

# American involvement in the vietnam war assignment

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Like a moth to a flame, the United States has always been attracted to international affairs. In this particular case communism in Vietnam was the flame that leered American bugs in, not knowing that they would be brutally burned by communism in the end. From 1953 to 1961, all the initial decisions involving Vietnam were made by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who once served as the Supreme Commander of the Allied forces in Europe as well as the first Supreme Commander of NATO. Thus, Eisenhower was very knowledgeable about war issues and was prepared to tackle pending conflicts and avert the dispersal of communism when he came into office.

Communism was an immense fear of this great patriot, who witnessed to the “Red Scare” during the Truman Administration, and he felt that Vietnam was at great risk as more countries in Asia found communism as an opportunity for independence. The sudden alliances that Ho Chi Minh, President of Vietnam, made with the Communists kindled a fear in Eisenhower, and he felt as though the United States’ capitalistic lifestyle was in jeopardy.

Eisenhower preached that in order to save Vietnam, their people, and the security of the U. S. as a known power, the only solution was intervention.

Motivated by economic profit and the imminent threat of Soviet influence, the Eisenhower Administration acted upon the “Superman Complex” by supporting Ngo Dinh Diem, and divided Vietnam to impede the globalization of communism between 1945 and 1964. Eisenhower’s Domino Theory, along with America’s desire for greater economic prosperity, was the major impetus in Vietnam intervention. In 1954, Eisenhower proposed that if South Vietnam was to become a victim of communism, “a crumbling process that

could... have grave consequences for [the United States] and for freedom” would follow (Eisenhower, Security).

He felt that if Vietnam succumbed to communism, the weaker nations in Asia that were struggling for freedom from colonialism would have no choice but to give up their efforts and follow those of Vietnam and China. Communism’s globalization posed a grave threat to the U. S. and to their controlled land of the Philippines. In response to the inevitable war against communism, Eisenhower proposed two options to Vietnam. The first was simply to give in and allow communism to prevail, or to begin to make “ private investments from the outside and government loans... from other and more fortunately situated nations” (Eisenhower, Security).

Vietnam longed for nothing more than its independence, and recognized that economic support was needed from other countries in order to be liberated. Vietnam’s only choice was to befriend the U. S. for financial support, and the U. S. believed they could only benefit from accepting Vietnam’s request. America’s intervention would have economic benefits for both countries, for even while reimbursing its debt to the U. S. , Vietnam’s economy would become more stable. With a stronger economy, the idea of communism would be less appealing and Vietnam would no longer be vulnerable to the fearful foreign ideal.

Eisenhower’s advisors believed that intervention in South Vietnam was essential in containing communism in North Vietnam. When the French abandoned Vietnam, the U. S. felt the need to step in and help defend the Vietnamese citizens from Communist influence. Vice President Richard Nixon

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stated that “ the Vietnamese lack[ed] the ability to conduct a war by themselves or govern themselves” (Nixon, 54). Nixon believed that in order to maintain Vietnam’s stability during the independence movement, the U. S. would have to intervene in their civil war. Furthermore, the U. S. feeling obligated to play the role of Superman, found it their duty to help defend South Vietnam’s capitalist economy. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, believed that if Vietnam was to fall to communism like its neighboring country of China, then “ communist aggression against other free peoples in the area” would surely resume (Dulles, 54). John Dulles’ idea of containment was heavily acted upon once the Soviet Union was on a global crusade to spread communism. Because China had just been overtaken by communism, America feared that under China’s influence Vietnam would also grow to become communistic.

Vietnam’s past reveals their “ monkey see, monkey do” mentality, adopting China’s Confucian social and political values. America felt that in due time, Vietnam would predictably mimic China once again. Taking Vietnam by its reins, the U. S. became more involved in Vietnam’s struggles, and tried to prevent the weakening South Vietnam’s potential fate. In response to John Dulles’ idea of containment, it was decided that Vietnam would be divided at the 17th parallel. As a result, Ho Chi Minh became upset and claimed that from “ North to South, [Vietnam] must unite closely...one in thought and deed” (Ho, After Geneva).

America believed that by reenacting prior successful containment strategies, they would also be victorious for Vietnam. Korea was soon the ideal outcome

that the United States longed for; a divided country that maintained the communism in one area. Along with the division of Vietnam, Eisenhower suppressed communism by supporting Ngo Dinh Diem who was ethnically Vietnamese but held the beliefs of a Capitalist. By stating that Diem's "recent request for aid... [was] being fulfilled," Eisenhower clearly demonstrated his advocacy for Diem. (Eisenhower, Support).

By rigging the elections, Eisenhower was able to employ Diem as president, and cleverly manipulate him in order to implement the ideal American government onto Vietnam. As America's puppet, Diem served as the key for America to indirectly control the vulnerable country and soon, due to their own conviction, America began to send in troops for their allied ruler. As a result of Eisenhower's policies and advisors, American diplomatic and military involvement in Vietnam escalated from 1945 to 1964. With the Superman Complex ideology in mind, America felt the need to help save Vietnam and halt the constant threat of communism towards the U.

S. When Vietnam was divided during the Geneva Conference, Communist leader Ho Chi Minh was greatly upset and opposed U. S. intervention within Vietnam's affairs. However, his opposing ruler, Diem, created an alliance with the U. S. and was guided by the nationalist nation to contain communism in the North. As Vietnam's ally, the U. S. hoped to benefit economically and also to demonstrate their superiority to the world. Even with the United States' guidance, Vietnam was captured by communism, thus becoming more fuel for the fire.