

Vietnam Notes

Part I: Causes

- 1) Why were the French in Indochina? - Wanted a colony. - Benefits to this: exploitation, trade, etc.
- 2) What effect did WWII have on the people of Vietnam? - Japan took over Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos in May 1940 - Important to Japanese war strategy because of resources. - By 1945 Japanese forces had overthrown the French government. - Vietminh resistance. - Forced villagers to grow crops other than staple rice for the benefit of the war machine. - After Japanese surrender, "August Revolution" - Uprising across country - Ho Chi Minh announced independence of Vietnam.
- 3) What resistance was there to the French Rulers? - There was always resistance to the French in Vietnam Nationalism - Nationalist Party formed in 1927 - Ruthlessly suppressed after uprising in 1930 - Quickly learned that peaceful reform movements are impossible, started turning to radical solutions i.e. Communist party.
- 4) Why is Ho Chi Minh an important part of Chinese History? - Head of Communist movement - Lead fight for independence. - "founder" of C.P. - unified individual groups. - Lead the fight against the French and later against the Americans. - President of North Vietnam from 1946 until his death.
- 5) Briefly describe why the French were defeated in Vietnam after WWII. - French forces unable to deliver a crippling blow to an enemy they often could not locate. - Tactics- Revolutionary war. - Similar to tactics used by Mao in Chinese civil war - Guerilla. - Based around peasantry - Promises to redistribute land equally, propaganda. - Nationalism
- 6) Why was Vietnam divided at the 17th parallel in 1956? Who was in control of the North? The South? - Geneva's diplomats did not desire the division to be permanent and specified that national election had to be held in two years time, after which the country would become one. - This did not happen, South Vietnam became a separate political entity, supported by the USA - North Vietnam became Communist, ruled by Ho Chi Minh.
- 7) Which country did the USA support and why? - USA supported South, fear of Communism and "Domino Theory"
- 8) What was the Vietminh and the Vietcong? - Vietminh - Founded in early 1940's by 1946 army of 60 000 - Largely based in N Vietnam - Used Guerrilla tactics. - Avoided large scale confrontation - Vietcong. - A lot of ex-Vietminh. - Many of those who repressed under the French - Vietcong a label used by the Americans - Wage a style of war similar to the Vietminh. - December 1960 saw formation of NLF- represented various political groupings opposed to the South Vietnam Government VC was military wing.
- 9) What Role did Kennedy and Johnson play in involving the USA in the Vietnam conflict? - Kennedy (1961-63) - increased American involvement at "Advisory" Level - 16 000 "advisors" - Johnson - After Gulf of Tonkin incident on August, 1964, - LBJ ordered US bombing raids. - After Vietcong attacks on American bases, Operation Rolling Thunder started in 1965. - 1965 US commander in Vietnam, General William Westmoreland asked president for 180 000 men - LBJ sent 99 000 - Escalation: By 1968 there were 536 000 troops in Vietnam.

PART II : THE WAR

- 1) Briefly outline the course of the war. - Gulf of Tonkin, 1964 - Rolling Thunder, 1965 - Ground troops 1965, escalation 1968 - Tet Offensive, 30th January 1968 - Essentially a failure, but propaganda bonus for VC - Increased opposition back home. - 1968 31 March LBJ announced that US troop levels would not increase, and that America would seek peace, resigned. - Nixon succeeded him. - Announcement of policy of "Vietnamisation" - Armed South Vietnamese to fight their own war, increased bombing. - 27th January 1973 ?Agreement ending the war and restoring peace in Vietnam? signed. Tactics - Fought predominantly in S.V. - VC consisted of three groups: Regular soldiers, provincial forces, and part-time guerrillas (men and women who farmed by day and fought by night) - Booby traps, tunnels, snipers, mortar shells, - America - Agent Orange, Napalm, use of helicopters.

About the Author

Revision notes by [Murray Waters](#)

Source: <http://crampuppy.com>