced relocation of villages to find hiding places
- More S.V. civilians killed by U.S. than N.V. civilians
- Jungle good hiding place so U.S. destroy jungle

## Section 4 68 Years of Crisis

U.S. saying com. being contained and reduced finally

- Tet Offensive- Jan 31, 68 new years
  - Com. Begin wide spread attacks all over S.V.
    - U.S. and S.V. troops eventually take back but
    - Major propaganda wins for N.V.
      - Attacks happen in “safe”
      - Many S.V. officials killed
      - U.S. public sees reports on T.V. and begin question

Conflict at Home

- Hawks “criticize” LBJ. Over limited war – need full war to win
- Doves see conflict as civil war and U.S. should not be involved
  - U.S. supporting corrupt regimes and U.S. gov. lying to public
    - Protestors gain strength and coming out of civ. rights protests
      - Know how to organize – mostly b/c colleagues
      - March on D.C. Oct. 67 50,000
      - Burn or send back draft cards – go to Canada and jail
    - Media reports on all – esp. violence b/c it sells

Election of 68

- LBJ. Not run again and stated 3-31-68 on TV. to want begin peace talks
- Rep. run Nixon b/c promising silent majority and restore of order in U.S.
- Dem. Robert Kennedy favorite but killed by Sirhan b/c
  - K. was pro Israel 6-5-68
  - 2 months later Dr. King killed and violence sparked all over
- Dem. Hubert Humphrey runs and is pro LBJ policies
  - DNC convention in Chicago Aug 68
    - many young dem anti-wars so begins protests
    - riots occur and police called out and TV capture beatings
- Nixon claim to have “secret plan” to end war
  - Dem. divided and Nixon wins with 43% pop. Vote

Section 5 Nixon and the End of the War

Vietnamization

- Sec. of St. Henry Kissinger has plan
- Build up S.V. military and have them do more fighting
- Slowly withdraw Am. Troops 480,000 end 69 – 235,000 end 70 – 160,000 end 71
  - Fewer troops = fewer casualties = less protests
- Increase bombing missions to send message of support to S.V.
- Nixon wanted to scare N.V. into compromise
- Begin bombing in Cambodia and even invaded in April 1970
  - Destroy tail but trail move deeper into Cambodia
  - Invasion w/o Congress consent or Cambodia gov.
    - New protest esp. at colleges
      - Kent St. and nat. guard called in
      - guard opened fire and killed 4 b/c rocks thrown
      - split country
        - N.Y. 100,000 protestors “Am-love it or leave”

→ Congress repealed Gulf of Tonkin Res.

#### The End

- Troop morale low b/c soldiers not safe and drafted and poor
  - Wealthy in college
- U.S. and N.V. agree all U.S. forces out and com. Allowed form coalition gov. w/ S.V.
  - 500 U.S. POW's also released
  - Signed Jan 27, 1973
- Early 75 N.V. forces begin probe and begin to Saigon
  - Saigon fall Ap. 30, 1975
  - Gerald Ford wants send help but congress refuses

#### The Results

- Vietnam unified and purges pro-west also sends people to re-education camps
- Cambodian gov. overthrown by Khmer Rouge under Pol Pot
  - Purge all western influence – over 1 million killed
  - 1978 Vietnam invade and set up pro-Vietnam gov
    - 1989 Vietnam troops pull out – Khmer Rouge fighting for power
- Congress pass War Powers Act Nov. 7, 1973
  - Pres. Tell congress at least 2 days before military action
  - Must withdraw in 60 days if congress not approve
- U.S. inflation begin and deficit rise b/c taxes not raised to pay war
- U.S. troops not welcomed back and viewed as U.S. 1<sup>st</sup> defeat