

The Road to Vietnam





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A Barry Levinson Film

"...The best military comedy since 'M·A·S·H'..."
TIME Magazine

The Main Idea

- The United States
became involved in
Vietnam to limit the
spread of communism.

INDOCHINA, 1950



GEOGRAPHY SKILLS

INTERPRETING MAPS

The political and cultural influence of both India and China on the region gave Indochina its name.

- 1. Region** What countries formed Indochina?
- 2. Place** What were the capitals of North and South Vietnam?

See **Skills Handbook**, p. H20

Vietnam's History

- Vietnam was an imperialist colony of France until Japan seized control in World War II.
- Ho Chi Minh led a nationalist movement and Vietnam gained their independence in 1945.
- France tried to gain control back of Vietnam and conflict followed.

Ho Chi Minh



- Name means “ He Who Enlightens”
- Joined the Communist Party.
- Believed that a Communist revolution was a way Vietnam could be free of foreign rulers.

Minh & The U.S.

- Ho Chi Minh
hoped for U.S.
support of
their
independence.



The Domino Theory

- Communists seized China in 1949.
- Communist North Korea invaded South Korea in 1950.
- Communist-led revolts in Indonesia, Malaya, and the Philippines.

The US Response

- The United States was fearful of the Domino Theory.
- From the Truman administration through the Kennedy administration, the U.S. slowly escalated their involvement in Vietnam.

The Geneva Conference

- The goal of the Geneva Conference was to work out a peace agreement.
- Vietnam was temporarily divided at the 17th parallel.
- General elections were to be held in July 1956 and would reunify the country under one government.
- The United States never fully supported the peace agreements fearing that Ho Chi Minh and the Communists would win.

Late 50's Early 60's Vietnam

- By the late 1950s a civil war broke out in South Vietnam.
- By 1960, Ho Chi Minh expanded the effort to unify North and South Vietnam under a Communist government.
- The Vietnamese people wanted the foreign influence out of their country.

Leaders

- Ngo Dinh Diem became the president of South Vietnam in 1954.
 - Diem's government was corrupt, brutal, and unpopular from the start.
- Ho Chi Minh's leadership in North Vietnam gained the support of the poor workers.

Buddhism

- Buddhist monk Quang Duc publicly burns himself to death in a plea for President Ngo Dinh Diem to show “charity and compassion” to all religions. Diem, a Catholic who had been oppressing the Buddhist majority, remained stubborn despite continued Buddhist protests and repeated U.S. requests to liberalize his government’s policies.





Diem's Overthrow

- Diem's government continued to grow more and more unpopular.
- He arrested and killed Buddhist protesters.
- Diem refused to change his stand against Buddhists.
- In November 1963 the South Vietnamese plotters murdered Diem.



Tonkin Gulf Resolution

- President Johnson wanted to deploy US military forces to Vietnam but needed the approval of Congress.
- Johnson went to Congress about a US military ship that had been attacked by the North Vietnamese.
 - In reality, the ship was on a spying mission and fired first.

Causes of Vietnam War

1. Vietnam's Desire for Freedom
2. US fear of Domino Theory
3. South Vietnam non-compliance with Geneva Accords
4. North Vietnam's attempt to unify the country
5. US support of Anti-Communist gov't

Order of Operations

- Vietnam Intro Assignment