

Was ho chi minh more of a nationalist than a communist?

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Was Ho Chi Minh more of a nationalist than a communist? Most people in America firmly believe that Ho Chi Minh was a communist first and foremost. The public was inundated with stories of his visits to Russia and China. We heard repeatedly how his support from communist countries was being used to take over and create a communist stronghold in South East Asia. What we didn't hear was the rest of the story. The Vietminh under Minh's leadership had an alliance of sorts with the U. S. during WWII.

The common enemy, the Japanese provided a sort of strange bedfellows situation where the communists supported the ouster of another foreign invader. After the war, the Vietminh set up governmental structures in the country assuming Vietnam would return to a sovereign state. Minh himself made repeated overtures to the U. S. and other countries for support in his quest of independence (Young, 1991. p 14). Even the Vietnam declaration of independence signaled Minh's nationalistic view (Gettleman, et al, p 26). As a pragmatist, Minh realized that the U. S. was not going to support his independence so he turned towards Russia and China for support. Minh walked a fine line with these countries to keep his supply line open without losing his independence. Some say that ability showed his true skills as a diplomat (Obituary, 1969). On the flip side of the equation, Minh was a true and thorough communist. He lived and breathed the communist ideals and was ruthless in achieving them. It has been said that he was a great contradiction. Ho Chi Minh was known as the great communist leader while at the same time ultimate nationalist (Ho Chi Minh, 2006).

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