

# Vietnam Conflict

1950s through 1970s

# **Vietnam & France** after WWII

**France tried to regain control of Vietnam with US support**

**1954 - communist forces in North Vietnam defeated the French**



# Vietminh

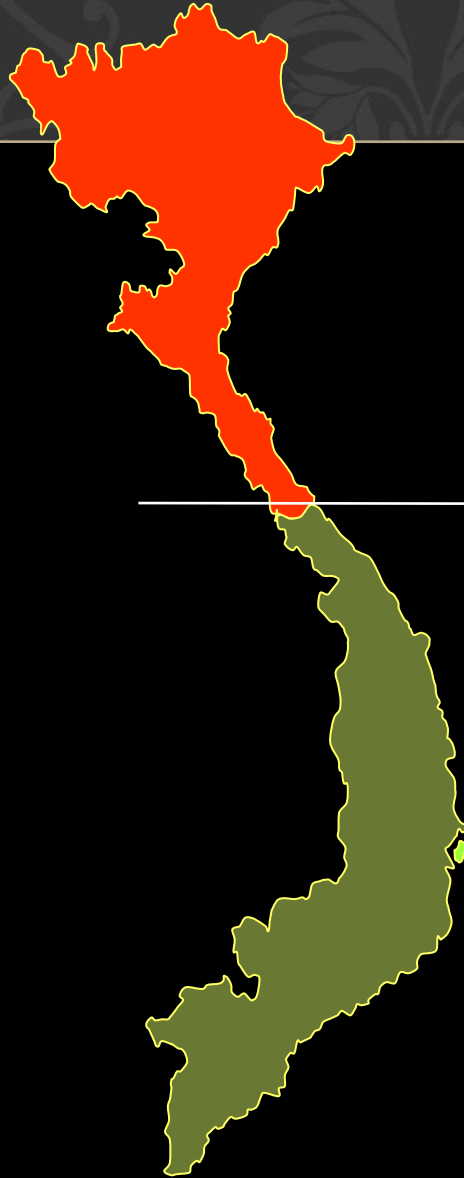


**Group of Vietnamese who supported independence of Vietnam from foreign rule (French)**

**Ho Chi Minh – leader of Vietminh**



# Geneva Accords



- 1954
- Divided Vietnam at 17<sup>th</sup> parallel
- North - communist government
- South - anti-communists
- Democratic elections scheduled in 2 years to unite Vietnam

# Domino Theory



*If one nation falls to **communism**, then nearby nations will be influenced and fall as well.*

President Eisenhower was concerned about the safety of South Vietnam.

Ike sent huge amounts of foreign aid and military advisors to South Vietnam to prevent communist take over.





# Elections 1956

South Vietnam's president Ngo Dinh Diem



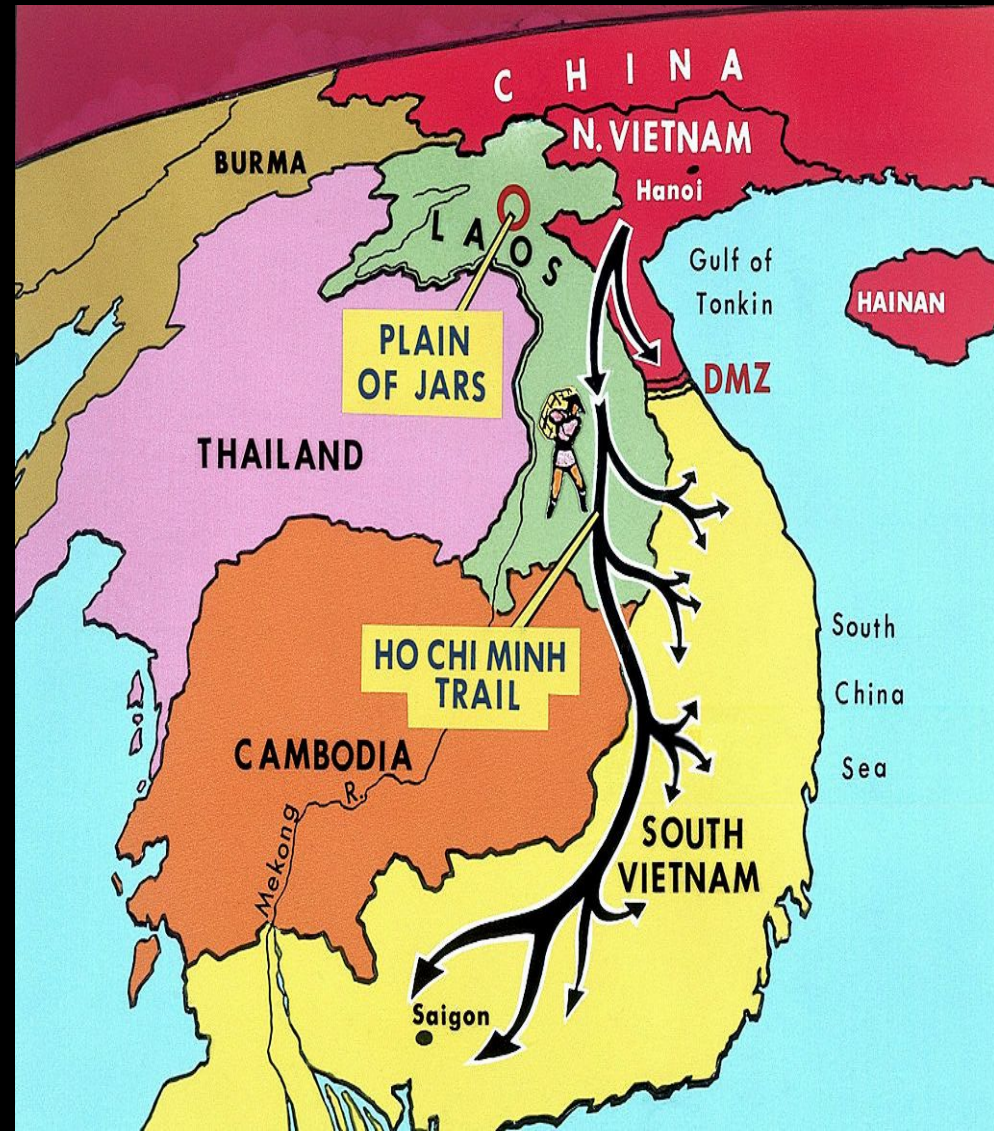
# In Response to Diem's Regime





# Ho Chi Minh Trail

- Allowed for the passage of weapons and supplies to **Viet Cong** (South Vietnamese Communists) from North Vietnam to South Vietnam.



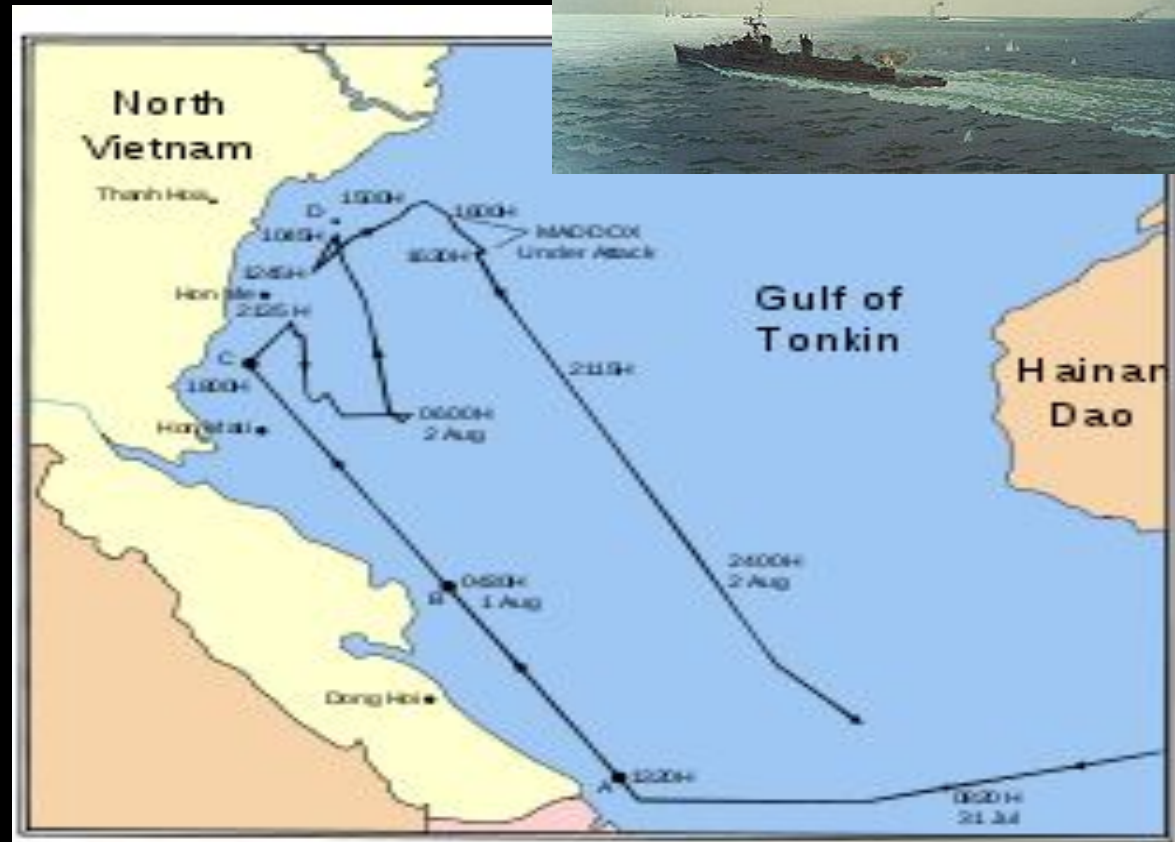


# Gulf of Tonkin

Incident, August 2, 1964

North Vietnamese patrol boat fired a torpedo on the USS Maddox.

LBJ went to Congress to discuss the Gulf of Tonkin incident.



# Gulf of Tonkin Resolution



- “Blank Check”
- Resolution - not a declaration of war

# Operation Rolling Thunder



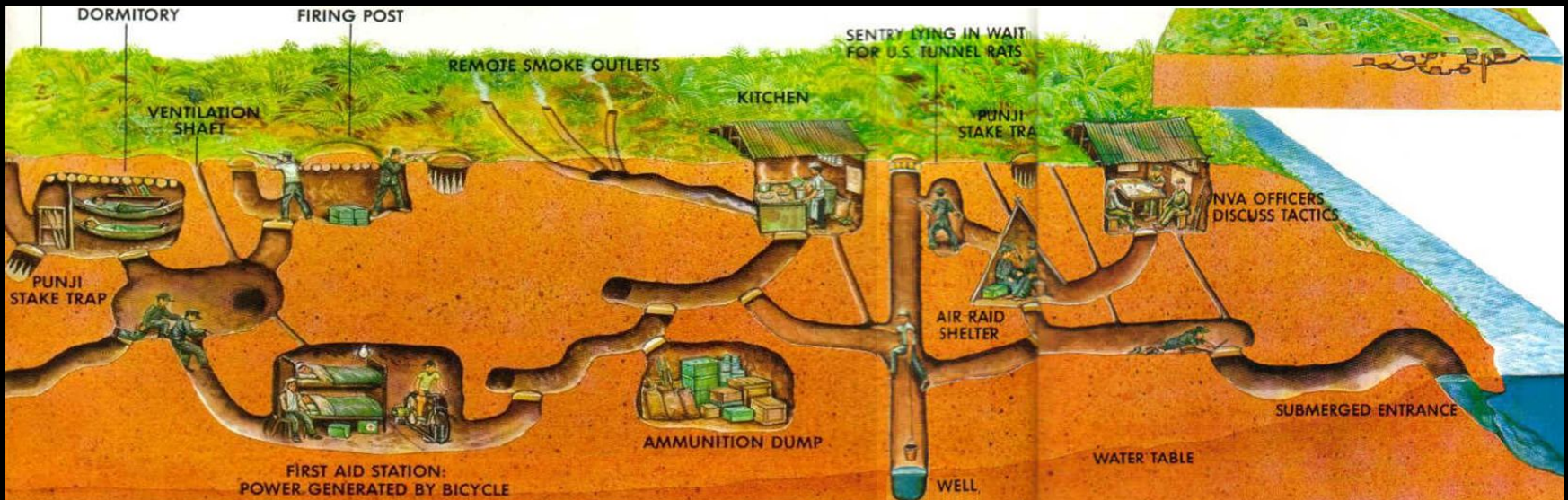
LBJ ordered the bombing of North Vietnam in 1965.

American troops began to arrive in South Vietnam to protect it from communist take over.



# Problems for American Troops

- Jungle terrain
- Viet Cong guerrilla tactics
- Viet Cong lived with the civilian population, creating difficulties for U.S. troops to find the enemy
- Underground tunnels
- Land mines













# Vietnam War Art and Music

The Rock and Roll War

# Drafting Troops



Selective Service Act-  
required males between the  
ages of 18 - 26 to register for  
military service.

Exemptions:

- Health Conditions
- College enrollment





## 1970 RANDOM SELECTION SEQUENCE, BY MONTH AND DAY

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1	305	086	108	032	330	249	093	111	225	359	019	129
2	159	144	029	271	298	228	350	045	161	125	034	328
3	251	297	267	083	040	301	115	261	049	244	348	157
4	215	210	275	081	276	020	279	145	232	202	266	165
5	101	214	293	269	364	028	188	054	082	024	310	056
6	224	347	139	253	155	110	327	114	006	087	076	010
7	306	091	122	147	035	085	050	168	008	234	051	012
8	199	181	213	312	321	366	013	048	184	283	097	105
9	194	338	317	219	197	335	277	106	263	342	080	043
10	325	216	323	218	065	206	284	021	071	220	282	041
11	329	150	136	014	037	134	248	324	158	237	046	039
12	221	068	300	346	133	272	015	142	242	072	066	314
13	318	152	259	124	295	069	042	307	175	138	126	163
14	238	004	354	231	178	356	331	198	001	294	127	026
15	017	089	169	273	130	180	322	102	113	171	131	320
16	121	212	166	148	055	274	120	044	207	254	107	096
17	235	189	033	260	112	073	098	154	255	288	143	304
18	140	292	332	090	278	341	190	141	246	005	146	128
19	058	025	200	336	075	104	227	311	177	241	203	240
20	280	302	239	345	183	360	187	344	063	192	185	135
21	186	363	334	062	250	060	027	291	204	243	156	070
22	337	290	265	316	326	247	153	339	160	117	009	053
23	118	057	256	252	319	109	172	116	119	201	182	162
24	059	236	258	002	031	358	023	036	195	196	230	095
25	052	179	343	351	361	137	067	286	149	176	132	084
26	092	365	170	340	357	022	303	245	018	007	309	173
27	355	205	268	074	296	064	289	352	233	264	047	078
28	077	299	223	262	308	222	088	167	257	094	281	123
29	349	285	362	191	226	353	270	061	151	229	099	016
30	164	---	217	208	103	209	287	333	315	038	174	003
31	211	---	030	---	313	---	193	011	---	079	---	100



# Troops



- College students
  - Exempt from going to war
  - Mostly white and financially well off
- most soldiers - lower class whites or minorities



# Subterranean Homesick Blues

"Waiting for Henry Kissinger"



"The Survivor"





# U.S. Weapons

- Napalm - gasoline based bomb used to set fire to the jungle.
- Agent Orange - leaf killing chemical



- The use of napalm and agent orange wounded civilians and ruined villages.

# Silent Night/7 O'Clock News



“Napalm 11” by Leon Golub



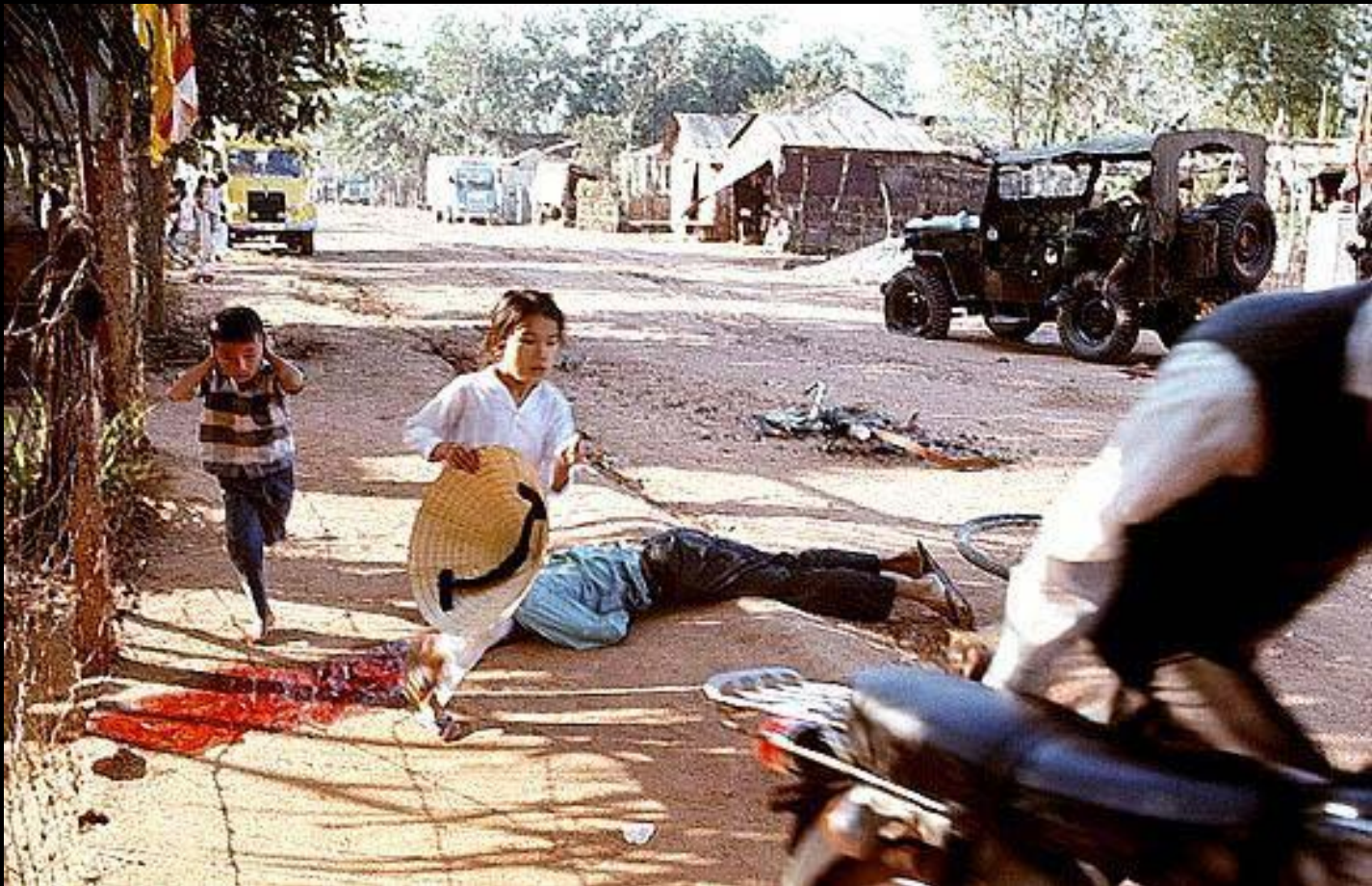


# Agent Orange: Before and After



# U.S. Weapons

Search and destroy missions - in search of the Vietcong, US troops would destroy all land and villages.





# Media

Television sends images home

Vietnam became the first war that was shown on television.





# Doves



Americans who strongly opposed the war and believed that the US should withdraw from Vietnam.

Example: College students protested the Vietnam War.

# Hawks



Pro-Vietnam war group

Felt that the US should use more military force to win the war in Vietnam.



# Credibility Gap

Media showed the war was not over, but the government officially stated that an end was close.

This created a credibility gap, in which the people don't trust what the government is reporting.

“War What Is It Good For?” Edwin Starr



**MORATORIUM**

“Moratorium” by Jasper Johns

# 1968

## Tet - Vietnamese New Year

a week long truce (peace) was proclaimed, so the Vietnamese could celebrate their holiday and bury the dead.

The Viet Cong placed weapons in coffins.

The Tet Offensive - Viet Cong launched an attack on US air bases and cities during Tet





# American reaction to Tet

American public thought the war could be won.

But after Tet millions of Americans changed their minds.

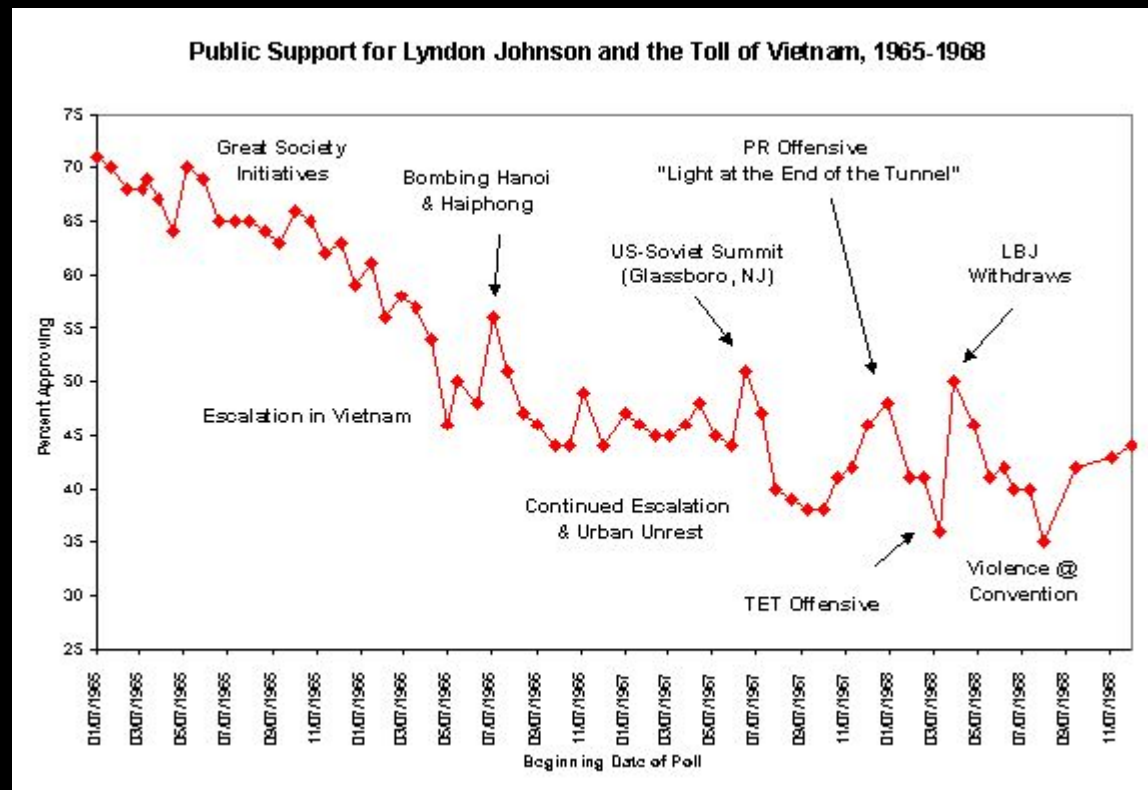
Americans began to feel that Vietnam war was a stalemate, unwinnable.



# LBJ loses popularity

Public opinion polls stated - 60% of Americans disapproved of Johnson's war policies

Johnson refused to run for the presidency in 1968.



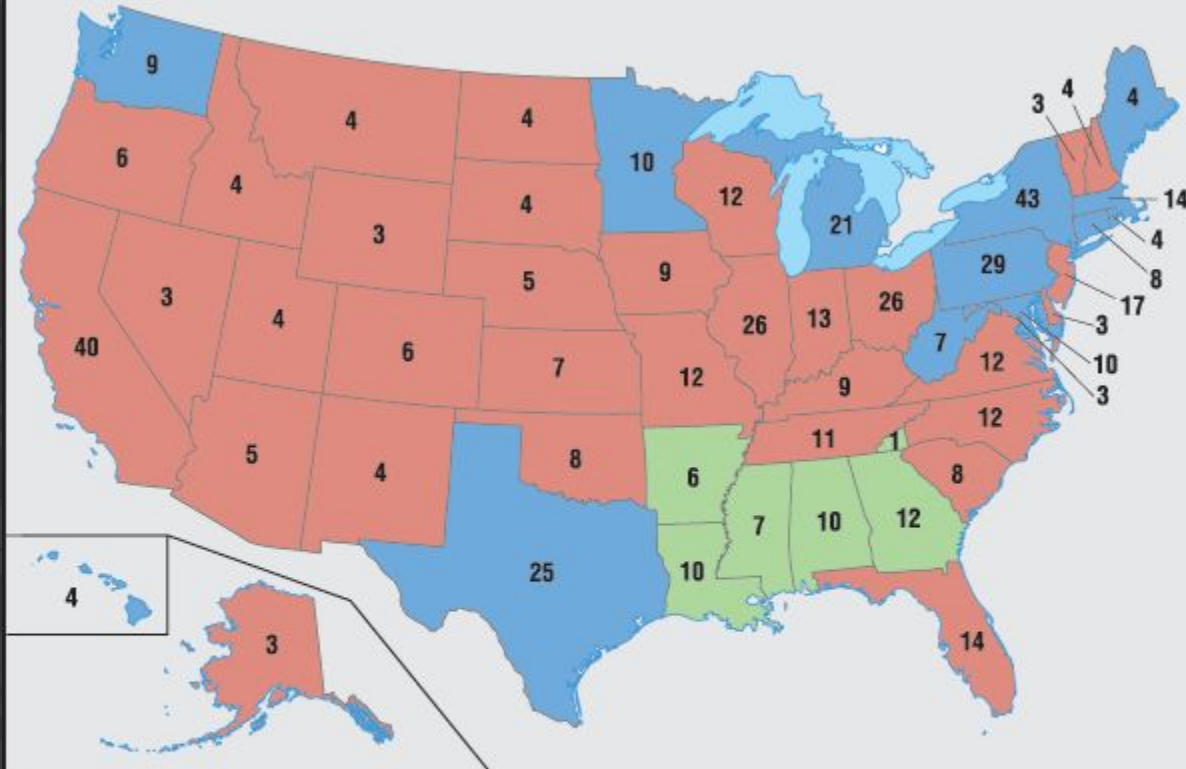
# 1968 and Nixon

Nixon campaigned on the promise to end the war in Vietnam.





## The Presidential Election of 1968



Party	Candidate	Electoral Vote (Share)	Popular Vote (Share)
Republican	Nixon	301 (56.1%)	31,710,470 (43.2%)
Democratic	Humphrey	191 (35.5%)	30,898,055 (42.6%)
American Independent	Wallace	46 (8.4%)	9,446,167 (12.9%)
Minor parties			972,139 (1.3%)

# Vietnamization

Nixon's policy of gradually withdrawing U.S. troops from Vietnam, allowing Southern Vietnamese to assume responsibility



# Bombing Campaigns

Nixon ordered massive bombings of supply routes in North Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.



# Silent Majority

supported Nixon's efforts to stop the Viet Cong and bombing campaigns



# Invasion of Cambodia 1970

President Nixon ordered the invasion of Cambodia. Troops were to find and destroy supply centers of the Viet Cong.



# Kent State

- reaction to the US involvement in Vietnam and Cambodia; college students protested
- Kent State University students protested; burned down the ROTC building.
- National Guard - sent in to establish order
- Campus protestors threw rocks at guards who then opened fire on the students killing four people and wounding nine others.



# 1973

## US ends war involvement

January 27, 1973 - US signed agreement to end the war and leave South Vietnam.

North Vietnamese troops would remain in South Vietnam.



# Fall of Saigon

April 30, 1975

After the US left, the war continued between North and South Vietnam.

North Vietnamese captured Saigon causing the surrender of South Vietnam to North Vietnam.



# Significance of the Vietnam War



South Vietnam fell to communism.

Cold War conflict expanded to Vietnam, as well as Korea, Cuba and the Soviet Union.