Vietnam Essay, Research Paper

During 1954 to 1965, America became more involved for several important reasons, the most important one is that America feared Vietnam would expand communism all over Asia. Throughout these years the USA could have retreat and stopped giving aid to South Vietnam, but didn’t, as the Presidents wanted to maintain there stature of strength and not let Russia think they were weaker.

From 1946 ahead the Vietminh organisation set-up and was led by, communist Ho Chi Minh. He fought seriously with the French. They fought with far more primitive weapons than the French who used modern powerful weapons supplied by the US. But since Vietminh were poor on the subject ?technology? they made up with ferocity, anger, patriotism and tactics. They fought using Guerrilla techniques and gave them major advantage to the Vietminh.

The US was not actually into the war they were just supplying the French. The French primarily fought to preserve their empire disagreed in the reason why America got involved. The USA were fighting against communism and not as war between colonialists and Nationalists. The USA were fighting for the wrong reasons.

The year 1954 was a major turning point, which brought about the immediate involvement of USA.

The battle of Dien Bien Phu, in which the French were defeated by the Vietminh. This caused the French to leave Indo-China. The Geneva peace agreement led to the temporary division of Vietnam. This was temporary, the elections were to be held in 1956 in which the Vietnamese could vote for one leader for the tow divisions.

The Vietminh leader Minh controlled North Vietnam and Bao Dai Controlled South Vietnam; he was disliked and was exiled by Diem.

Diem was a Nationalist and was supported by the Americans. Diem had no intention of holding the elections and said that the communists would not allow free elections in the North. This broke the Geneva peace agreement and the USA supported his actions. This broke the agreement and the agreement was promised to be defended by the Americans.

In order to keep peace in South Vietnam in 1959 President Eisenhower sent to Vietnam economical aid and modern weapons and sent military advisors. Two years later in 1961 Eisenhower left the presidency and by this time 685 advisors were in Vietnam already. Eisenhower believed in the ‘Domino theory’, he thought that if Vietnam fell to Communism the surrounding countries would fall like dominoes around it. This was the main reason USA was involved.

Diem set up the A.R.V.N (Army of the Republic of Vietnam ) and the new President Kennedy helped them by giving them $270 million. He sent up to 10,000 advisors to help Diem. He did this as Communist North seemed to be winning as the

peasants in the south did not like Diem as he taxed them and took away there land, while the Vietminh gave peasants land and helped them. The USA was again fighting for the wrong reasons as they thought it was non-communist against the communists. In fact the peasants didn’t even understand what communism meant and what leader they were following and problems they were making.

The South Vietnams army wouldn’t fight for their country and the Guerrillas ruled the countryside. The US had to get out or take control and win the war. Kennedy did not like Diem. In November 1963 A.R.V.N officials assassinated Diem, as they were afraid that the US would withdraw support if Diem stayed in power. President Kennedy knew of the assassination but did nothing. A few weeks later Kennedy himself was assassinated.

The new president, Johnson had the opportunity to pull the US out of involvement in Vietnam he choose not to, he actually increased his aids to south Vietnam. He poured more money and bombed the Ho Chi Minh trail.

The Gulf on Tonking incident provide the excuse needed by President Johnson to seize control of the war and send troops into Vietnam and win the war. On the 11th November 1965 the American Destroyer ‘Maddox’ registered a radar mix-up and thought it was being attacked. The President was told, and he went public and stated they were under attack even though a second message was relayed saying it was an error and not attack. The President ignored this and led the public to believe they were being attacked. He did this as he wanted to grasp hold of the war, and now the public were on his side.

The result of this was an rise in USA’s involvement in Vietnam. The war effort was in place and the US navy and the South Vietnam navy fought the Vietminh navy.

On the 11th of February 1965 President Johnson made it clear that he thought ‘Operation Rolling Thunder’ would win the war. The plan consisted of bombing North Vietnam key military targets, such army barracks, bridges and cities in an attempt to bomb the Vietminh in to submission and stop communism in Vietnam and hopefully the Middle-East.

From 1954 to 1965 the Americans became increasingly involved due to fear, hate, and the attempt to eliminate communism from the face of the earth. At first America were indirectly part of the war, they gave financial aid and equipment to the South Vietnamese. They progressively became involved when the view of communism endangered their ‘Back yard’. The USA were dragged in to the war by their complete and whole hate of Communism. The US thought the war was communism against nationalists where in fact it was between colonialists and Nationalists. The later part of the war consisted of two Nationalist parties who wanted power over Vietnam. America’s vision saw the Vietminh led by a communist. This meant America would do any thing they could to defeat the Vietminh (communists).