

# Theories of us involvement in the vietnam war

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



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## The Right Reasons

Do you know how many U. S troops were killed in the Vietnam War?

According to the DCAS in 2009, there were 58, 220 recorded deaths. Did the United States really have the right reasons to expend that many citizens?

There was not significant enough economic, social or political reason for the U. S. to involve itself in the Vietnam Civil War. “ For many who study foreign affairs, the Vietnam War was a tragic mistake brought about by the U. S. leaders who exaggerated the influence of communism and underestimated the power of nationalism” (Lind). However, those who actively study foreign affairs are not the only ones who view this war as a mistake. It is also agreed that in the long run, the United States had nothing to gain economically from being involved in the Vietnam Civil War.

When fighting finally broke out in Vietnam there were two sides, the communist North Vietnam and anti-communist South Vietnam. In reality, the two sides weren't so clearly defined until 1945 when, “ Viet Minh forces seized the northern city of Hanoi and declared a democratic State of Vietnam (known commonly as North Vietnam) with Ho as president,” (History. com staff). Ho as in Ho Chi Minh. Bao Dai, the French educated emperor of all Vietnam stepped down in favor of the revolution to free his country from the oppressive French. However, the French who had formed an alliance with the Chinese were not planning on letting Vietnam have their independence yet. While they got control of the South, the Chinese invaded the North. Despite Ho's tries for peaceful negotiations with the French for independence for

Vietnam, withdrawal of the Chinese and reunification of the North and the South were all for naught when, “ in October 1946, a French cruiser opened fire on the town of Haiphong after a clash between French and Vietnamese soldiers”(History. com staff). and Ho Chi Minh’s followers called for war.

Now, onto the claims. In the long term, The United States had nothing to gain economically from the Vietnam War. When the United States first entered the war the main concern was the spread of communism; the economy was not fore-front. Though the war was instrumental in increasing wages, inflation was also rising at an astounding rate. However, this was not the true economy. “ It was all fabricated because of the war. The government was spending huge amounts of money on companies that were, in one way or another, feeding and fueling the Vietnam Conflict and people were making money hand over fist” (Captain John Glowe, Vietnam veteran). It can be argued that the stimulating effect of wars can be beneficial to the economy. “ War leads to higher government spending, higher employment and can, therefore, provide a boost to domestic demand, economic growth and help reduce unemployment” (Pettinger). Yet, when America pulled out of the conflict much of this work dried up and the American people were left with a huge recession that damaged the economy greatly.

Socially, the Vietnam conflict was a Civil War that we should not have involved ourselves in. The United State’s main justification of its involvement in the war was to help the people of Southern Vietnam be free and so stop the spread of communism; however, it was hard for the American people to understand the Vietnamese because they wanted to be

independent more than they didn't want communism. Their freedom was not as important as their nationalism. The independence of the country of Vietnam was paramount. " One of the things that made the Vietnam War so morally confusing for Americans was the fact that the Viet Minh were both nationalists and Communist" ( [www. spark notes. com](http://www.sparknotes.com) ). This confusion led to the American people not supporting their returning troops and to protests. Though it can be argued that this confusion also caused the innocent American people to wake up and question their leaders, ultimately, the costs of the war did not justify the means. " During the Vietnam War, one of the biggest social impacts was the use of protesting. Protesters believed that mass gatherings and constant protesting would actually influence government decisions. Whether it did or not, is something to debate. But, from the outside looking in, the protests did nothing to stop the U. S, from getting involved, the war continuing, or ending" (Biello).

Finally, the negative global effect of a possible communist Vietnam was exaggerated. It was feared that if one country fell to communism, its neighbor would, and so on and so on, much like dominoes falling. " In Southeast Asia, the United States government used the domino theory to justify its support of a non-communist regime in South Vietnam against the communist government of North Vietnam, and ultimately its increasing involvement in the long-running Vietnam War (1954-75)" (History. com Staff).

This theory did not evolve as was feared. " In fact, the American failure to prevent a communist victory in Vietnam had much less of a global impact

than had been assumed by the domino theory. Though communist regimes did arise in Laos and Cambodia after 1975, communism failed to spread throughout the rest of Southeast Asia” (History. com Staff).

In conclusion, although economic, social, and political justifications have been touted for the United States’ entanglement in the Vietnam War, with time, most of these have been proven invalid. It is impossible to know what our world might look like had America not chosen to participate in the Vietnam conflict. As in most instances, hindsight is 20/20.

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