

Vietnamization



'Too Little, Too Late' - Could the Vietnam War have been won if intervention had started earlier, or firepower been increased? " We are not about to send American boys nine or ten thousand miles away from home to do what Asian boys ought to be doing for themselves. " Were the words of Lyndon B. Johnson in October 1964, [Lyndon B. Johnson Re-election Campaign speech 1964] in reference to the pressure the American government had been facing from questions raised about how far their support in an 'advisory role would extend to, as the Vietnamese civil conflict escalated.

The Vietnam War' had been ongoing internally since the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu [Vietnam in HD, History Channel] and the Geneva Accords division, and as a result of such there was widespread support for the division throughout the whole of the country, even with the recent divisions. The main argument supporting that the US contributed not enough and at a too late date doesn't seem to be substantiated when the ideas of Rolling Thunder and the 1965 Combat Initiative [The Fog of War, 2003] are introduced. Furthermore, the subsequent rises in troop levels do not support the view that the US was inclined to contribute more.

However, it is evident that possibly earlier intervention could have stopped the organization of the PVC and NVA into a formidable fighting force, the main opponent of US victory in Vietnam, even with the political views of the Vietnamese people leaning largely in favor of HO Chi Mini. In 1954, the power vacuum left by the French withdrawal from Vietnam due to the French inability to fight such a large war for their colonial power, resulted in the US-Dien advisory role of military and political commanders to be sent to South Vietnam in support of the pro-western government there.

By 1955, the US-sponsored President Diem of South Vietnam declared the South an independent state. Diem's strong anti-communist beliefs, his persecution of Buddhists, and almost warmongering nature are the key factors for the eminent escalation, predicted by the US military in the period from 1950-1960. The Eisenhower administration understood that if Diem continued, the overwhelming support for the South would escalate into a proper conflict. It is said that if Diem had not rigged his own election, 80% of the population would have voted for the nationalistic North Vietnamese.

The South's desire to hold further elections like the Geneva Accords promised led to large scale rural violence and resistance to the South Vietnamese domestic policy. However, even though it was evident to the US intelligence that war would soon be inevitable as the NVA would plan to make an attack, the US did not want to directly involve itself as of yet, and to 1961 even. Though gradually, the role of US 'advisors' increased, and military preparations were being made.

It can be argued an organized strike on the 'terrorist' nature of the Viet Cong could have suppressed an insurgency, but the political inconvenience was too high for both the Eisenhower and Kennedy administration. Kennedy had been advised to commit a fighting force, but instead delegated and stated he would "draw a line in the sand," in further support of Diem's forces, whom Johnson at this time pledged to help Diem into a formidable fighting force. "Between 1961-1963, the reluctance of the US to enter Vietnam became a very struggling issue.

Though the communists were indeed a huge threat to the sovereignty of South Vietnam, and the Truman policies of containment almost dictated they would have to further support their ally should they fail (and they evidently were). However, under Robert Mascara's suggestions, the war in Vietnam could not be disregarded and by 1963 there were 16000 military personnel in South Vietnam, showing that any earlier US ideas of 'support and encourage' were not going to be facilitated in the Vietnamese environment.

Matters were made worse by the overthrow of Diem, which even though was semi-state-approved, made an impact on the ability of the South Vietnamese to fight their own war. Eventually in October 1963, Manager suggested a plan and objective of removing all of them" within two years, and he believed it Seibel given the advice of the personnel present in Vietnam at this time. This instance supports the view that the eventual 1965-1968 manipulation was too late for a victory. In 1964, under the Johnson administration it was still believed by Lyndon B. Johnson that " we still have a commitment to Vietnamese freedom. And thus the cycle of what-to-do left by JEFF was to be repeated when by a full year had passed since Dime's death and the withdrawal of 1000 military personnel, there was still no clear option of what action to take in the commitment to containment, Vietnamese redeem, and the will of the American people. In late 1964, Johnson was at ends over the necessity of intervention. Though he proclaimed that " We are not about to send American boys nine or ten thousand miles away from home to do what Asian boys ought to be doing for themselves," the incident off the Gulf of Tontine incident in August 2 1964.

Suddenly, all his senior military advisers and the Pentagon called for escalation, exaggerating the following incident to be an act of war. Evidence would suggest Johnny's decision was not due to a belief that Vietnam would be easy, but either it was necessary. Whether or not it was too late at this time is debatable, as the earliest combat reports in 1965 showed several successful operations even with the new use of airlifting, and the success of La Drang is an early example of such.

Throughout 1965-1966, further combat bases were being established all across, and it seemed considerable efforts to route the NAVA had been achieved, and the US government viewed this as a success in a sense that it would be reasonable to continue on with the war, but rather unaware of the forces [The Fog of War, 2003] that would be needed. However, some views portray that a massive and absolute takeover in this time would have prevented the setbacks of the Et Offensive and the use of the Ho Chi Mini Trail to decimate forces in 1968-1972.

However, under military intelligence at that time, the contingent of Operation: Rolling Thunder was used to ensure absolute corruption of the North Vietnamese military, organization and further their will. 643 000 tons of pure democracy [The Fog of War, 2003] were subsequently dropped in the campaign, which would totally reject a claim of too little. In fact, the eventual protest from Rolling Thunder was likened to it being med excessive, unnecessary and certainly unproductive, as the PVC still managed to launch the Et Offensive after every factory, fort, ammunitions depot, and barracks had been blown by the forces of freedom. Manager stated after the instigation of Rolling Thunder, this is not primarily a military problem, it's a <https://assignbuster.com/vietnamization/>

battle for the hearts and minds for the people of South Vietnam. " [Robert Manager, *The Fog of War*, 2003] And by 1968 troops levels were at the all time high of 537 000, [US Army Archives Website] with most engaged in combat roles. The Vietnam War as it seemed, had taken a turn from a decisive military campaign to root out the NAVA, PVC and greater communists, but instead a political war of American might and power, and the hopeful idea that the North Vietnamese would eventually submit after being so greatly exhausted.

Situations from 1965-1968 remained relatively unchanged in the territory and fighting force of the NAVAL, and even with great losses, the armada continued on in a series of redundant territory changes like Hill 937, [Hamburger Hill, 1987] where the abandonment after such a trifled victory seemed to prove the lack of purpose in the war. As such, it seemed by 1969 the term 'unnamable war' was frequently an accurate description of the state, and no number of increased troops or bombings could deter the will of the Vietnamese.

Johnny's war had tactically failed, and it seemed that it wouldn't have mattered when the US came in, or in what quantity; they were no longer battling to control the forces of communism, but the determined, a-political motives of the Vitamin, NAVA and PVC. It can be determined from the events that occurred from the French Defeat to the American Defeat that any number of enormous force applied did not break the will of the people, and that entailment as a policy was not reasonable to be applied to Vietnam, when the people saw it as a war against their colonial freedom, not the protection from communism as the West saw it.

The idea of 'too little, too late' is not substantially supported when evidence from Rolling Thunder, the 550 000 troops at the height of the conflict and the overwhelming amount of combat fought is presented. 'Too late' is also not seen as viable, when by 1963 the NAVA had only started to begin conflict with the South Vietnamese, and the manipulation of 1965 suppressed a significant amount of North Vietnamese military expansion.

However, the tactics used show that the complexities of the Vietnam War are too diverse and complicated to be brought down to a single factor of not enough force, and not quick enough. Bibliography; 1. Film - The Fog of War (2003) Errol Morris and Sony Pictures Classics 2. Film Series - Vietnam in HAD (2008) History Channel 3. Speech - Lyndon B. Johnson Re-election campaign Speech 1964, Washington. 4. Website - US Armed Forces archives - <http://www.Archives.Gob/> 5. Film - Hamburger Hill (1987) - Paramount Pictures lamina Jameson 11TH