**VIETNAM WAR**

The Vietnam War lasted from 1957 until 1975.  Communist-ruled North Vietnam Wanted to take over non-Communist South Vietnam and unite the north and south into a single nation.  The United States feared that if one Southeast Asian country fell to the Communists the other nations in the region would also fall.  In the end, the United States and South Vietnamese forces were unable to stop the North Vietnamese takeover.

Directions:  Complete the sentences on these pages by filling in the spaces with the words, names, and terms in bold print that appear above the passages.

**Ho Chi Minh Trail advisers military forces Viet Cong communism**

**Marines North Vietnam aid containment**

Background/Early Events

1. In the years after World War II ended in 1945, President Truman declared that the United States must help any nation threatened by Communists.  Truman’s policy- called -was followed by Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson.
2. In the mid-1950s, Vietnam was a divided country. Ho Chi Minh was the leader of Communist North Vietnam. Ngo Dinh Diem, an opponent of , was the President of South Vietnam.

1. President Eisenhower sent several hundred U.S. to South Vietnam to help Diem.
2. Diem did little to improve the hard life of the peasants in rural areas. In 1957, a rebellion broke out against his rule. The rebels were called the , or Vietnamese Communists.
3. North Vietnam supported the rebellion in South Vietnam and established a supply line to the Viet Cong through Laos and Cambodia. This system of roads and trails came to be known as the .
4. By 1961, the U.S. backed Diem government was in danger of being overthrown by the rebels. President Kennedy reacted by increasing the number of American military advisers in Vietnam from about 900 to about 16,000. He also expanded economic and military .
5. In 1963, a group of South Vietnamese generals overthrew the unpopular Diem government. A period of political disorder followed. stepped up its supply of war materials and began to send units of its own army into the south.
6. In 1964, the United States accused North Vietnamese torpedo boats of attacking American ships off the coast of North Vietnam. Congress responded by passing the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, giving President Johnson the power to increase U.S. in the region.
7. A year later, President Johnson sent a group of U.S. to South Vietnam. They were the first American ground combat forces to enter the war in Vietnam.

**guerrilla warfare search and destroy Soviet Union Cambodia**

**B-52 bombers helicopters China the Philippines**

The Fighting Escalates

1. U.S. troop strength grew from 60,000 in 1965 to 543,000 in 1969. The American joined about 800,000 South Vietnamese forces and another 69,000 men from Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Thailand, and .
2. North Vietnam and the Viet Cong had over 300,000 troops, but the exact number is unknown. The Soviet Union and , the two biggest communist nations in the world at that time, sent war materials but no military forces to the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong.
3. The United States did not try to invade and conquer North Vietnam during the war. Instead, it focused on air strikes against targets in North Vietnam and ground missions against the enemy in South Vietnam.
4. The air raids against North Vietnam were carried out by huge and smaller warplanes.
5. In South Vietnam, American pilots used to search for the Viet Cong in jungle and mountain ranges.
6. The Viet Cong and North Vietnamese used a defensive strategy and tried to avoid major battles in the open. The lightly armed Communists preferred , which included such tactics as ambushes and hand-laid bombs.
7. Between 1965 and 1967, neither side could gain an advantage. The U.S. Army and Marines usually won their battles, but North Vietnam continued to send in new troops. The and China provided more war materials.
8. To avoid defeat, North Vietnamese forces often retreated into neighboring Laos and .

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**National Guard college campuses election cease-fire agreement**

**money and lives Saigon U.S. troops military aid**

**enemy food crops Johnson television peace negotiations**

 Final Years of the War

1. Public opinion in the United States began to turn against the war. Many Americans wondered whether blocking Communist expansion in South Vietnam was worth the cost in .

1. When field commander General Westmoreland asked for an additional 206,000 troops, President Johnson turned down the request. cut back the bombing of North Vietnam and called for peace negotiations.

1. Peace talks began in Paris in May, 1968. When negotiations failed to produce an agreement, Americans became impatient with the war. President Nixon announced a new policy known as Vietnamization. This policy called for stepped-up training of South Vietnamese forces and the gradual withdrawal of from South Vietnam.

1. As the fighting dragged on, anti-war demonstrations were held in the United States, many on .

1. On May 4, 1970, a demonstration at Kent State University in Ohio ended in violence. A group of protesters were fired upon by units, killing four students and wounding nine others. The event shocked the nation and aroused more anti-war sentiment.

1. Opposition to the Vietnam War also developed as a result of coverage, which brought scenes of war into millions of American homes.
2. War critics called attention to the large number of civilians killed by U.S. bombing missions and ground operations in South Vietnam. Bombs and chemical sprays destroyed much of the countryside. U.S. forces used such weed killers as Agent Orange to reveal Communist hiding places in the jungle and to destroy .

1. In 1972, North Vietnam undertook a major invasion of South Vietnam. This campaign resulted in heavy losses for both sides, and led to the beginning of serious .

1. On January 27, 1973, a was signed by the United States, South Vietnam, North Vietnam and the Viet Cong.
2. According to the agreement, the United States and its allies would withdraw their forces from Vietnam within 60 days. North Vietnam could leave150,000 troops in the south. Each side would return prisoners of war. An internationally supervised would settle the political future of South Vietnam.

1. On March 29, 1973, the last U.S. ground forces left Vietnam. Congress sharply reduced

 to South Vietnam.

1. With American troops gone from Vietnam, North Vietnam and the Viet Cong resumed their attacks against .

1. The war finally ended when South Vietnam surrendered to North Vietnam in Saigon on

 April 30, 1975. was then renamed Ho Chi Minh City.

**factories Laos 58,000 150 billion**

**prisons Vietnam 500,000 10 million**

**the United States cropland 1 million vital interests**

**unemployment sacrifices**

Results of the War

1. About American died during the Vietnam War, and another 300,00 were wounded.

1. More than South Vietnamese lost their lives during the fighting.

1. The death toll among the North Vietnamese ranged between and one million.

1. The United States spent over on the war.

1. U.S. warplanes caused heavy damage to North Vietnam’s and transportation system.
2. South Vietnam suffered the most destruction because that is where nearly all of the fighting took place. As many as South Vietnamese- half of the country’s population- became refugees.

1. The bombing and use of chemicals in order to clear forests damaged much of South Vietnam’s

 and plant and animal life.

1. North Vietnam helped establish communist governments in and Cambodia in 1975.
2. In 1976, North Vietnam united North and South Vietnam into the communist nation of

 .

1. Hundreds of thousands of South Vietnamese were put in by the Communists. More than one million people fled Vietnam between 1975 and the early 1990s.
2. The Vietnam War was the first foreign war in which American forces failed to achieve their objectives. This hurt the pride of many people in and left bitter and painful memories.

1. About 2,700,000 American men and women fought in the war. Most veterans made the transition to civilian life with relative ease, but others experienced serious problems. These veterans suffered from a high rate of divorce, drug abuse, suicide, involvement in violent crime and .

1. Many opponents of the war criticized and ignored the returning veterans. This reaction made the veterans feel that the nation neither recognized nor appreciated their .

1. The Vietnam War has made the United States look more closely at world trouble spots before sending U.S. troops to foreign countries. Since Vietnam, many Americans have argued that the nation should stay out of wars that do not directly threaten its safety or .