

The vietnam war: defeating the us

[War](#), [Vietnam War](#)



Why did the Vietnam war happen? Why didn't we just back down?. I think that the United States could have won this war, with a mixture of better weapons usage, better moves, and better support from their home country, this could also have even been prevented. Before the war, Vietnam was a disputed territory. Many countries in the past had taken Vietnam over, and after World War II, Vietnam was in the hands of France. Clearly, the Vietnamese wanted their own country, and their long history of being a colony prompted the oppressed people to fight for their independence in the French Indochina war.

Ho Chi Minh, the leader of the Communist party, organized the Vietnamese independence movement, Viet Minh. Asked for support from America first, since that leader didn't want to use communism to free his people. The United States looked helping Ho Chi Minh gain his independence from France as a move against their own allies, they declined. It was only after Russia and China offered to help that Ho Chi Minh adopted communist ideals and wanted to make all of Vietnam communist. The Vietnam war started because communism was going to expand into Korea and eventually into other countries. America didn't want that.

If the United States had looked past its alliances and not helped another country gain its independence like we had gained ours so many years ago, this war would have been completely avoided. Unfortunately for the families of over 58,000 soldiers, it wasn't. This began as early as 1954, the United States started sending financial and military aid to South Vietnam, hoping to stop the spread of communism. The flow of 'military advisors' from 700 to over 14,000 built up steadily through John F Kennedy's presidency, and after <https://assignbuster.com/the-vietnam-war-defeating-the-us/>

he was assassinated, Johnson escalated the war to the point of no return. American people were so scared of communism that they were willing to do anything to stop communism where it started. The people of the United States let Johnson build up a huge force in Vietnam, and he was also almost unanimously backed by congress. By the end of the war, Johnson was so ashamed that he didn't even try to run for reelection. If the Americans would have stopped and thought about what they were getting themselves into and not jumping right into it, we would be ok.

In 1964, the event that all war hawks wanted happened. In the Gulf of Ton kin, several Viet Cong torpedo boats reportedly fired on a U. S. vessel. Even though the American ship sustained no damages, Johnson drafted the Gulf of Ton kin Resolution, which authorized him to use any force necessary to beat back the North Vietnamese. Congress never declared war or even directly authorized troops, but Johnson somehow got to declare it. Early in the War At first, Johnson didn't let the problem go into the air, because he was hoping to destroy Viet Cong. He used planes such as the B-52 bomber and the F-4 Phantom to try to win the war as quickly as possible. Unfortunately, the United States' air power had many shortcomings. The F-4 Phantom was the latest and best technology out there during Vietnam War. Manufactured by McDonnell-Douglas, this plane was capable of multiple roles, as a dogfighter, bomber, recon, and support aircraft. But, the F-4 had its some problems. First, the engineers who designed it did not mount any type of gun on the F-4A through the F-4D, thinking that the Phantom's frightening compliment of missiles could take out any enemy threat. This wasn't the smarted move. Not having a gun made the dog-fighting role of the Phantom extremely hard,

because the AIM-9 and AIM-7 missiles were not as effective at closer ranges against the enemy MIGs. Only after almost 2 years was the F-4E Phantom fitted with a 6-barrell gatling gun. Also, many pilots were not trained very well, only having 6 weeks of training as opposed to the normal 1-year. The B-52 Stratofortress was the largest bomber ever made at that time. We should have used it wisely

There were also negative sides to the use of the B-52. During World War II, the allies could depend on destroying the industry of their enemy, eventually destroying its fighting power. The VC did not count on industry and big guns, but guerrilla tactics and small arms weapons. The U. S. also thought by using a lot of bombs and by using napalm, the enemy would be scared and finally give up. Both of tactics proved to be wrong. The bombings got the enemy angry and brought the North Vietnamese closer together, instead of its actual goal. Napalm was also bad mistake. By using a flammable jelly which consisted of gasoline and some other chemical to make it thick, they burned up all of North Vietnam, the United States not only killed more people than enemies, but also made people think was this the right thing to do? Anything that Napalm touched burned for up to a week. Another type of bomb was dropped by the B-52s, this one containing a large amount of the deadly gas, Agent Orange. Millions of acres of jungle were destroyed and even more fields and paddies were poisoned. South Vietnamese farmers complained about the effect Agent Orange had on their rice paddies. Agent Orange was supposed to eliminate the Viet Cong ' s advantages of there hiding places, but it only turned the people we were fighting for against us even more. Agent Orange also hurt us to, many of the Veterans ended up getting sick,

like cancer and other deadly sicknesses. The use of Agent Orange was perhaps one of the worst mistakes made in Vietnam. If we just thought ahead, and figuring out the consequences of using weapons such as napalm and Agent Orange, the U. S. could have won the Vietnam War, mostly through the use of air power.

During the Vietnam War we dropped more bombs than in any other war, this would make you think that we should win because it's easy. Sadly, ethical problems and lack of planning made it impossible to settle the war in the air, making the U. S. invade with ground forces. President Johnson chose General William C. Westmoreland to command the land forces. Westmoreland commanded over 500, 300 troops at the high point of the war, and was still unable to defeat the Viet Cong. But there were many factors that contributed to our shocking defeat on the ground in Vietnam. The first and foremost was the difference in tactics. The Viet Cong was ruthless soldiers, who, even though sometimes poorly trained, fought with a lot of drive and pride. The Viet Cong used something called guerrilla tactics. They would get children, to join use baby's as bait for booby traps, and other unethical things. These were a few deaths that the U. S. soldiers had. Also on the tactics side, the entire U. S. consisted of search and destroy missions. Search and destroy missions involved a group patrol, (usually 15-30 soldiers), going out of the home territory and finding and killing the enemy. Unfortunately, the booby traps placed by the Viet Cong and the fact that they knew the land meant that they could hide well. They took advantage of that and so U. S. soldiers died a lot from that.

If the United States only thought about what they were getting themselves into and realized the consequences then they would have probably not gotten involved. Either way I do believe that if we didn't help out the other country that, they would try to get back at us in some way. But the amount of people that died, and the amount that got sick was really just unnecessary. But since we did get involved we should have just stuck with fighting in the air. That was our strength at the time and we should have taken advantage of it.