

VIETNAM what did this war mean? What was it fought over? Was it a just cause or a cold war fear?

We will explore America's longest war / police action.

1945 - First American Dies in Vietnam - Lt. Co. Peter Dewey thought to be a Frenchman

May 7, 1954 - French IndoChina Dien Bien Phu Vietnam over-run the French Fortress and the U.S. is asked for "Advisors"

Feb. 1955 - Eisenhower's Administration sends the first Advisors to South Vietnam to train South Vietnamese soldiers.

July, 1959 - Two U.S. soldiers are killed north of Saigon.

May, 1961 - J.F.K. orders 100 special forces troops to S. Vietnam

1962 - U.S. uses [redacted] for the first time. Defoliant to rid the jungle for better enemy identification.

1962 - Mike Mansfield tells J.F.K. that Diem has wasted Billions in Vietnam. J.F.K. concerned.

1963 - South Vietnamese ARVN is formed. Kennedy assassination Nov. 22, 1963. [redacted] now in charge of the war. Buddhists monks burn themselves in protest of the war. With the U.S. approval, Diem and his Brother are assassinated.

1964 - [redacted] Incident August 2. Three NVA P.T. boats fire on the USS Maddox. Another attack supposedly happens on the 4th. This is the spark which will send the U.S. to war.

L.B.J. wins the election of 1964 in a landslide.

1965 - Rolling Thunder. Sustained American Bombings for the next three years. Marines arrive at Danang Airbase. Very important stand for the Marines. U.S. troop levels at 200,000

1966 - L.B.J. continues to support the South Vietnamese government.

1967 - Operation Cedar Falls begins. U.S. 16,000 troops and the ARVN 14,000 troops head to sites near Saigon and the Iron Triangle. They find a massive tunnel system which now makes the job of the U.S. more complex. Sec. of Defense Robert McNamara admits to congress that bombing has been ineffective and the Ho Chi Minh trail is still supply line for the NVA.

1968 - Turning point of the war. January TET offensive by the Vietcong sweep down to Saigon. The U.S. turn back the communists in a few weeks. This was a big loss for the Communists but the Psychological effect on the U.S. troops is considerable.

The end of the tunnel seems to be very far away. Politicians begin to waver. Battle of Hue the previously religious icon was leveled by the U.S. and mass graves were discovered. The Communists killed hundreds of thousands of civilians.

The war now got more complex.

Gen. Westmoreland asked Congress for another 206,000 troops. The political fall out of another 200,000 will be political suicide. The soldiers are now being politicized.

1968 March 16- My Lai Massacre. Lt. Calley and his men conduct a search and destroy mission.

Civilians are targets and are killed. LBJ announces he will not run. The first time this had or has ever happened. The message to the nation seems clear. "Even the president is tired of this war"

April - MLK is killed in Memphis.

By May, Peace talks will begin.

RFK is assassinated in L.A. in June.

Democratic convention in Chicago is a mad house of political protest and unrest.

Richard Nixon elected in November. He promises to bring back Law and Order. He beats Humphrey by 1 percentage point. George Wallace is third.

1969 - Nixon begins to bomb Cambodia covert. Operation Breakfast. If the public hears of this it will be the end of Nixon. Vietnamization policy announced. This means we will teach the ARVN to defend themselves. Ho Chi Minh dies at 79.

News of the My Lai Massacre reaches the public. Lt. William Calley is convicted by 1971. Massive anti war demonstrations in D.C. and other places in the U.S.

1970 - Kent State incident - four students killed, eight others wounded by National Guard troops.

Sec. of State Henry Kissinger secretly talks with Le Duc Tho on an end to the war.

1971- Pentagon papers are leaked. Daniel Ellsberg publishes these papers to the press. A legacy of deception of the public is now revealed. The U.S. public is now very upset with the government. Nixon announces he will visit China.

1972- Nixon cuts troops by 70,000. He also orders bombing of Hanoi. B-52's going non stop. Watergate break in revealed. Kissinger states that Peace is at Hand. Peace with honor. This agreement is between Kissinger and North Vietnam. The South is now upset. Nixon wins reelection.

1973 - Cease fire signed in Paris by Kissinger and Le Duc Tho. Peace with honor. This will go into effect on Jan. 28. The end of the draft is announced.

1974 - The resignation of Nixon. Damage investigations of the environment by Agent Orange.

1975 - Saigon is the target of the NVA. President Ford calls the war unfinished. Americans are being evacuated from the city. The fall will happen by April 30. The last two deaths of U.S. military happen in the Evac when their Helo's crash.

1976 - Jimmy Carter pardons draft dodgers. Vietnam is added to the U.N. Boat people escape from Vietnam. These were our allies during the war. Report on Agent Orange reports it not being good for human exposure. Ronald Reagan elected.

1980 - Reagan announces that MIA's will be first priority. Dow chemical transparent on Agent Orange.

Names to remember:

William Calley -

Hubert Humphrey -

Lyndon Johnson -

Robert McNamara -

Ho Chi Minh -

POW -

MIA -

