

Research paper on difference between vietnam war and korea war

[Politics](#), [Communism](#)



The decision that was made for engagement in a war between Korea and Vietnam can be attributed to Domino Theory. This was found in the doctrine of Truman Doctrine, which was found in MacNamara's theory, often referred to as Domino Theory. It has been argued that, Americans were the losers, in Vietnamese war. Given the way the direction the war took, this statement could be true. On the other hand, one wonders if a large country like the US could lose such a fight. These are two opposing arguments that have been maintained by historians. In all these, the Americans did not concede to accept a rule of conciliation which had made way for Hitler to reinforce Germany to engage in World War II. In both Korea and Vietnam, America struggled to ensure that communism was at bay from these two countries. This would enable the two countries free from communisms be controlled by Soviet forces. This objective was common all the way through the reigns of President Truman, President Eisenhower, President Kennedy and President Johnson. Even though, these two wars were engaged for similar reasons, the circumstances and the nature were different.

There are many similarities that exist between the battles of two countries, Korea and Vietnam. One fundamental objective why America got involved in both of these battles was to keep nations that are independent to surrender to the rule of the communists. American viewed that if the Soviets would be permitted to take be in charge of Vietnam and Korea, other Asian countries would be risky. Both cases show the struggle between communism and democracy. It is often said that both wars were engaged, not because of an individual but because of an ideology. Ho Chi Minh started the war as a fighter with nationalist origins, but ended up being a communist fighter so

that his aims would be supported (Nosotro 92).

One other resemblance between these two countries was that they each divided between communists to the north and democrats to the south. North Korea and North Vietnam both had links to China, which was a communist nation. In this regard, China provided them with military weapons, goods and supplies. They also got sustenance from China. Democracy was favored, on the other hand, in South Korea and South Vietnam. The United States got involved in the supplies of goods and military expertise to South Korea. This is something that led to the rise of the war. Both of these nations could engage negotiations so that the war could come to an end. Allies could come together and have a dialogue which could have ideological benefits to both sides of the fighting troops. This is something which was later achieved. This is what catapulted to the start of war in both of these countries. In both of these countries, there were negotiations in the end. The leaders of both sides were Christians. Neither side had an outright win when compared to the Second World War. There was at all, In Korea, for a truce and a region which was demilitarized connecting the two borders which were antagonistic. In Vietnam, there was also a ceasefire. From the Paris agreement, America accepted to withdraw their military staff, while, on the other hand, the region of North Korea accepted to free all America POWs. Although the communist north of Vietnam did not honor this treaty by attacking the south after America pulled out, both nations agreed to some form of negotiations in the end. This state shows cold war impasse that exists between America and the Soviet Union. Each nation dreaded the other country, but there was no significant victory that was achieved by either side (McCandless 73).

Another issue that has been overlooked more often is that of religious affiliations of the two leaders of the two countries. The two leaders practiced Christianity. South Vietnam's Jean Baptiste Ngo Dinh Diem was a Roman Catholic while South Korea's Syngman Rhee, was a Protestant. This fact had a lesser impact on the outcome and the process of the war. The influence of this fact has now been realized currently. Currently, Korea is seen to be the center of Christianity. Korea has approximately 25% of her population being Christians and sends the largest number of missionaries of all countries in the world. The church with the largest congregation in the world is that of Paul Yonggi Cho, whose church is in South Korea. At exact opposite to South Korea where Christianity enjoys a good following, there are few Christians in Vietnam. Vietnam was ruled by a government which was under communism. This government did not support Christianity and outlawed it. However, Christianity is slowly gaining popularity because the government is no longer that oppressive the way it used to be (Martindale 82).

The wars in Vietnam and Korea had their huge differences. The major difference between these battles was in the results of the wars. America and other countries in the world, which supported democracy defended South Korea from the taking over by communists. They lost this war that took place to the southern part of Vietnam. This outcome difference comes as a result of the way in which this war was fought. In Korea, the communist people put their efforts in their quest to overpower America with absolute numbers. There was no effective defense shown by North Korea; this saw China giving millions of their troops in the war to North Korea to help in the war. There was an urge by General Douglas MacArthur to extend war to China. Most of

the battles, from both sides, were conducted openly on the ground. The fact that both sides conducted war on open ground gave America tactical advantage due to their greater power in the air war and their sophisticated military artillery which they used. The battles were fierce and quick thus giving Americans good campaign to push the fighters from the communist side to go back to the original distinguishing border that separated the American troops and the communist fighters (Schulzinger 82). The approach that was applied by Vietnam, on the other hand was guerilla war style. This is because of their slighter fighting force and setting. Vietnam had initially constructed underground tunnels that they used in their war against Japan and, later, against French. They built on this network of underground tunnels and expanded this to a stretch of 250 kilometers and above. A good number of these underground tunnels were not seen by America's attacks from the air, and some of the tunnels were created right under the military station of Americans (Foot 92). For a long time, Americans did not understand how the fire of the enemy could be found in their camps and yet the enemy could not be seen in the near vicinity. When the American military realized where the problem was, they came into the tunnels, but most of the time; they got lost in the tunnels, or were trapped in most traps that were found in the tunnels. Another reason as to why Americans lost the Vietnam War and won the Korea war was because Vietnam converted the battle to be seen to be and perceived as a people's war (Preston 82). The Chinese battled with Americans inside Korea without any effort and involvement with the people in Korea. Many people in Vietnam got involved in the war. It was hard for Americans to differentiate between neutral nationals from Vietnam Cong

cohorts. It is one reason why Americans did not overpower Vietnam Cong (Bradford 72).

One distinctive difference that was experienced in the approach of the fight in the two wars gave a sharp difference in the number of casualties. In Korea, 54000 American soldiers lost their lives and the battled came to a stop after a period of three years. This was not the case in Vietnam, where there were a total of 58000 soldiers who perished, and the war went on for a period of 10 years. The Korea war was typified by short periods of bursts of war while in Vietnam; it was a sort of prolonged period of war, which was drawn out. Given the psychological effect that the veterans got after the wars, there was a difference in the way they got their welcome back at home, in the US. The period timing and the validations of the wars which caused to the erratic way in which moral support was accorded to the United States military troops (Bradford 83).

The two countries, Vietnam and Korea had distinctive differences in the approach of carrying out the battles, but the distinction between these two wars has expanded to date. There are also huge differences that are seen between North and South Korea. Vietnam has regained economic stability after they did away with communism (Nosotro 73). There is a thriving economy in South Korea. This is not the case in North Korea, where starvation and poor economy are the order of the day. From this example, it is obvious to everybody that communism does not provide economic success of her people. Nearly all countries worldwide have done away with communism because it has not been able to provide people with success in their economy and social life (Agnew and Rosenzweig 73).

The war in Korea took place when most Americans trusted and less cynical of the federal government. Most people believed in what the president said. If the president decided that there was a need to engage in war with a country facing war and extinction in a faraway country, then people believed and took the president's word. In Korea, the war was more of the North fighting the South. This was not the case in Vietnam, where the grassroots were involved in the war; this looked like a civil war. Both the North governments of Vietnam and the government of South Korea were far from attaining democracy. The thing that led to the fall of South Vietnam was their corruption and their unwillingness to engage and bring on necessary reforms.

There was also a will of the North Vietnam, to continue with the war with the Americans and the South Vietnam. This was so, even though they had been terribly beaten in the war and the bombings they experienced in Hanoi and other cities of Vietnam. After many years of fighting, America were tired of war and had to end the war. It has also cleared that the North Vietnamese were empowered politically and, therefore, to convince the world that the war they had was a fight of Western imperialism, thus winning a lot of sympathy from the rest of the world.

A succinct difference between the two wars is that, while, in Korea, the war was against aggressors, the war in Vietnam was against communism. Communism was worth the fight according to the Americans. This is the main reason they engaged in war with the two nations. In Vietnam, they had a vast wealth of experience as they had been fighting for independence with France. This was followed by a fight with Japanese. All these wars were

enough to train Vietnam and learn some useful facts about how to fight strongly and come out as winners in war. In Korea, they had little experience in war. They also took the Chinese and the North Koreans as the invading force. They supported America in fighting the North and the Chinese. This way, Americans were seen to be winning. Also, there was a lot of support from South Vietnam, unlike the case of Korea where the South Koreans took sides with Americans.

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