



T&T MUN 2024



WWW.TANDTMUN.WEBLY.COM
TANDTMUN@GMAIL.COM



Table of Contents

Position Paper Expectations.....	Page 1
Introduction Letters	Page 2-5
Key Terms	Page 6
Profiles Of Characters In Committee	Page 7-24
Topic Background: Counter Culture	Page 25-28
Topic Background: Vietnam War.....	Page 29-39
The Crisis.....	Page 40-42
Bibliography	Page 43-49

Position Paper Expectations

- a. 1 Page
- b. Times New Roman 12pt font
- c. 1-inch margins
- d. Header
 - i. Committee:
 - ii. Delegation:
 - iii. Name, School
- e. Paragraphs:
 - i. Background of the issue (based on background guide)
 - ii. Country stance / past United Nations actions (what has your country and the UN done about the issue)
 - iii. Proposed solutions (how do you and your country think this issue should be solved)



Letter to Delegates

Co-Chair: Joshua Hangartner

Hello delegates, and welcome to the fifth session of T&T MUN! My name is Joshua Hangartner and it is my pleasure to serve as your co-chair for the A Decade of Turmoil, Progress, and Liberation historical crisis committee. I am currently a Senior at La Jolla Country Day School and Co-President of our MUN team. I joined MUN in tenth grade and have since attended 10 conferences, including Knights MUN, Jackrabbit MUN, Triton MUN, SSUNS (hosted by McGill University in Montreal), and THIMUN.

Outside of MUN, I am the Editor-in-Chief of the school newspaper, a member of Making History Alive—an organization focused on educating students about the Holocaust—leader of my school's Korean Culture Club, and a member of the French Honors Society. I also enjoy reading, history, traveling, eating good food, and spending time with family and friends.

Through high school, MUN has helped me improve my public speaking skills, develop my knowledge of global issues, and cooperate with others. I am excited to witness your collaborative efforts in tackling this crisis, and I am confident that we will achieve great results.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at joshua.hangartner@ljcds.org.



Best regards,

Joshua Hangartner



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

Co-chair: Sophia Brotman

Hello there,

I am Sophia Brotman, a student here at La Jolla Country Day and a third-year Model UN delegate and first-time chair. I am one of your chairs for the *A Decade of Turmoil, Progress, and Liberation* historical crisis and am thrilled to be a part of this committee. As an avid enthusiast of The White Album (yes Didion's work and The Beatles), appreciator of Priscilla Presley's fashion, and an American history fan (Ancient Rome is toe to toe) I am excited to see the political aspects of this decade play out along with the ever-changing sentiments and growing counterculture movement. I have participated in 11 total conferences, 2 General Assembly and 9 crisis committees during my three years at BruinMUN, TritonMUN, KnightsMUN, THIMUN, Jack Rabbit MUN, and our very own T&T MUN.

Outside of Model UN, I enjoy fencing, baking, organizing my 55 Spotify playlists, volunteering, antiquing, reading, lifting, watching films, and leading the Lucky Ducklings, the Regional Student Diversity Summit, the Latine Affinity Club, and Amnesty Club. There's never a dull moment with me. Model UN has allowed me to meet people from all walks of life, people I still talk to or think about years later. I look forward to seeing delegates use their creativity and work with each other to rewrite the course of history.



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

If you need anything please contact me at sbrotman2025@ljcds.org. If you understood the choice of Hello there, I'm sure we'll get along fine. Godspeed delegates.



Key Terms

Civil Rights: guarantees of equal social opportunities and protections under the law regardless of race, religion, or other personal factors

The Civil Rights Movement: a struggle for justice and equality led by Black Americans that took place mainly in the 1950s and 1960s

Feminism: a range of socio-political movements and ideologies that aim to define and establish the political, economic, personal, and social equality of the sexes

Imperialism: the practice, theory, or attitude of maintaining or extending power over foreign nations, particularly through expansionism

French Indochina: a grouping of French colonial territories in Mainland Southeast Asia, including present-day Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam

Black Panther Party: a Marxist-Leninist and black power political organization founded by college students in 1966 in Oakland, California

Propaganda: communication that is primarily used to influence or persuade an audience to further an agenda



Profiles of Characters In Committee

Civil Rights/Freedom of Expression:

- **Martin Luther King:**

Martin Luther King Jr. is a prominent civil rights leader and advocate for nonviolent resistance. He emerged as a central figure in the American civil rights movement during the 1950s and 1960s. King led the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955 and played a pivotal role in organizing the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1963, where he delivered his iconic "I Have a Dream" speech. Through his leadership of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), King championed equal rights, desegregation, and voting rights for African Americans. His commitment to nonviolent protest and civil disobedience earns him recognition as a leading voice for social change.

- **Muhammad Ali:**

By 1963, Muhammad Ali, originally named Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr. (born January 17, 1942), is a legendary boxer and an increasingly influential public figure. Known for his quick wit and charismatic personality, Ali becomes a three-time world heavyweight champion and one of the greatest boxers of all time. As the Vietnam War intensifies, Ali's decision to refuse the draft in 1967, citing his religious beliefs and opposition to the war, marks a significant stand against the conflict. His refusal to fight earns him a



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

suspension from boxing and the stripping of his titles, sparking discussions about conscientious objection and the role of athletes in social and political matters.

- **Malcolm X:**

Malcolm X, born Malcolm Little on May 19, 1925, is a charismatic civil rights activist and a prominent spokesperson for the Nation of Islam. After a troubled youth and incarceration, Malcolm X converted to the Nation of Islam during his imprisonment. He later became one of its most influential leaders, advocating for black empowerment, self-defense "by any means necessary", and racial separatism. Malcolm X's speeches and writings challenge prevailing notions of integration and call for a radical reevaluation of race relations in the United States.

- **Fred Hampton:**

Fred Hampton is a young activist who will later become a prominent leader of the Black Panther Party. Hampton is known for his passionate community organizing efforts, emphasizing education and social services for African-American communities. His involvement in civil rights and advocacy for unity between racial and ethnic groups foreshadows his future role in the Black Panther Party.

- **Kathy Boudin:**



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

Kathy Boudin is not widely known to the public, but she will later become a member of the Weather Underground, a radical left-wing organization. The Weather Underground engages in acts of protest and direct action against the government and institutions they view as oppressive. Boudin's involvement in the organization will lead to significant events and consequences in the coming years.

- **Bernadine Dohrn:**

Bernadine Dohrn is not a well-known figure but became a member of the Weather Underground, a radical left-wing organization. The Weather Underground's activities and Dohrn's role within the organization will gain attention as they engage in high-profile actions against the Vietnam War and other societal issues.

Government/Politics:

- **Lyndon B. Johnson:** Lyndon B. Johnson is the President of the United States during the Vietnam War, having assumed office following the assassination of John F. Kennedy. His presidency witnesses a significant escalation of American involvement in the conflict. Known for his domestic policy achievements, such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Johnson's tenure is marked by the complex challenge of managing the Vietnam War while facing a growing anti-war sentiment.



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

- **Hubert Humphrey:** Hubert Humphrey serves as the United States Vice President under Lyndon B. Johnson. He is a close advisor to the President and plays a role in shaping policy decisions with his eloquence, including those related to the Vietnam War. Humphrey's position within the administration gives him a unique vantage point to influence discussions about the war's strategy and implications.
- **Richard Nixon:** Richard Nixon is a prominent political figure running for office during the Vietnam War. Having lost the presidential election to John F. Kennedy in 1960, he is characterized by a shifting approach to the Vietnam War, including the policy of Vietnamization.
- **Henry Kissinger:** Henry Kissinger is notable in foreign policy and international relations. While he is not directly involved in the Vietnam War response, he will later become a pivotal figure as the U.S. National Security Advisor and, subsequently, the Secretary of State under President Nixon. Kissinger's diplomatic efforts include negotiations with North Vietnam, leading to the Paris Peace Accords.
- **Dean Rusk:** Dean Rusk serves as the U.S. Secretary of State during the Vietnam War. He plays a key role in shaping the United States' foreign policy responses to the conflict. Rusk's interactions with other world leaders and his involvement in diplomatic initiatives contribute to the evolving U.S. stance on the Vietnam War.



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

- **Walt Rostow:** Walt Rostow is a political economist and advisor to President Johnson. His influence extends to economic and foreign policy matters related to the Vietnam War. Rostow's ideas about development and modernization theory impact the U.S. approach to international relations during this critical period.
- **William Fulbright:** William Fulbright was a U.S. Senator and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman in 1963. As a prominent voice in Congress, he plays a significant role in shaping U.S. foreign policy, including matters related to the Vietnam War. Fulbright's hearings and critiques of the war's progress contribute to the ongoing debate about American involvement.
- **Ronald Reagan:** In 1963, Ronald Reagan is the Governor of California and a former actor. While not directly involved in the Vietnam War decision-making at this time, Reagan's political career will lead him to reach greater heights and influence American opinion at a nationwide level.
- **Nelson Rockefeller:** By 1963, Nelson Rockefeller is the Governor of New York. While not directly linked to the Vietnam War response, his political prominence and involvement in the Republican Party contribute to discussions about the nation's foreign policy and security strategy.



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

- **John Daly:** In 1963, John Daly is the Mayor of Chicago. While his role is primarily at the city level, he witnesses the unfolding of nationwide protests and demonstrations against the Vietnam War. The war's impact on local communities and public sentiment becomes a part of Daly's responsibilities as a city leader.

Feminism/Women's Rights:

- **Gloria Steinem:**

Gloria Steinem is a feminist and journalist who plays a vital role in the evolving Vietnam War social response. A prominent figure in the women's movement, Steinem's activism intersects with her coverage of the anti-war movement. She writes about the experiences of women within the context of the war, shedding light on their perspectives and challenges. Steinem's work contributes to a broader understanding of the interconnectedness between the anti-war and feminist movements.

- **Betty Friedan:**

Betty Friedan is a feminist writer and activist who, by 1963, has already achieved notable recognition for her work. The author of "The Feminine Mystique," Friedan's book sparks discussions about women's roles and challenges in society. Her contributions to the feminist movement help lay the groundwork for a broader conversation about gender



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

equality, which becomes intertwined with discussions about the Vietnam War social response.

- **Jane Fonda:**

Jane Fonda is an actress and activist who is known for her anti-war and feminist activism during the Vietnam War era. Fonda's emerging political consciousness is shaped by the evolving social responses to the war and the broader cultural shifts of the 1960s.

- **Liz Fink:**

Liz Fink is a member of the National Lawyers Guild, an organization involved in civil rights and anti-war activism. While her specific contributions are not widely documented up until that point, her involvement in these legal and activist circles sets the stage for her future engagement in issues related to the Vietnam War social response.

Journalism/War Correspondents:

- **Joan Didion:**

In the Vietnam War era, Joan Didion is a journalist and writer known for her coverage of the war and her cultural criticism. Didion says that her presence is "so temperamentally unobtrusive and so neurotically inarticulate that people tend to forget that my presence runs counter to their best interests." Her insightful reporting and essays provide



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

nuanced perspectives on the impact of the war on American society. Through her writing, Didion contributes to the ongoing dialogue surrounding the Vietnam War's social response and its broader implications.

- **Michael Herr:**

By the time of the Vietnam War era, Michael Herr has written "Dispatches," a notable book that captures the essence of the war through his vivid reporting. As a correspondent for Esquire magazine, Herr's work provides firsthand accounts that offer readers a unique perspective on the war's impact and the societal responses it generates.

- **Neil Sheehan:**

Neil Sheehan, a journalist for The New York Times, is a key figure in exposing the Pentagon Papers during the Vietnam War era. His role in bringing to light this classified government study, which details the history of U.S. involvement in Vietnam, becomes a defining moment in journalism and contributes to the public's understanding of the war's complex dynamics.

- **David Halberstam:**

David Halberstam is an American journalist whose reporting on the Vietnam War for The New York Times plays a pivotal role in shaping public perception. Known for his critical reporting and analysis, Halberstam challenges the official narrative and provides



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

a deeper understanding of the war's realities. His journalistic contributions could earn him a Pulitzer Prize and have a lasting impact on the Vietnam War social response.

Protest/Activism:

- **Daniel Ellsberg:**

Daniel Ellsberg was carving a path toward his eventual role as a whistleblower. His journey began with his involvement as an analyst and defense expert, laying the foundation for his deep understanding of military and policy matters. As the Vietnam War loomed, Ellsberg's trajectory took a decisive turn when he gained access to classified documents that unveiled the hidden truths of the conflict. By doing so, Ellsberg wished to shatter established official narratives and reveal an unfiltered perspective on the war's progression and the intricate decision-making processes within the government. An unprecedented act could ignite a firestorm of public discourse, reshaping how the American public and the global community perceived the war and its implications.

- **Mark Rudd:**

Mark Rudd emerged as a prominent figure during the Vietnam War as the leader of the Columbia University chapter of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). His charismatic leadership galvanized student activism and reshaped campus conversations. Under



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

Rudd's guidance, the branch was pivotal in advocating social change, amplifying youthful voices against the Vietnam War's controversies.

- **Michael Kazin:**

A dynamic participant in protest and academia, Michael Kazin exemplified the intersection between activism and scholarship during the Vietnam War era. A co-editor of "Dissent" and a protester, his actions echoed his beliefs, contributing to the broader chorus of dissent. Simultaneously, his role as a historian of social movements provided context to the transformative period, illuminating the wider historical significance of the Vietnam War's social response.

- **Mary McCarthy:**

Mary McCarthy's legacy extended beyond her literary achievements. Renowned as a novelist and critic, McCarthy merged her artistic sensibilities with her political activism during the Vietnam War era. Her activism added depth to her public identity, showcasing her commitment to using her platform to challenge social norms and advocate for change, leaving an indelible mark on literature and society.

- **Haywood Burns:**

Haywood Burns emerged as a committed activist and a notable member of the National Lawyers Guild during the Vietnam War era. His commitment to justice and civil rights



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

intersected with his legal expertise, allowing him to navigate the time's complex legal and social landscape. Burns' advocacy extended beyond words, embodying the spirit of social change through his actions.

Law Enforcement/Intelligence:

- **J. Edgar Hoover:**

J. Edgar Hoover held a prominent and influential position as the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). His extensive tenure in this role granted him unparalleled authority over law enforcement and intelligence operations in the United States.

Throughout his career, Hoover's methods and actions were both praised and criticized and his leadership style played a significant role in shaping the FBI's response to key events of the era, including civil rights struggles and anti-war protests.

- **William Colby:**

William Colby serves as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) director. In this capacity, he was deeply engaged in the intelligence community's activities, often operating behind the scenes in national security matters. Colby's position at the CIA coincided with a period of intense geopolitical tensions, and he was tasked with overseeing covert operations and intelligence gathering that shaped U.S. foreign policy. His leadership



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

marked a critical juncture in the CIA's history as it navigated complex global challenges and responded to emerging threats during the early stages of the Cold War.

- **Clyde Tolson:**

Clyde Tolson, a significant figure within the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) leading up to 1963, held the position of Associate Director. In this capacity, his responsibilities primarily revolved around the internal operations of the FBI, managing criminal investigations, and overseeing the bureau's administrative affairs. Given the FBI's central focus on national security, domestic surveillance, and law enforcement, Tolson's involvement in discussions or decisions about the Vietnam War might have needed to be expanded.

Military:

- **William Westmoreland:**

William Westmoreland played a pivotal role as a U.S. Army General and the commander of American forces in the Vietnam War. His leadership during the conflict was marked by his approach to conventional warfare, emphasizing the deployment of U.S. troops and firepower. This strategy aimed to counter the North Vietnamese forces and the Viet Cong insurgency. Westmoreland's command style and role in shaping the course of



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

military operations have been subjects of praise and criticism within the broader context of the Vietnam War social response.

- **Robert McNamara:**

Robert McNamara served as the U.S. Secretary of Defense during the Vietnam War, and his influence was profoundly felt within the Johnson administration. McNamara's tenure was marked by his efforts to modernize and restructure the military, but he also faced criticism for his role in escalating U.S. involvement in Vietnam. McNamara's complex legacy is tied to his participation in the decision-making processes that shaped the war's trajectory, making him a significant figure in the social response to the conflict.

- **Nguyen Cao Ky:**

Nguyen Cao Ky held the dual roles of Prime Minister and Vice President of South Vietnam during the 1960s. As a key political figure in the South Vietnamese government, Ky's leadership intersected with the Vietnam War era. His tenure was marked by political instability and shifting alliances within South Vietnam, further complicating the broader conflict. Ky's actions and decisions, along with those of other South Vietnamese leaders, played a role in shaping the social and political landscape of the time.

- **John Paul Vann:**

**Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response**

John Paul Vann, a U.S. Army officer and advisor in Vietnam, brought a unique perspective to the war effort. Known for his critical assessments of the conflict, Vann often challenged the prevailing optimism and official narratives surrounding the war. Based on his on-the-ground experiences, his insights provided a different lens through which to view the war's progress and challenges. Vann's perspective contributed to the evolving dialogue about the effectiveness and direction of U.S. involvement in Vietnam, making him an essential voice in the Vietnam War social response.

Vietnamese Negotiators:

- **Nguyen Thi Binh:**

Nguyen Thi Binh emerged as a notable female leader within the National Liberation Front (NLF), also known as the Viet Cong, during the Vietnam War era. Her significant role extended to the international stage, where she was a negotiator during the Paris Peace Talks. Binh's participation in diplomatic negotiations added a critical dimension to the peace process, highlighting the complexity of the conflict and the efforts to find a resolution.

- **Bui Diem:**

Bui Diem, a South Vietnamese diplomat, played a key role as the ambassador to the United States during the Vietnam War era. His position positioned him at the forefront



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

of diplomatic relations between the two nations during a tumultuous period. Diem's interactions with U.S. officials and his insights into the South Vietnamese perspective contributed to shaping international perceptions of the conflict.

- **Le Duc Tho:**

Le Duc Tho was a significant Vietnamese negotiator and diplomat who participated in the Paris Peace Accords, which aimed to end the Vietnam War. His role as a representative of North Vietnam underscored his commitment to finding a diplomatic solution to the conflict. Tho's involvement in negotiations, particularly alongside U.S. diplomat Henry Kissinger, demonstrated the complex interactions between the parties involved and the challenges of reaching a sustainable agreement.

Imaginary:

- **William Henry Scarr:**

William Henry Scarr's involvement as a member of COINTELPRO in the years leading up to 1963 highlights his role in a covert FBI program aimed at surveilling and disrupting domestic political activities. His connection to COINTELPRO underscores the government's efforts to monitor and counter various social and political movements during a tumultuous era.

- **Michael James Ballantyne:**



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

Michael James Ballantyne's role as the head of a local draft board in the lead-up to 1963 places him in a position of authority within the context of the Vietnam War. As the head, Ballantyne would have been responsible for overseeing the selective service process, which held immense significance for young men potentially subject to conscription during the conflict.

- **Christopher Andrew:**

Christopher Andrew Smith is a recent high school graduate. He was valedictorian and the quarterback of the football team at Hillad High School. He has been drafted but he plans to flee to Canada. As opposition to the war intensified, some individuals evaded the draft, seeking refuge in Canada to avoid military service. Smith's decision exemplifies the complex choices many young men faced during social and political upheaval.

- **Sherryl Smith:**

A senior in Hillad High School who is the head of the Hillad Daily. She is fabulously wealthy and follows all of the latest fashion trends. She is a trendsetter at her school. She advocates for war and believes that the young men of America should protect their country.



Influencers

- **Audrey Hepburn:**

Audrey Hepburn, celebrated as an iconic actress, captivated audiences with her elegance and charm. She had already made her mark in Hollywood with unforgettable performances in films like "Breakfast at Tiffany's" and "Roman Holiday." Hepburn's influence extended beyond the silver screen, as her unique style and timeless beauty inspired a generation.

- **Twiggy:**

Twiggy, known for her distinctive appearance and revolutionary impact on fashion, emerged as a prominent model in the 1960s. Her slender figure and bold, mod-inspired look redefined the beauty standards of the era. Twiggy's rise to fame marked a shift in the modeling industry, reflecting the dynamic cultural changes and trends of the 1960s.

- **Charles Manson:**

Charles Manson, a notorious cult leader, gained infamy for his role in orchestrating a series of gruesome murders in the late 1960s. His cult, known as the Manson Family, was responsible for the shocking and brutal killings of innocent victims, including the actress Sharon Tate. Manson's actions and the subsequent trials marked a dark chapter in the cultural and social landscape of the time.



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

- **Sharon Tate**

Sharon Tate, a promising and aspiring actress, was on the cusp of a burgeoning career in the years leading up to 1963. During this period, she had begun to make her mark in Hollywood with television appearances in popular shows such as "The Beverly Hillbillies" and "Mr. Ed." Tate's journey was characterized by a palpable sense of potential as she honed her craft and navigated the competitive world of entertainment. Her beauty and charisma were already evident, as a precursor to the widespread recognition and success that awaited her in the coming years.



Topic Background: Counter Culture

Colorized TV, the Vietnam War, and Shaping Social Perspectives: An Era of Transformation

The transformation of television from monochromatic images to color broadcasts heralded a seismic shift in how people perceived and interacted with the world. This technological advancement coincided with a tumultuous period in history, with the Vietnam War serving as a dramatic backdrop that played a pivotal role in shaping the societal landscape. Amidst the transition to color and the war's televised coverage, several interconnected sub-topics emerged, each leaving an indelible mark on society: Civil Rights, Feminism, Massive Resistance to Government Policies, and the Generational Gap's Influence on War Perspectives.

Vietnam War: A Visual Turning Point

The introduction of colorized television amid the Vietnam War transformed how the global audience experienced the conflict. The "living room war," was the first to be broadcast directly into people's homes, and the switch to color broadcasts amplified its impact. Viewers no longer saw distant, detached black-and-white scenes; instead, they were immersed in battle's vibrant landscapes and harrowing realities.

One iconic example was the footage of the Tet Offensive in 1968. Color cameras captured the intensity of urban combat, revealing the devastating impact on civilian lives. The juxtaposition of vivid hues against the backdrop of destruction made the horrors of war palpable. The



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

emotional resonance of colorized TV brought home the war's human toll-like never before, fostering a new level of empathy and engagement.

Civil Rights and Feminism Unveiled

The convergence of colorized television and the Civil Rights Movement ushered in a new era of visibility for racial injustices. Television cameras captured the confrontations between civil rights activists and segregationists, bringing the brutality and inequality of Jim Crow laws to the forefront. Images of peaceful demonstrators being attacked by police dogs and high-pressure hoses shocked viewers and galvanized support for change.

A landmark moment was the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom coverage in 1963. Martin Luther King Jr.'s iconic "I Have a Dream" speech was not only heard by the gathered crowd but resonated across the nation through colorized television screens. The vivid imagery of a diverse crowd united in a common cause reinforced the importance of the civil rights movement and energized the fight for racial equality.

Similarly, the Feminist Movement harnessed the power of colorized TV to shed light on gender discrimination and inequality. The broadcast of the Women's Strike for Equality in 1970, organized to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote, showcased a massive march of women demanding equal rights. The visual impact

**Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response**

of women from all walks of life joining together in solidarity demonstrated the movement's strength and called for a change in societal norms.

Confronting Government Policies: Mass Resistance

As colorized television emerged, it provided a powerful platform for dissent against significant government policies. Opposition to the Vietnam War was evident through televised anti-war protests. One poignant instance was the Kent State shootings in 1970. The colorized images of National Guardsmen opening fire on unarmed student protesters at Kent State University shocked the nation and ignited protests across campuses. The vivid scenes captured the brutality of state-sanctioned violence against American citizens, galvanizing a growing anti-war sentiment. The generational divide that characterized this era was reflected in perspectives on war and societal issues. The older generation, many of whom had lived through World War II, viewed the Vietnam War through a lens of duty and patriotism. The televised scenes of American soldiers fighting a distant war evoked a sense of national obligation.

Conversely, the younger generation, influenced by counterculture movements, questioned the motivations behind the war. The colorful broadcasts of anti-war protests, such as the massive demonstration at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago, revealed the deep-seated mistrust of government institutions. The clash between protesters and police, captured in vivid detail, underscored the generation's determination to challenge established



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

norms and demand transparency. The convergence of colorized television and the Vietnam War era marked a profound juncture in the intersection of technology, journalism, and social change. The visual impact of color broadcasts magnified the harrowing realities of war, propelled civil rights and feminist movements, spotlighted resistance against government policies, and accentuated generational differences in perspectives on conflict. This era serves as a testament to the power of visual media in shaping public perception, fostering activism, and leaving an enduring impact on society's collective memory.



Topic Background: Vietnam War

After centuries of gradually extending control over separate regions of Southeast Asia, on October 17, 1887, France officially formed the colony of French Indochina, comprising present-day Vietnam, Cambodia, and later, Laos. Under French colonial rule, the Vietnamese were stripped of civil liberties and economically exploited. Even infrastructure projects funded by the French government, which apologists claim led to developmental progress, served primarily the interests of French colonial authorities. When irrigation networks quadrupled the land dedicated to rice cultivation in the Mekong Delta, new lands were sold to Vietnamese collaborators and French speculators, and peasants' consumption of rice decreased. The construction of a railroad linking the central northern city of Hanoi to the southern city of Saigon facilitated a rice export market built on the exploitative labor of Vietnamese people. Furthermore, a shift from the cultivation of substantive crops to cash crops intended for the global economy culminated in the Vietnamese famine in the twentieth century.

Vietnamese nationalists and guerilla leaders resisted French authority from the beginning. In 1885, scholar Phan Dinh Phung fostered a large-scale resistance movement in Annam that sought to re-establish the old imperial order of pre-colonial Vietnam. Following his death, this quickly fell out of favor among younger anticolonial leaders increasingly interested in Western Enlightenment ideology. In the twentieth century, Phan Boi Chau became a

**Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response**

prominent spokesperson for Western ideas, science, and technology in conjunction with the rejection of French imperialism. In 1905, Chau visited Japan, where he began contriving with Japanese officials to smuggle young Vietnamese scholars to study science as well as tactics of political resistance. In 1907, Chau and these scholars founded the Free School of Tonkin. The school quickly became a bastion of opposition to the French colonial authority and was suppressed soon after its formation. Nevertheless, followers led mass demonstrations against high taxes across Vietnamese cities in 1908. Hundreds of demonstrators and organizers were arrested, some condemned to death, and others exiled to Con Son (Paulo Condore) Island — turned into a penal colony. In 1914, Chau was detained in China, and his movement quickly declined.

Nevertheless, the end of World War I stirred the ambitions of nationalist leaders in colonized nations across the world, and the desire for independence in Vietnam intensified. U.S. President Woodrow Wilson announced his Fourteen Points, guidelines for rebuilding the postwar world. Including the policy of national self-determination, an approach that nonwhite endurers of colonization quickly learned did not apply to them. The failure of reformist efforts to achieve political concessions through diplomacy revitalized nationalist movements in the radical urban centers of Tonkin and Annam. Most prominent was the Vietnamese Nationalist Party (Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dong, VNQDD). The VNQDD penetrated garrisons of indigenous



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

Vietnamese troops, and on the night of February 9-10, 1930, troops of one garrison in Tonkin killed their French officers.

The nationalists were executed, and the French colonial government embarked on a wave of nationalist suppression, killing hundreds of nationalists and suspected nationalists and sending thousands to prison camps.

Ten years after the garrison mutiny, Japanese forces invaded the Tonkin region and, in the year after, the entirety of French Indochina. Japanese officials allied with the collaborationist French Vichy government despite the invasion, allowing France to continue colonial operations in the region. On September 22, 1940, French Governor-General Jean Decoux signed an agreement with the Japanese, permitting the stationing of 30,000 Japanese troops in the area. Under this uneasy agreement, Indochina was “a French-administered possession of Japan.” As World War II neared an end in 1945, Japan, fearful of betrayal from its French allies, ousted and disarmed French forces. Although Bao Dai, the last French-appointed governor of Vietnam, proclaimed the nation independent and appointed a new Vietnamese national government, Japanese commanders controlled the region. Then, in August 1945, the Japanese surrendered. In the vacuum of military control, a communist-led group known as the Viet Minh seized power in the capital city of Hanoi and forced Bao Dai to abdicate. The

**Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response**

orchestrator of this communist rebellion - which stunned the Western world - was Nguyen Ai Quoc, better known as Ho Chi Minh.

Ho Chi Minh was born in central Vietnam on May 19, 1890, three years after the formation of French Indochina. Ho's father worked at the Vietnamese imperial court but was dismissed for criticizing French colonial rule. In 1911, Ho became a seaman on a French ship, traveling to Europe and America. Ho Chi Minh spent the next eight years in Paris, the UK, and the U.S. An admirer of American ideology, Ho lived in New York and Boston. He eventually settled in Paris in 1917, where he played a key role in the formation of the Communist Party of France. In 1923, Ho traveled to Moscow to attend Comintern, an organization created by Lenin to promote the Communist Revolution internationally. Afterwards, he traveled to southern China and like Chau before him organized a revolutionary movement among Vietnamese exiles and founded the Indo-Chinese Communist Party (ICP) in 1930. For the next decade, Ho traveled extensively between the Soviet Union and China building up the ICP and creating a diplomatic and military network. When Japan invaded Indochina in 1941, Ho returned home and founded the Viet Minh, a communist-led independence movement intended to fight Japanese intrusion. In his efforts, Ho received support from the U.S. government. In early 1945, the U.S. provided Ho with weapons, supplies, and even training in combat and guerilla tactics. At one point, a U.S. nurse even helped Ho heal from dysentery and malaria.

**Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response**

In the aftermath of Viet Minh's successful insurrection, Ho declared North Vietnam independent, modeling his declaration on the American Declaration of Independence in a bid to gain U.S. support. Determined to restore their colonial presence after World War II, France, working with British forces, seized occupational control of a region of Vietnam south of the Gianh River. French occupation meant two Vietnams: the North under the communist leadership of Ho Chi Minh and the South under French non-communist rule. In March 1946, France and Ho Chi Minh agreed to negotiations recognizing the Viet Minh government and giving Vietnam the status of a free state within the French Union. He also agreed to allow French troops to stay in Vietnam under the promise that they would be progressively withdrawn over five years. Nevertheless, these negotiations eventually fell apart as France continued to reassert control over a Viet Minh government determined to achieve unequivocal independence. In June 1946, Georges-Thierry d'Argenlieu, the French high commissioner for Indochina, proclaimed southern Vietnam an autonomous republic, dispelling any notion of peaceful French departure from Vietnam. Five months later, the northeastern city of Haiphong was bombarded by French naval vessels, killing thousands of civilians. Viet Minh troops retaliated, overwhelming French troops in Hanoi, marking the beginning of the First Indochina War.¹

In 1949, French forces reunited Vietnam and proclaimed the Associated State of Vietnam. Former emperor Bao Dai was appointed as Chief of State. Simultaneously, the Viet

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam/World-War-II-and-independence>

**Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response**

Minh, equipped with U.S. weapons from World War II, trained in guerilla tactics, and aided by the newly Communist Chinese government, launched a successful guerilla campaign against the French. Fearing the spread of communism in the context of the beginning of the Cold War, the U.S. sent significant aid to the French war effort. In late 1953, French forces were rapidly losing ground to the Viet Minh, whose popular support among the Vietnamese people was growing.² French forces occupied Dien Bien Phu, a small town vital to supply lines into Laos. On May 7, 1954, this key base was overrun, a decisive final blow to French colonialism in Vietnam. In May 1954 France agreed to end the war at the Geneva Conference.³

The Geneva Accords, created a ceasefire line along the 17th parallel—separating Vietnam into North and South regions— allowed 300 days for each side to withdraw troops to their side of the country, and called for guerilla fighters to leave Laos and Cambodia immediately. This partition line was explicitly impermanent and adherence to treaty policy was to be reviewed by representatives from India, Poland, and Canada. A pivotal provision known as the Final Declaration assured that all Vietnamese elections would be supervised by the committee before July 1956. 1956 elections were predicted to overwhelmingly support the reunification of the country and Viet Minh leadership. At the time, the Viet Minh controlled

² <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam/World-War-II-and-independence>

³ <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1953-1960/dien-bien-phu> and <https://www.britannica.com/event/Battle-of-Dien-Bien-Phu>

**Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response**

three-quarters of Vietnam and the provision was essential to ensuring their agreement. The U.S. and “leaders in the South” refused to sign the Final Declaration. Elections were never held.⁴

In light of the division, nearly one million people emigrated from North to South—primarily Vietnamese Catholics encouraged by propaganda from the CIA and dictatorial President Diem. In the North, Ho and the Viet Minh devoted policy and resources to socialist industrialization and the collectivization of agriculture, as Stalin had done decades before in Russia. The Viet Minh also launched a campaign of violent political repression, killing thousands, particularly in the Red River Delta. In the South, Bao Dai led the endeavors of a new, capitalist government that despite U.S. backing proved to be equally repressive. The source of this dictatorial repression was Ngo Dinh Diem.⁵

Diem was born in 1901 into a Vietnamese noble family with links to the nation’s earliest Roman Catholic converts. Friends with the Vietnamese imperial family in his youth, in 1933 emperor Dai asked Diem to serve as his minister of interior, to which he obliged. When Bao appointed a new government in the South following the Geneva Conference, he named Diem prime minister. Diem quickly established himself as a formidable governmental leader, stabilizing the anticommunist regime in Saigon with U.S. aid.⁶ Shortly after, in October 1955, a

⁴ https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/KH-LA-VN_540720_GenevaAgreements.pdf and <https://www.britannica.com/event/Geneva-Accords>

⁵ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam/The-two-Vietnams-1954-65>

⁶ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ngo-Dinh-Diem>

**Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response**

government-controlled referendum organized by Diem removed Dai as Chief of State and inaugurated Diem as the new president of the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam).⁷ As president, Diem refused to comply with the stipulations of the Geneva Accords, embracing and establishing a U.S.-backed autocratic regime in South Vietnam. Under Diem, plans for land reform and other economic policies were mostly dismissed, and with U.S. financial backing, Diem devoted the majority of his government's resources to the buildup of military and security intelligence forces.⁸

Diem's autocratic regime brought increasing instability to Vietnam. As Chief of State, Diem, a Roman Catholic, quickly abolished the local autonomy of many of Vietnam's religious-political groups. Totalitarian methods of suppression alienated Vietnam's majority Buddhist population as Diem aggressively endeavored to suppress religions other than Catholicism.⁹ The most influential protest occurred on June 11, 1963, when a Buddhist monk by the name of Thich Quang Duc committed self-immolation in a crowded public square in Saigon during a Buddhist protest against Diem's suppression of the religion, as well as the partition of

⁷ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam/The-two-Vietnams-1954-65>

⁸ <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ngo-Dinh-Diem>

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<https://www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/SOD.CHAP6.HTM#:~:text=Putting%20together%20all%20these%20consolidations.the%20other%20at%20500%2C000%20dead.>

**Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response**

Vietnam and mishandling of the nation on both sides. Other monks and nuns would soon follow suit. Photos of Thich Quang Duc have widely circulated the world, drawing criticism of Diem's regime and U.S. support both domestically and abroad, prompting the U.S. government to threaten to cut off the support of Diem. Soon after, Diem agreed to meet with Buddhist leaders and sign a Joint Communique promising to agree upon the five demands of Buddhist leaders and end his suppression campaign. The Joint Communique was however never implemented and Buddhist suppression continued.¹⁰

The situation continued to escalate when Diem refused to participate in the all-Vietnamese elections outlined in the Final Declaration which had convinced Ho Chi Minh to agree to the Geneva Accords. The elections would have almost surely ousted Diem and resulted in a Communist government with control over the entirety of Vietnam. In response to Diem's decision, the communist-led focus of southern Vietnamese guerilla fighters—the National Liberation Front (NLF), popularly known by the offensively labeled by the U.S and its allies as the Viet Cong (meaning Communist traitors to the nation)—launched an insurgency movement to overthrow Diem's regime and reunify the country. The NLF insurgency was extremely successful. In spite of U.S. support, the NLF possessed shocking guerilla tactics and numbers; many noncommunists alienated by Diem's oppressive government joined the People's

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<https://www.itourvn.com/blog/the-buddhist-crisis-of-1963#:~:text=On%20June%2011th%2C%201963%20Buddhist.Diem%27s%20regime%20oppression%20against%20Buddhism.>

**Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response**

Liberation Armed Forces (PLAF), the Front's regular army, and spread-out guerilla forces. In addition, Diem's favoritism towards family members and loyal government officials as opposed to military meritocracy ultimately weakened his military operations.¹¹ The insurrection appeared close to succeeding, when Diem's army overthrew him in November 1963. Both Diem and his brother Nhu were killed in the coup, which was approved by the Kennedy administration.

The conflict in Vietnam became increasingly difficult for the Kennedy administration to navigate as the war dragged on and the South Vietnamese government was marred by political instability. Kennedy had already failed to stop the construction of the Berlin Wall and simultaneously, Communism was spreading in Laos and Cambodia. In 1961, Kennedy also approved the humiliatingly failed Bay of Pigs invasion. With mounting pressure to act on the conflict in Vietnam from both the public and military advisors, Kennedy sent an elite group of soldiers, the Green Berets, and military advisors to train and organize South Vietnam's military. The Kennedy administration also doubled military funding, sent helicopters and armored personnel carriers, and authorized the use of napalm and Agent Orange to destroy Viet Cong crops and cover. Kennedy insisted upon these measures as an alternative to sending in U.S.

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<https://www.pbs.org/battlefieldvietnam/guerrilla/#:~:text=The%20Vietcong,the%20Ho%20Chi%20Minh%20Trail,And>
<https://ca.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/61215092-411c-45d3-b2e7-248292221864/ngo-dinh-diems-regime-clip-the-vietnam-war/>



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

troops. Ho Chi Minh saw the increase in U.S. aid to the South Vietnamese army as posing a threat of invasion to the North. Minh convinced the Chinese to arm his troops and enacted a variety of conscription laws requiring all able-bodied men to serve.

People in South Vietnam celebrated the death of Diem, however, the question of who would replace him became increasingly urgent for Kennedy, who was assassinated only months later on November 22, 1963. Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson replaced Kennedy as president and took on the role of dictating the U.S.'s future role in Vietnam without Diem or Kennedy.



The Crisis

The day is November 22nd, 1963. The world watches in shock as the United States experiences a tragic and sudden turn of events. Just moments after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, the nation was thrust into a state of uncertainty. The echoes of the gunfire that took the charismatic leader's life reverberate throughout the global political landscape.

As Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson is swiftly sworn in as the new President two hours after Kennedy's untimely and mind-blowing passing, he inherits a nation grappling with grief, confusion, and a looming crisis. The Vietnam War has been simmering for years and now takes on a renewed urgency. The initial seeds of this crisis were planted in the escalating involvement of the United States in Southeast Asia, ostensibly to prevent the spread of communism. However, the war effort has proven to be divisive, with increasing opposition from the American public and the international community.

Amidst the backdrop of the cultural revolution of the 1960s, the war's unpopularity becomes intertwined with a broader societal shift. The decade is marked by a profound transformation in social norms, civil rights activism, and anti-establishment sentiment. The Civil Rights Movement reached a milestone by enacting the Voting Rights Act, a significant step towards addressing systemic racial discrimination in the United States. Yet, this period is



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

also characterized by profound divisions, as various segments of society clash over matters of race, gender, and power.

Within this turbulent context, the Vietnam War is a symbol of government deception and propaganda. The conflict, initially justified as a necessary response to the spread of communism, increasingly comes under scrutiny. Reports of civilian casualties, the controversial Gulf of Tonkin incident, and the harsh realities American troops face on the ground all contribute to a growing anti-war sentiment.

Returning veterans who have faced the horrors of war in a distant land find themselves frowned upon by society in upheaval. The war's unpopularity and the complex emotions it generates lead to a fractured nation. Both peaceful and violent protests dominate the streets as activists demand an end to the conflict and reevaluate the country's priorities.

As the fate of the Vietnam War hangs in the balance, both domestically and internationally, President Johnson faces the daunting task of navigating a nation at odds with itself. The crisis that unfolded in the aftermath of Kennedy's assassination reverberates far beyond the borders of the United States. It becomes a microcosm of the broader struggles for justice, equality, and truth that define an era of transformation and upheaval.

Delegates, you are tasked with grappling with the complexities of this pivotal moment in history. The decisions made within these chambers will not only shape the course of the



Historical Crisis : Vietnam War Social Response

Vietnam War but also reflect the values and aspirations of a society amid profound change. The weight of the future of the United States rests on your shoulders as you deliberate, negotiate, and strive to find a path forward. The future hangs in the balance, and the world watches with bated breath as you navigate the tumultuous waters of a decade defined by turmoil, progress, and liberation.

The time of justice has now come. I tell you that **I believe sincerely that no force can hold it back.**

- **Lyndon B. Johnson**



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