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# THE VIETNAM WAR:

## *The Rainbow Herbicides*

As one of the most horrific wars of our history, the Vietnam War took place from 1955 to 1975, officially between North and South Vietnam but supported by the greater powers of communist allies such as the Soviet Union and China, and the South Vietnam's allies such as the United States and Australia.

It is known for the absolute destruction of the Vietnamese peoples and country - the aftermath of the war resulted in the deaths of civilians far outweighing that of the military of either side.

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## THREE STRUCTURE MODELS

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# 1945 TO 1954

This year was the end of World War 2. Previously, Japanese forces had invaded Vietnam, and in opposition to it and French colonialism, Ho Chi Minh formed the Viet Minh, inspired by Chinese and Soviet communism.

After the Japanese defeat, they withdrawn their forces from Vietnam, leaving Emperor Bao Dai in control.

The Viet Minh forces from hereon overtook Hanoi City and spread across the North, declaring themselves as the Democratic Republic of Vietnam with Chi Minh as president.

France, in retaliation, declared the state of Vietnam with the Emperor as the central power.

Soon after the French slowly began pulling out, replaced by the US, who were previously largely funded them.



Emperor Bao Di, one of the central powers of Japan.



Ho Chi Minh, founder and leader of the Viet Minh.



Ngo Dieh Diem is pictured to the right, as the prime minister of Southern Vietnam during the Geneva Accords..

## MARCH 13-MAY 7 1954 BATTLE OF DIEN BIEN PHU

In an operation attempt to cut off the Viet Minh's supply chains through Laos, the French began an operation to support and insert more troops into Dien Bien Phu, Though,, they underestimated their opponent's firepower and anti-aircraft ability, destroyed through their reliance and deprivation of airsupplies. Thie French surrender after a two-month siege.

1954-1956~

## OPERATION PASSAGE TO FREEDOM

Large migrations of civilians started after ceasefires were announced - approximately 900,000 Northern Vietnamese moved to the South officially, while more realistically the number was closer to 2 million. Approximately 52,000 moved to the North.

1956

## FRENCH WITHDRAWAL

By 1956, the French had withdrawn all forces from Vietnam, no longer taking part in the conflict.

## DECEMBER 29 1960 VIET CONG

The National Liberation Front is created (aka Viet Cong) - a Southern Vietnamese communist group fighting for the North and against Ngo Dinh Diem's government.

JANUARY 31-SEPTEMBER 23 1968

## TET OFFENSIVE

The Tet Offensive was a main turning point of the Vietnamese War. It was a three-part operation launched by North Vietnam to attack more than a hundred outposts and cities using over 80,000 of their troops. The motive of the attack was to instigate an uprising within the South, as well as to push out US support - though it didn't work as thought. No uprising occured, and though the US was caught by surprise, it quickly recovered and retaliated. The main three targets of the attack were the cities of Saigon, Hue, and Khe Sanh.

APRIL 26-JULY 21 1954

## GENEVA ACCORDS

Named after the conference in Geneva, Switzerland discussing the resolution of the conflict, the Geneva Accords involved the USSR, Viet Minh, USA, PRC, United Kingdom, and future states made from the crumbling of the French Empire in Southeast Asia. The agreement resulted in the two sides of Vietnam being separated into North and South Vietnam - a decision pushed by Soviet and Chinese allies in concern of US military intervention, as previously the Viet Minh desired a unified Vietnam. Neither the delegates for the US and the State of Vietnam directly signed on or agreed to terms.

1955-1956

## RESTARTING

In 1955, anti-communist politician Ngo Dinh Diem replaced Emperor Bao Lian as the central power, as president of the Republic of Vietnam. President Eisenhower of the US also pledged support to him and South Vietnam.

Though there was to be a country-wide election in 1956, Ngo Dinh Diem refused, stating that they had not signed the Geneva Accords. North Vietnam also failed to withdraw all Viet Minh troops from South Vietnam, therefore re-sparking conflict.

NOVEMBER 1963

## INSTABILITY

On November 2, 1963 Ngo Dinh Diem and his brother are killed in a coup of his generals, three weeks before President Kennedy's assassination. The resulting political instability and ensuing chaos. Each new regime thereafter were viewed as puppets of the United States.