



Vietnamese Cabinet

CIMUN XV

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1. Topic 1 - Winning the Civil War

1.1. Introduction

Our struggle to remain independent and free from oppression has endured for decades. The American War itself has been a difficult one for our valiant defenders. From the first day Ho Chi Minh declared us independent to the invasion of American imperialists on our soil, to the moment we live in now, we have been fighting a war for our very way of life. Our fight for our land is not an easy one, but we must win this civil war that plagues our land to unify our people.

We must find a way to win this civil war. Recent military maneuvers have yielded few results for our cause, as the Tet Offensive has been halted and our holds on Hué and Saigon have been lost. The Americans and their puppets of the south continue to bomb our families, roads, and villages. But, we shall not back down, we shall not falter, we shall show the American wolves no quarter in our fight to free our families from their oppression.

1.2. Historical Background

From June of 1862 to September of 1940, Vietnam was controlled by the French on behalf of Napoleon III.¹ Despite rebellion attempts, the French oppressors would remain dominant in the region they declared as Indochina, comprised of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos until 1945. In 1930, Nguyen Ai Quoc, later known as Ho Chi Minh, founded the Indochinese Communist Party (ICP) from smaller communist organizations. Ho Chi Minh used the power of this party to organize revolutionary cells for demonstrations and organizations. Within only a few months, the ICP had over 1,800 communist activists mobilizing the people into protests against the French occupation.² When their demands for decreased taxation and the return of traditionally Vietnamese lands were not met, the demonstrations turned into riots. These violent uprisings destroyed government buildings, tax rolls, and caused numerous governmental officials to flee. In September of 1930, the French authorities responded by bombing Vietnamese protesters, raided their villages, and executed all those who were suspected of being communists or their sympathizers. The French suppression of the 1930 communist uprisings spread beyond Vietnam, even arresting those complicit in the acts who hid in Singapore, China, and Hong

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Vietnam/The-conquest-of-Vietnam-by-France>

² <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/19.htm>

Kong. This led to a period of recovery for the French Indochina, as well as for the ICP in Vietnam.

Recruitment for the covert communist blocs would continue through the fall of France to Nazi Germany in World War II. Japan, intending to cut off China's southern borders as well as fulfill more of their imperialist plans, sought to occupy Vietnam.³ With the surrender of the French government French Indochina face no choice but to concede to the demands of Japan. In 1940, the French governor-general agreed to the stationing of Japanese troops in Indochina, as well as the usage of the airports in Vietnam by the Japanese. The Japanese, despite having a far greater military presence in the region, left the French administration intact as a puppet state for Vietnam. During this time, Ho Chi Minh coalesced the ICP and other communist and independence factions into a broad nationalistic alliance of groups seeking independence, known as the Viet Minh. Ho Chi Minh dedicated the Viet Minh to undermining the oppressive authority however possible, a theme that would foreshadow the plight of the Vietnamese for years to come.

Japan would remain in power until the final months of WWII. The Viet Minh, bolstered by Japanese troops and by Japan's surrender to the United States, declared a provisional government for the independent nation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) in 1945.⁴ Japan ceded control and power to Ho Chi Minh's new authority, seated in the capital city of Hanoi. Following the end of WWII, France returned to Vietnam to reclaim its colony in 1946. The new state of Vietnam refused the occupation, and sparked the First Indochina War.^{5,6} The French government created a new country, the State of Vietnam, with former emperor Bao Dai as ruler. In 1950 the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the now communist People's Republic of China recognized the independence of the DRV, but the United States of America denied the legitimacy of the DRV government. President Truman supported the French opposition of independence from February of 1950 onwards, assisting the French with \$15 million worth of military aid.

³ <https://alphahistory.com/vietnamwar/japanese-occupation-of-vietnam/>

⁴ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/1026782.stm>

⁵ <https://thevietnamwar.info/vietnam-war-timeline/>

⁶ <https://www.britannica.com/event/Indochina-wars#ref764002>

The Democratic Republic of Vietnam would emerge victorious from the First Indochina War thanks to their success at the battle of Dien Bien Phu in May of 1954. The Geneva Accords, signed in July, created an armistice for France to withdraw from the area. These accords also temporarily divided Vietnam between the 17th parallel, until elections could be held to determine the future of the country in 1956. The United States and South Vietnam rejected this agreement, and refused to participate in the elections.⁷ The denial of elections led to increased communist insurgency actions in Southern Vietnam, killing more than 400 South Vietnam officials with guerilla strikes and terrorist bombings between 1956 and 1959. During this period, North Vietnam began the creation of a road for supplies and weapons eventually known as the Đường Hồ Chí Minh, or the Ho Chi Minh Road.

The year 1960 leads to drastic changes in leadership for both the Americans and the Vietnamese. In the United States, John F. Kennedy defeated Richard Nixon for the presidency, while Ho Chi Minh is replaced by Le Duan as the leader of North Vietnam's communist party.⁸ President Kennedy ordered the greater involvement of American combat units and support staff in Southern Vietnam, providing assistance to its leader Ngo Dinh Diem wherever possible. North Vietnam, attempting to replicate the success of the Viet Minh, created the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam. Commonly known as the National Liberation Front (NLF) to the Vietnamese, and as the Viet Cong by the Americans, the NLF sought to organize displeased Vietnamese of the south into usurping the South Vietnam government. This unrest manifested in attacks on villages and provinces across South Vietnam and an attempted coup by bombing the South Vietnam palace. The US responded by utilizing Agent Orange to clear out possible routes used by the NLF. Conflict have escalated since the NLF defeat of the South Vietnamese Army, known as the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), at the Battle of Ap Bac in early 1963. By late 1963, the US' confidence in Diem had evaporated. A US-backed coup occurred in November, eliminating Diem and his brother permanently.⁹ Over ten different administrations would follow to control the south. When President Kennedy was assassinated in 1963, Lyndon B. Johnson assumed control of the American operations in South Vietnam.

⁷ <http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/vietnam/timeline.htm>

⁸ <https://www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war-timeline>

⁹ <https://www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war-timeline>

On August 2nd, 1964, NLF forces attacked two American destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin. No casualties nor injuries resulted from the attack.¹⁰ Two days later on August 4th, two more American destroyers were on patrol in the gulf. Poor visibility and violent seas led to reports of automatic weapons fire, and unidentified boats attacking from all angles.¹¹ American administration retaliated with bombing raids on North Vietnamese naval bases and oil facilities, in which two US planes were shot down.¹² Subsequently, in November the USSR sent food, ammunition, small arms, air defense systems, and medical supplies to North Vietnam. The People's Republic of China also provided for the North Vietnamese, by contributing engineering corps for the development of infrastructure.

In January and February of 1965 VFN forces marched further into South Vietnam to attack the town of Binh Gia, a US helicopter base, and to bomb Qui Nonh. The Vietcong managed to capture the town of Binh Gia and kill 200 ARVN troops and 5 American advisors. While South Vietnam was able to retake the town from the northern forces, this caused alarm to the American administration as Binh Gia was only 40 miles from Saigon. At the helicopter base, the NLF managed to wound and incapacitate over 70 American soldiers. The bomb at a hotel in Qui Nonh killed 23 American servicemen, prompting President Johnson to authorize a continual bombing campaign on North Vietnam, known as Operation Rolling Thunder. The operation was dedicated to preventing North Vietnam from supporting the NLF units attacking South Vietnam. On April 7th, 1965, the United States offered aid to the people of Northern Vietnam in return for peace talks. The offer was refused.

In 1966 war efforts continued, with the United States bombing the Mugia Pass, a crucial transportation route used by North Vietnam, as well as capturing the city of Huế in the damaging Battle of Huế. The fighting in Con Thien would kill nearly 1,300 North Vietnam troops, but the utilization of the Ho Chi Minh Road would allow the affected divisions to quickly recover. The end of 1966 would yield positive search and destroy missions for the Americans, and an increase of ground forces to nearly 400,000.

¹⁰<https://www.pri.org/stories/2017-09-14/what-really-happened-gulf-tonkin-1964>

¹¹<https://www.usni.org/magazines/navalhistory/2008-02/truth-about-tonkin>

¹²<https://www.pbs.org/battlefieldvietnam/timeline/index.html>

The first months of 1967 featured the American Operations of Cedar Falls and Junction City, predominantly as efforts to remove Vietcong positions near Saigon. Between January 8th and May 14th of 1967, the largest American operation to date occurred in South Vietnam. In an attempt to remove Vietcong entrenched areas near the Cambodian border, American forces needed to delve into the Iron Triangle, a sixty square mile area less than twenty miles from Saigon. The “Hammer and anvil” style tactics utilized airborne US troops to push NLF forces out of fortified areas, directly into waiting and ready ground American ground troops. This proved effective for the Americans, securing the Iron Triangle over the five months of the operations. The Vietcong would suffer losses of thousands of men and literal tons of food and ammunition, as well as the destruction of vital tunnel systems and bunkers.¹³ Late 1967 would feature the Battle of Dak To, a failed Vietcong assault on the central highlands of South Vietnam, at the cost of 1,800 casualties to the United States.

From January of 1968 to this day, North Vietnam has been assaulting numerous American positions whenever possible. Khe Sanh has been under bombardment from NLF artillery from the start of the year, and the Tet Offensive has combined all forces available to North Vietnam in a wide-ranging campaign across South Vietnam. Huế, Saigon, the US Embassy, and hundreds of other key locations are attacked in the offensive, leading to the heaviest losses for the United States yet. However, despite the wide reach of the assaults, the Vietcong suffered crucial losses to experienced personnel and political officers, in devastating military defeats. While the United States would suffer massive political backlash to the Vietcong’s Tet Offensive, the Vietcong themselves would face drastic losses in the wake of American counter attacks and retaliation.

1.3. Current Situation

At face value, the Tet Offensive has been nothing short of a military failure. Heavy casualties and dwindling supplies are crippling our ability to face the Americans head on. Thankfully, the resolve of the invaders is weakening following the offensive. Their morale has dropped steadily in the face of our impressive determination, and their fighters will continue to balk at our might. Ongoing search and destroy maneuvers threaten our bunkers and caches, and the puppet state

¹³<https://www.abmc.gov/news-events/news/commemorating-50th-anniversary-vietnam-war-operations-cedar-falls-and-junction-city>

of South Vietnam still remains backed by the imperialists. Unless we can find a way to further break the resolve of the Americans, remove their dogs from our land, or cripple the puppet government, winning this war will not come easily, if at all.

1.4. Discussion Questions

1. What is the best way to win the war that will unify Vietnam?
2. How can the National Liberation Front encourage more Vietnamese people to rise up against the American oppressors?
3. In what ways can North Vietnam involve more support from other communist countries?

1.5. Key Terms

- French Indochina
- Ho Chi Minh
- Indochinese Communist Party (ICP)
- Viet Minh
- Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV)
- Ngo Dinh Diem
- Battle of Dien Bien Phu
- Geneva Accords
- National Liberation Front of South Vietnam (NLFSV)
 - Alternatively: National Liberation Front (NLF)
- Viet Cong/Vietcong (VC)
- Agent Orange
- Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN)
- Battle of Ap Bac
- Battle of Huế
- Gulf of Tonkin
- Iron Triangle
- Operation Cedar Falls
- Operation Junction City
- Battle of Dak To
- Tet Offensive

2. Topic 2 - Fostering a Foreign Policy During Conflict

2.1. Topic Overview

Waging war in the 20th century requires a vast number of diverse resources. In order to win the war these resources must be sustained at a pace necessary to move the war in our direction. The various weapons of war are complex machines that, if one is unable to manufacture themselves, must be purchased from foreign states with the necessary resources. The two main communist giants, China and the USSR, are at odds with each other. Choosing to ally with one likely makes further contact with the other more difficult. By constructing a stable foreign policy our war-efforts become legitimized by the international community and the odds of survival of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam grow.

2.2. Historical Background

Foreign policy is all about creating a mutually beneficial relationship among states. That being said, just because a nation might benefit in some way from cooperating with you there are many reasons they may not. The current state of the global community has easily divided the world into two camps with starkly differing ideologies. Our choice of communism as a ruling ideology does limit our options when deciding how to craft a



functioning foreign policy, but it also does half the work for us. There are numerous ways for us to develop a foreign policy during this tumultuous time, but all revolve around the communist ideology and the goals of communists around the world.

2.2.1. Sino-Soviet Split

Communism has been an ideology that continues to both expand and evolve. As it expands, factions within the ideology begin to form. The Sino-Soviet split occurred over a period of approximately 10 years, from 1956 to 1966.¹⁴ During this time, relations between China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) went from friendly and warm to stunningly cool. The explanation for this change begins with the death of Joseph Stalin and the divergent policies taken by Nikita Khrushchev.

As the head of the People's Republic of China (PRC), Chairman Mao led a state visit to Moscow late in 1949. Mao and Stalin agreed to the *Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance*, which included a \$300 million loan, and a 30 year military alliance.¹⁵ This included the loaning of Soviet technicians to aid China in its infrastructure projects. This level of cooperation led to the rapid implementation of the Soviet planned centralized economic system in China.

However, the communist ideologies of the USSR and the PRC began to diverge with the death of Joseph Stalin and the ascension of Nikita Khrushchev to the Premiership of the Soviet Union in 1953. Khrushchev's comparatively liberal policies of coexistence with the West were of no appeal to Chairman Mao.¹⁶ Mao believed the USSR had turned its back on the values and ideals of communism, and because of this, the relationship soured. For Mao, the last straw came in 1962, soon after the Cuban Missile Crisis. The Sino-Indian war culminated in the USSR expressing disillusion at the Chinese aggression against India. It has been since these events that the Chinese and the Soviets have had such cool attitudes towards one another.

These events are what guide our path today in deciding with whom to ally. While we are tentatively involved in numerous anti-capitalist actions with the Chinese and the Soviets, we can choose to adopt a Chinese approach to our system, or a Soviet style. Closer cooperation with one likely leads to less involvement from the other. Each has its advantages and disadvantages.

¹⁴ <https://www.marxists.org/history/international/comintern/sino-soviet-split/index.htm>

¹⁵ <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP80R01443R000300050007-8.pdf>

¹⁶ http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/mao_zedong.shtml

What we decide to prioritize in our campaign against the United States and the capitalist scourge will ultimately lead to our decision.

2.3. Current Situation

2.3.1. China

China is a vast nation. With a population of about 775 million, it is currently the Earth's most populous country.¹⁷ China's wealth of resources is exactly what any country waging war would need. The prospect of being able to marshal these resources for our cause is an appealing one as it will likely aid in our war efforts against the United States.

Its proximity also grants us an advantage. The ability to move the goods we so desperately need such a short distance restricts the amount of sabotage and subterfuge our enemies can apply. The 796 miles of jungle make up our border with China is a prime location to transport sensitive goods.

Chinese Communism currently focuses on what Mao is calling the Cultural Revolution. The Cultural Revolution is a massive overhaul of nearly every aspect of the average Chinese life. This lead to the reformation of much of the bureaucratic structure in China, and vested much of the power with the new Red Guard. A student movement aimed at making China fully Maoist from the inside out.¹⁸ The idea here is to usher all dissonance out of the party as covertly as possible without raising international alarms.

China does have nuclear weapons capabilities. The current count is seven nuclear tests; however, the Chinese nuclear program is in its infancy and there have been only a handful of successful tests. While the program may not be as fully developed as one would hope, the ability to use these weapons would all but guarantee our nation's' survival into the future.

2.3.2. USSR

The USSR is, without a doubt, the most powerful nation with which we could ally. Standing up to the West is no small task, and the most secure way for us to balance the battlefield is to bring a

¹⁷ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL>

¹⁸

<https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2014/01/23/265228870/chinese-red-guards-apologize-reopening-a-dark-chapter>

balance of power to the political table. Who better than the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to help us oppose the United States and their interventionist policies?

The Soviets have been testing nuclear weapons since the late 1940s.¹⁹ This more advanced nuclear technology may be exactly what we need in order to win the war, but the Soviets are notoriously suspicious of divulging technical nuclear information. It would take a great deal from us in order to be granted some sort of nuclear Soviet assistance, not to mention the level of difficulty in transporting such material covertly to Indochina.

Currently, the Soviet style of communism relies on a more overt method of centralizing and stabilizing power. Large expressions of force bring misbehaving dissidents to their knees, in the hope that upon witnessing these actions, others are less likely to follow their example. These policies are globally visible and often render the leading nation in a poor light to the international community.

Be aware however, that the current political climate in the USSR is that of cautious optimism towards its relationship with the United States. The current Soviet Premier, Leonid Brezhnev, is trying to balance a stagnating economy against that of the United States. This policy has continued to draw tensions between China and the USSR since the time of the Sino-Soviet split. By cooperating too heavily with the USSR, we may incur the wrath of Mao.

2.3.3. Other Communist States

China and the USSR may be the largest communist powers perhaps willing to work with us, but there are other independent communist nations that may be willing to lend certain kinds of aid.

The kingdom of Cambodia is a nation in which we are already very active, supporting the Royal United National Government of Kampuchea in their quest to stifle the Western influence on their culture.²⁰ Geopolitically it is a very important country for us to be engaged in. The access Cambodia grants to the Republic of Vietnam is beyond value. It is necessary. What is important is to monitor the progress of the Khmer Rouge and the activities of their leader Pol-Pot in order to ensure that the Khmer Rouge is in line with our goals.

Josip Broz, more commonly known by Tito, is the current political leader in Yugoslavia. Despite being one of the only communist European nations not to be part of the Warsaw Pact it is still

¹⁹ http://www.coldwar.org/articles/40s/soviet_atomic_bomb_test.asp

²⁰ <http://www.coldwar.org/articles/70s/KhmerRougeandCambodia.asp>

ruled with the iron fist of Tito.²¹ Adopting a more overt soviet style of dissident suppression Tito has garnered a reputation as a strongman. But Yugoslavia is half a world away, and with limited resources one must really appeal to Tito in order to gain any assistance.

2.4. Discussion Questions

- What resources do we already have at our disposal? What resources do we lack?
- What exactly are we looking for in an ally?
- How should we balance the attitudes of China and the USSR against one another?
- Is it even possible to be aligned with both China and the USSR while maintaining the level of aid necessary in our war effort?
- How open to negotiations should we be with the Republic of Vietnam and the West in general?
- What benefit might there be to allying with nations that are not the USSR or China?
- How will our expression of communism alter the choices we can make in terms of making alliances?

2.5. Key Concepts

Cultural Revolution

The Cultural Revolution was a political movement in China lasting from 1966 until 1976, Mao began the movement with the stated goal of preserving communist ideology in the country by purging remnants of capitalist and traditional elements from Chinese society.

Sino-Soviet Split

The Sino-Soviet Split was a period of ten years where relations between the USSR and China deteriorated over doctrinal differences.

Warsaw Pact

A collective defense treaty between the Soviet Union and its respective satellite socialist states in Central and Eastern Europe

²¹ <http://library.cqpress.com/cqresearcher/document.php?id=cqresrre1968121800>