**Vietnam War, 1965-1975**

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| **Advantages & Disadvantages** | **Leaders** |
| **United States & South Vietnam*** Advanced technology & financial resources but fighting a “limited war”
* Unpopular government in South Vietnam
* Divided public opinion and little international support

**North Vietnam & Viet Cong*** Strong ideological commitment: fighting a war for national liberation & for communist doctrine
 | **United States & South Vietnam** **Civilian –** Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford (presidents); Robert McNamara (Secretary of Defense); Ngo Dinh Diem, Nguyen van Thieu (SV) **Military –** William Westmoreland**North Vietnam & Viet Cong** **Civilian –** Ho Chi Minh **Military –** Vo Nguyen Giap |
| **Causes** | **Strategies** |
| **Long Term*** Failed French effort to recolonize Vietnam after WWII was supported by U.S. aid
* Division of Vietnam at the 17th Parallel under the 1954 Geneva Conference
* American Cold War policy of containment of communism & the domino theory

**Short Term/”Spark”*** Tonkin Gulf Incident… T.G. Resolution gave president a “blank check”
 | **United States & South Vietnam*** Limited war: bombing, then escalation
* “Pacification” of South Vietnamese countryside to eliminate Viet Cong
* Aid to South Vietnamese army (ARVN)

**North Vietnam & Viet Cong*** Defensive guerilla war of attrition
* Supply Viet Cong using the Ho Chi Minh trail inside Laos & Cambodia
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| **Turning Points** | **Homefront** |
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| **Battle/Event** | **Significance** |
| Tet Offensive, 19681968 U.S. Presidential ElectionSecret bombing of Laos & Cambodia | Surprise attack was beaten back but it convinced many Americans the war was unwinnableNixon won the election promising a “secret plan” to end the war and “peace with honor”Targeted Ho Chi Minh trail but further escalated the war |

 | Youth movement* Draft deferments, draft dodgers
* Antiwar movement (SDS)
* Kent State shooting

Democratic Party became divided* LBJ declined to run for reelection in 1968; antiwar RFK was assassinated
* Riots at 1968 DNC

Media coverage* TV: “living room war” & body counts
* Newspapers: My Lai Massacre; Pentagon Papers were “leaked” by Daniel Ellsberg (*NYT v. US*); Nixon created “plumbers”... Watergate
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| **End of War** | **Non-Treaty Results** |
| * “Vietnamization” – U.S. gradually withdrew troops and trained South Vietnamese forces
* Paris Peace talks dragged on for years
* Last U.S. troops left in 1973
* North Vietnam made rapid advances
* Fall of Saigon, 1975
* Vietnam was reunified under communist control
 | * War Powers Act restricted president’s ability to commit troops to indefinite engagements
* 26th Amendment lowered voting age to 18; draft was ended (all-volunteer army)
* Voter apathy & distrust of government
* Veterans issues: PTSD, POW/MIA, poor treatment of returning vets, creation of Maya Lin’s Vietnam Veterans Memorial
* Lasting effects of Agent Orange
* Khmer Rouge genocide in Cambodia
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