



# CHAPTER

# 30

# The Vietnam Era

1960–1975

## Why It Matters

The United States became involved in Vietnam because it believed that if all of Vietnam fell under a Communist government, communism would spread throughout Southeast Asia and beyond. The Vietnam War was the longest war in the nation's history.

## The Impact Today

More than 58,000 U.S. troops died in Vietnam. The war damaged people's confidence in their government. Americans grew more willing to challenge the president on military and foreign policy issues after Vietnam. The war also became a yardstick to gauge whether to involve American troops in later crises.



**The American Journey Video** The chapter 30 video, "The First TV War," explores how televised images brought the Vietnam War into American households and influenced public opinion about the war.



United States  
PRESIDENTS

Eisenhower  
1953–1961



1960

Kennedy  
1961–1963



Johnson  
1963–1969



1963

1962  
• Cuban missile crisis



1965  
• U.S. involvement in Vietnam grows

1966



World

1959  
• Civil war begins in Vietnam

1961  
• Berlin Wall erected



1966  
• Cultural Revolution in China

**Sequencing Events Study Foldable** Sequence the actions of the United States's presidents during the Vietnam War by making and using this foldable.

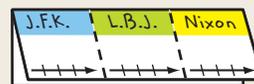
**Step 1** Fold one sheet of paper in half from side to side.



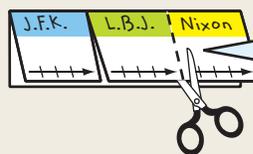
**Step 2** Turn the paper and fold it into thirds.



**Step 3** Unfold and label the foldable as shown.



**Step 4** Cut the top layer only along both fold lines.

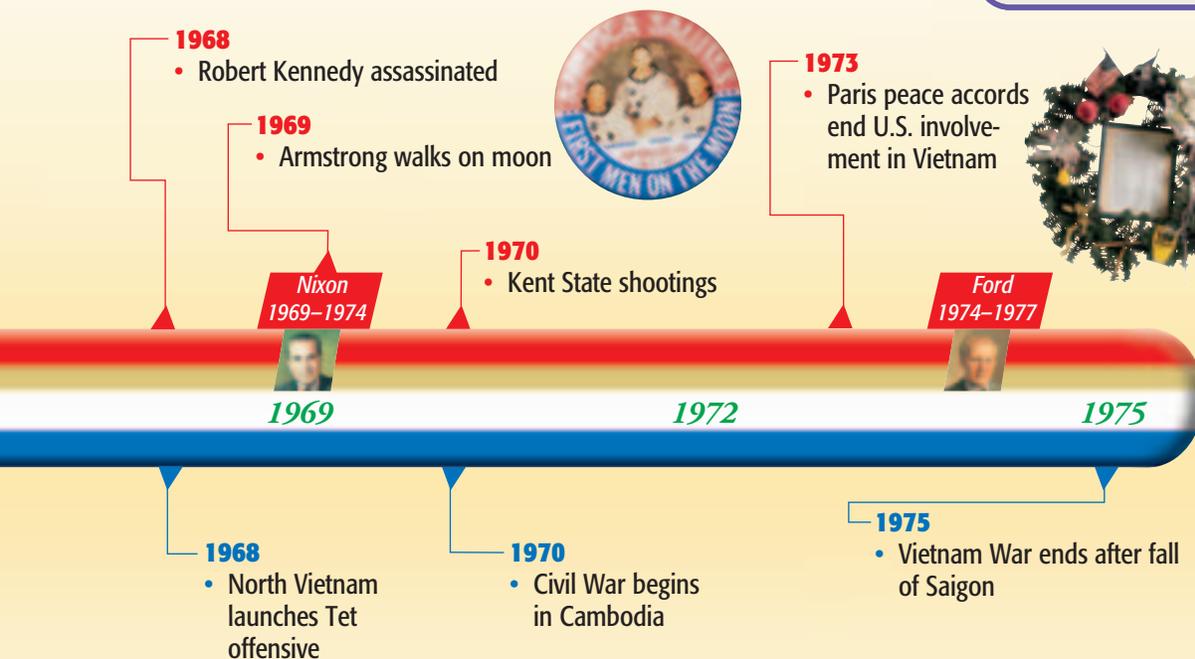


This will make three tabs.

**Reading and Writing** As you read the chapter, record facts about the actions and policies of the presidents in office during the Vietnam era. Be sure to also record the dates of these important events.



**Helping a Comrade** Members of the First Marine Division carry a wounded marine to safety during battle in South Vietnam.



**HISTORY**  
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# Kennedy's Foreign Policy

## Guide to Reading

### Main Idea

In the early 1960s, the nation faced Soviet threats relating to Cuba and to Berlin.

### Key Terms

guerrilla warfare, flexible response, executive order, exile, blockade, hot line

### Reading Strategy

**Organizing Information** As you read Section 1, re-create the diagram below and describe the actions the Kennedy administration took in response to these crises.

Response to Crises	
Berlin Wall	Cuban missile crisis

### Read to Learn

- how the Kennedy administration handled challenges to foreign affairs.
- what happened during the Cuban missile crisis.

### Section Theme

**Geography and History** The Kennedy administration faced crises in Cuba and Berlin.

### Preview of Events

◆ 1960

1961

Bay of Pigs invasion fails

1962

Cuban missile crisis occurs

1963

Telephone hot line links U.S., Soviet leaders

◆ 1965

1969

Neil Armstrong walks on the moon

◆ 1970



Kennedy inaugural ribbon

## AN American Story

"In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger. I do not shrink from this responsibility—I welcome it." So spoke John F. Kennedy in his Inaugural Address. Although Kennedy talked of approaching this responsibility with "energy" and "devotion," events unfolding around the world—in Cuba, Eastern Europe, and Vietnam—would challenge his determination. The new president and nation soon faced a series of crises.

### New Directions

President Kennedy continued the anti-Communist foreign policy begun under Presidents Truman and Eisenhower. In pursuing that policy, though, Kennedy tried some new approaches.

During the presidential campaign, Kennedy led Americans to believe that the nation had fewer nuclear missiles than the Soviet Union. As president, Kennedy increased spending on nuclear arms. At the same time, he tried to convince Nikita Khrushchev, the Soviet leader, to agree to a ban on nuclear testing.



## Strength Through Flexibility

Kennedy also worked to improve America’s ability to respond to threats abroad. In certain areas of the world, Communist groups fought to take control of their nation’s government. Many of these groups received aid from the Soviet Union. They employed **guerrilla warfare**, or fighting by small bands using tactics such as sudden ambushes.

The United States needed a new approach for fighting guerrilla wars. Kennedy introduced a plan called **flexible response**, which relied on special military units trained to fight guerrilla wars. One of these units was the Special Forces, known as the **Green Berets**. The Special Forces provided the president with troops ready to fight guerrilla warfare anywhere around the world.

## Strength Through Aid

President Kennedy understood that the poverty in Latin America, Asia, and Africa made the Communist promises of economic equality seem attractive. He decided to provide aid to countries in those areas to counteract the appeal of communism. On March 1, 1961, the president signed an **executive order** creating the **Peace Corps**. An executive order is a rule issued by the chief executive.

Americans who volunteered for the Peace Corps worked in other countries as teachers, health workers, and advisers in farming, industry, and government. By 1963 some 5,000 volunteers were working in more than 40 countries.

To promote Latin America’s growth, Kennedy proposed a 10-year development plan called the **Alliance for Progress**. In his Inaugural Address, Kennedy promised Latin American leaders that the United States would “assist free men and free governments in casting off the chains of poverty.” He hoped as well to prevent the rise of Communist states in the region.

**✓ Reading Check Explaining** Why did President Kennedy form the Peace Corps?

## Cold War Confrontations

In 1961, just a few months after taking office, President Kennedy faced a foreign policy crisis in Cuba. That same year, the United States and the Soviet Union clashed in Europe.

As you read in Chapter 28, **Fidel Castro** had seized power in Cuba in 1959. When Castro formed an alliance with the Soviet Union, Americans felt threatened because Cuba lies only 90 miles (144 km) south of Florida. Late in Eisenhower’s presidency, officials in the Central



**History Through Art**  
*The Peace Corps in Ethiopia, 1966* by Norman Rockwell  
Volunteers worked in many developing countries in Africa. **Which Kennedy program dealt with Latin America’s economy?**





Intelligence Agency (CIA) forged a plan to overthrow Castro. The CIA recruited refugees who had fled Castro's Cuba and settled in the United States. The plan called for these **exiles**, or persons forced from their homes, to land in Cuba, spark an uprising, and overthrow Castro. Although Kennedy had doubts about the plan, he accepted the advice of military advisers and the CIA and allowed it to go forward.

On April 17, 1961, about 1,500 CIA-trained Cuban exiles landed at the **Bay of Pigs** in southern Cuba. Many blunders occurred, and at a crucial moment, Kennedy refused to provide American air support. Within days Cuban forces crushed the invasion and captured the survivors.

The Bay of Pigs embarrassed Kennedy, who took the blame for the failure. The disaster had three consequences. First, Kennedy never again completely trusted military and intelligence advice. Second, other nations in Latin America lost trust in Kennedy. Third, Soviet premier Khrushchev concluded that Kennedy was not a strong leader and could be bullied.

## The Berlin Wall

Though 16 years had passed since the end of World War II, the wartime Allies had still not settled the status of Germany. West Germany gained complete independence in 1949, but the Soviet Union continued to control East Germany.

The location of **Berlin**—fully within Soviet-controlled East Germany—posed special problems. American, British, and French troops still remained in the western part of the city, and they sometimes had difficulty getting into West Berlin and maintaining control there. Meanwhile a steady flow of people fled to West Berlin from Communist East Berlin, hoping to escape economic hardship and find freedom.

At a June 1961 summit conference in Vienna, Austria, Premier Khrushchev told President Kennedy that the West must move out of Berlin, and he insisted on an agreement by the end of the year. Kennedy rejected Khrushchev's demand. To emphasize the West's right to stay in West Berlin, the United States later sent more troops to protect the city.

# People In History

Alan Shepard 1923–1998



Alan Shepard became a national hero on May 5, 1961, when he became the first American in space. His flight aboard the tiny *Freedom 7* spaceship lasted 15 minutes and reached an altitude of about 120 miles. Although the flight was brief, it was a key step forward for the United States in its space race with the Soviet Union.

After graduating from the United States Naval Academy in 1944, Shepard served during World War II. After the war, he attended the Naval Test Pilot School. In 1959 Shepard was named one of NASA's original seven astronauts.

Ten years after his flight aboard *Freedom 7*, Shepard commanded the *Apollo 14* moon mission,

during which he spent a record 33.5 hours on the surface of the moon.

In 1974 Shepard retired from both NASA and the Navy and entered private business. He served as the president of the Mercury Seven Foundation, which provides college science scholarships for deserving students.



Later that summer, a large number of East Germans fled to the West. On August 13, the East German government, with Soviet backing, closed the border between East and West Berlin and built a wall of concrete blocks and barbed wire along it. The Soviets posted armed guards along the wall to stop more East Germans from fleeing to the West. The **Berlin Wall** cut communications between the two parts of the city.

The Western Allies continued to support the independence of West Berlin. They could do little, however, to stop the building of the wall, which came to symbolize Communist repression.

**Reading Check Explaining** Why did the Soviet Union build the Berlin Wall?

## The Cuban Missile Crisis

The most dangerous Cold War dispute between the Americans and Soviets came in 1962. Once again the dispute involved Cuba.

In mid-October 1962, an American spy plane flying over Cuba made a disturbing discovery. Photographs revealed that the Soviets were building launching sites for nuclear missiles. These missiles could easily reach the United States in a matter of minutes.

For the next week, President Kennedy met secretly with advisers to determine how to deal with the **Cuban missile crisis**. They explored several options, including invading Cuba and bombing the missile sites. New spy photographs showed the bases nearing completion faster than expected. A decision had to be made.

On October 22, President Kennedy, speaking on national television, revealed the “secret, swift, and extraordinary buildup” of missiles in Cuba. Kennedy ordered the navy to **blockade**, or close off, Cuba until the Soviets removed the missiles. He threatened to destroy any Soviet ship that tried to break through the blockade. The president also declared:

“It shall be the policy of this nation to regard any nuclear missile launched from Cuba against any nation in the Western Hemisphere as an attack by the Soviet Union on the United States.”



### Geography Skills

This map shows the range of the Soviet missiles in Cuba. Their accuracy fell off as range increased.

- 1. Region** What parts of the United States could intermediate-range missiles reach?
- 2. Analyzing Information** What strategy did the United States use to respond to the Soviet threat in Cuba?

The United States would respond, he warned, with a nuclear attack against the Soviet Union.

As the two superpowers neared the brink of nuclear war, people all over the world waited nervously. However, Khrushchev was not ready to back down, and Soviet ships—some carrying missiles—continued to approach Cuba.

Two days after Kennedy’s announcement, a breakthrough occurred. Some Soviet ships nearing the blockade turned back.

However, some Soviet ships still headed toward Cuba, and work on the missile bases continued. The president’s advisers worked on plans for an air attack on the missile sites—just in case.

After five agonizing days, when the world appeared on the brink of nuclear war, the Soviet ships turned back from the blockade. Soviet leaders also decided to withdraw their missiles from Cuba.

Having come so close to nuclear disaster, the superpowers worked to establish a better relationship. In the summer of 1963, Kennedy and Khrushchev created a direct telephone link, called the **hot line**, between Moscow and Washington to allow the leaders to communicate instantly in times of crisis.

That same summer, the two nations signed a treaty banning nuclear tests aboveground and underwater.

### Rivalry in Space

The United States competed with the Soviet Union in another area during the Kennedy administration—outer space. The space race began when the Soviet Union launched *Sputnik*, the world’s first successful satellite, in 1957. In April 1961, Soviet cosmonaut **Yuri Gagarin** (guh•GAHR•uhn) became the first person to orbit the earth. One month later, **Alan Shepard, Jr.**, became the first American to make a spaceflight.

Shortly after Shepard’s flight, Kennedy challenged the nation to a great undertaking. In a speech to Congress, he said:



“I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth.”

The president asked Congress for more money for NASA (the National Aeronautics and Space Administration), which ran the space program. NASA expanded its launching facility in Florida and built a control center in Houston, Texas.

Astronaut **John Glenn** thrilled the country in February 1962 when he orbited the earth in a spacecraft, the first American to do so. An even greater triumph for the space program came on July 20, 1969, with the **Apollo project**. Awestruck television viewers around the world watched the spacecraft *Eagle* land on the surface of the moon. Hours later, with millions still watching, astronaut **Neil Armstrong** took the first human step on the moon and announced: “That’s one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind.” By the end of the Apollo project in 1972, 10 more Americans had landed on the moon.

**Reading Check Explaining** Why did President Kennedy order a blockade of the island of Cuba?

## SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT

### Checking for Understanding

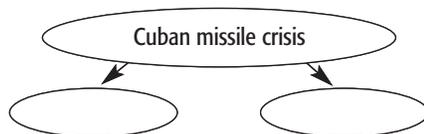
- Key Terms** Write a sentence in which you correctly use each of the following terms: **guerrilla warfare**, **flexible response**, **executive order**, **exile**, **blockade**, **hot line**. Below each sentence write the definition of the term used.
- Reviewing Facts** Who was the first American to orbit the earth in a spacecraft?

### Reviewing Themes

- Geography and History** Why did West Berlin’s location make it difficult for the allies to defend it?

### Critical Thinking

- Making Inferences** Why do you think Khrushchev sent missiles to Cuba?
- Analyzing Information** Re-create the diagram below and identify strategies that the Kennedy administration considered to stop the buildup of missiles in Cuba.



### Analyzing Visuals

- Geography Skills** Examine the map of the Cuban missile crisis on page 869. According to the map, was Washington, D.C., within the range of a medium ballistic missile? Could a medium-range missile reach Los Angeles?

### Interdisciplinary Activity

**Persuasive Writing** Write a speech that President Kennedy might have written to defend his actions during the Cuban missile crisis. Use complete sentences except where fragments are appropriate.

## SECTION 2

# War in Vietnam

### Guide to Reading

#### Main Idea

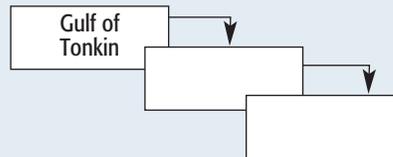
U.S. military involvement in Vietnam increased steadily throughout the 1960s.

#### Key Terms

**Vietcong, coup, escalate, search-and-destroy mission**

#### Reading Strategy

**Organizing Information** Re-create the diagram below and fill in the main events that occurred after the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution.



#### Read to Learn

- how Vietnam became a divided country.
- why America increased its involvement in the Vietnam War.

#### Section Theme

**Global Connections** Unable to end the Vietnam War quickly, the United States found itself increasingly drawn into the conflict.

#### Preview of Events

◆ 1950

1954

Geneva Accords divide Vietnam

1959

Civil war in Vietnam begins

◆ 1960

1964

Gulf of Tonkin Resolution passed

◆ 1970

1968

More than 500,000 U.S. troops are in Vietnam



*Soldier's boots, Vietnam War*

## AN American Story

In March 1967 David Parks, an African American soldier serving in Vietnam, described an enemy attack on his camp: "I was asleep when the first shell exploded. The earth shook and I rolled to the ground as someone hollered, 'Incoming!' . . . I shook like jelly as the shrapnel burst all around our bunker. . . . All we could do was open up with our 50-caliber and small arms. . . . I'm not sure the native people are with us. They smile at us in the daytime and their sons shoot at us at night. It's hard to spot the real enemy."

### The U.S. and Vietnam

In the early 1960s, the United States became involved in a fight against communism in Southeast Asia. The war in **Vietnam** did not unfold as Americans had hoped, however. General Maxwell Taylor, who served as American ambassador to Vietnam, reflected on the war in Vietnam years after it had ended:

“First, we didn’t know ourselves. We thought we were going into another Korean war, but this was a different country. Secondly, we didn’t know our South Vietnamese allies. We never understood them, and that was another surprise. And we knew even less about North Vietnam.”

## Origins of the War

The roots of the Vietnam conflict can be traced back to World War II, when Japanese forces captured the French colony of Indochina in Southeast Asia. Vietnamese forces led by Communist **Ho Chi Minh** (hoh chee MIHN) fought against the Japanese.

When Japan surrendered at the end of World War II, Ho Chi Minh declared Vietnam's independence. The French, however, were unwilling to give up their empire. Their Indochina colony—the present-day nations of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam—was among the richest of France's colonies, supplying such valuable resources as rice, rubber, and tin. Ho Chi Minh and his forces fought the French in a long, bloody war, finally defeating the French in 1954 at Dien Bien Phu.

## The Geneva Accords

That same year, diplomats from the United States, France, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, China, and Vietnam met in Geneva, Switzerland, to work out a peace agreement. According to the **Geneva Accords**, Vietnam would be divided temporarily. Ho Chi Minh's Communist nationalists would control the North.

**Hanoi** served as its capital. Non-Communist forces—supported by the United States—would control the South, with **Saigon** as the capital. Vietnam would be unified in 1956 after national elections.

Neither the United States nor South Vietnam had signed the agreement, but they did not oppose its provisions. At the same time, an American representative warned that the United States reserved the right to step in if Communist North Vietnam moved aggressively against the South.

In 1955 **Ngo Dinh Diem** (NOH DIHN deh •EHM), the French-educated Vietnamese leader, gained control of the government of South Vietnam. The following year, Diem, with American support, refused to hold the elections. Diem's brutal policies and his refusal to hold elections angered many Vietnamese.

Communist supporters of Ho Chi Minh remained in the South after Vietnam was divided. In the late 1950s, Diem launched a campaign to destroy the power of the Communists. In response, the Communists organized themselves as the **National Liberation Front** (NLF)—better known to Americans as the **Vietcong**. In 1959 the Vietcong, on orders from Ho Chi Minh, began a war against the Diem regime.



*Ho Chi Minh*



### Picturing History

Buddhist monks often led protests against unpopular South Vietnamese governments and their leaders. **Why did Vietnam's Buddhists protest against the Diem government?**



*“The helicopter added a new dimension to warfare—mobility. The helicopter took soldiers into battle, supplied them, and evacuated the wounded and the dead.”*



### **Picturing History**

American soldiers leap from a helicopter during a mission in South Vietnam. **When did President Johnson begin to increase American involvement in Vietnam?**

## **A Growing American Role**

The United States had replaced the French as the dominant foreign power in the South in 1955. If Communists took South Vietnam, President Eisenhower once said, the other countries of Southeast Asia would fall to communism like a row of dominoes—one right after the other. This **domino theory** helped shape American policy in Vietnam for the next 20 years.

To support South Vietnam, the Eisenhower administration sent the country billions of dollars in aid. It also dispatched a few hundred soldiers, who acted as advisers to the South Vietnamese government and army.

Like Eisenhower, President Kennedy saw Vietnam as part of the global struggle in the fight against communism. Kennedy sent more Special Forces troops—the Green Berets—to train and advise South Vietnamese troops. Kennedy also pressured Diem to make political and economic reforms to eliminate the conditions that had allowed communism to take root in the first place. But Diem refused to comply.

Instead of paying for new schools, health clinics, or land reform, American funds often ended up in the pockets of corrupt South Vietnamese officials. At the same time, North Vietnam sent aid and troops to the South to help the Vietcong in a guerrilla war against Diem that began in 1959.

The Diem government lost support throughout the country. His government took rights away from **Buddhists**—the majority of the people in South Vietnam—and favored Catholics, like himself. Buddhists responded with protests, some of which ended in bloodshed when government troops fired into the crowds.

In early 1963 Buddhist monks showed their opposition to Diem’s rule by setting themselves on fire on busy streets. Horrifying photographs of monks engulfed in flames appeared in newspapers and on television screens around the world. The Kennedy administration found it difficult to continue to support Diem.

On November 1, 1963, a group of South Vietnamese army officers staged a **coup**—overthrew the government—and assassinated Diem. The



*More than 7,500 American nurses served during the Vietnam conflict.*

Kennedy administration had supported the coup, but not the assassination. After President Kennedy was assassinated later that same month, the question of what to do in Vietnam fell on the shoulders of President **Lyndon B. Johnson**.

 **Reading Check Analyzing** How did the domino theory affect the decision regarding the conflict in Vietnam?

## The Conflict Deepens

At the time of Kennedy's death, the United States had nearly 16,000 American troops in Vietnam as advisers. President Johnson sent Secretary of Defense **Robert McNamara** to Vietnam on a fact-finding mission.

McNamara told the president that South Vietnam could not resist the Vietcong rebels without more help from the United States. In a May 1964 conversation, taped but not made public until 1997, Johnson himself expressed doubts about American commitment. "I don't think it's worth fighting for," he said, "but I don't think we can get out." Nevertheless, as Vietcong attacks continued, the United States moved toward deeper involvement.

President Johnson wanted congressional support for expanding the American role in Vietnam. The opportunity to get that support came in August 1964, when North Vietnamese patrol boats allegedly attacked American destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin near North Vietnam. Congress quickly passed a resolution that allowed the president to "take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States." The **Gulf of Tonkin Resolution** gave Johnson broad authority to use American forces in Vietnam.

In 1965 Johnson began to **escalate**—gradually increase—United States involvement in Vietnam. The buildup included both ground troops and an air campaign.

United States Marines landed near **Da Nang**, South Vietnam, on March 8, 1965. During the next three years, the number of American troops in Vietnam increased sharply. About 180,000 soldiers were in Vietnam by the end of 1965, almost 400,000 by the end of 1966, and more than 500,000 by 1968.

The United States also unleashed an intense bombing campaign called Operation Rolling Thunder. Some planes attacked the **Ho Chi Minh Trail**, a network of roads, paths, and bridges that wound from North Vietnam through Cambodia and Laos into South Vietnam. North Vietnamese troops used this route to bring equipment south. Other planes targeted bridges, docks, factories, and military bases in the North.

The bombing increased in intensity from 1965 through 1968. By then American planes had dropped more bombs on North Vietnam than they had dropped on Germany, Italy, and Japan during World War II.

## Fighting the War

The American troops found fighting a ground war in Vietnam difficult. Dense jungles, muddy trails, and swampy rice paddies hampered troop



movement. The South Vietnamese army did not always fight effectively. As the Vietcong guerrillas blended with the population, American soldiers found it hard to tell friends and enemies apart.

The American forces began to conduct **search-and-destroy missions**. The goal was to seek out Vietcong or North Vietnamese units and destroy them. The Americans hoped to eventually defeat the Communists or force them to negotiate.

Ground troops coordinated their moves with air support. Patrols on the ground radioed their location, and helicopter gunships roared to the scene to blast the enemy with cannon and machine-gun fire.

Planes bombed areas of South Vietnam in an effort to drive guerrillas from their jungle cover. Both sides used planes to drop **napalm**, an explosive that burned intensely, to destroy jungle growth. North Vietnamese and Vietcong

forces also used napalm in flamethrowers, devices that expel fuel or a burning stream of liquids. To improve visibility, chemical herbicides were sprayed in Vietnam to clear out forests and tall grasses. One herbicide, **Agent Orange**, is believed to have contaminated many Americans and Vietnamese, causing serious health problems.

### Frustration Grows

The bombing of the Ho Chi Minh Trail and the North did not stop the constant flow of troops and equipment south. Neither did it break the morale of the North Vietnamese. As one of their leaders later said,

“The Americans thought that the more bombs they dropped, the quicker we would fall to our knees and surrender. But the bombs heightened, rather than dampened, our spirit.”

#### **Picturing History**

A wounded American soldier reaches for a fallen comrade. **How many American troops were in Vietnam by late 1967?**



*Military I.D. tags, commonly called dog tags, included the wearer's name, branch of service, blood type, and religion, if desired by the wearer.*



The search-and-destroy missions killed thousands of North Vietnamese and Vietcong troops—but the troops always seemed to be replaced. What Ho Chi Minh had said to the French became true again:

“You can kill ten of my men for every one I kill of yours. But even at those odds, you will lose and I will win.”

American troops advanced into rice paddies, jungles, and small villages and killed scores of Vietcong. Yet the next day, the same area had to be attacked again.

American soldiers grew frustrated. Philip Caputo, a young marine lieutenant, recalled the changing attitude:

“When we marched into the rice paddies on that damp March afternoon, we carried, along with our packs and rifles, the implicit convictions that the Vietcong could be quickly beaten. We kept the packs and rifles; the convictions, we lost.”

### Debate in the White House

Officials in the Johnson administration saw the mounting Communist losses and believed at first that the United States could succeed. As the war dragged on, however, some government officials saw a gloomier situation. Secretary of Defense McNamara began to argue that the ground war and the air attacks had failed and that the war could not be won. Outside the nation's capital, opposition to the war grew. Soon it swelled to anger.

**✓ Reading Check Identifying** What is Agent Orange? What are its effects?

## SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

### Checking for Understanding

- 1. Key Terms** Use the following terms in sentences or short paragraphs: **Vietcong, coup, escalate**. Relate them by using two or more of the terms in each sentence or paragraph.
- 2. Reviewing Facts** How many American troops were in Vietnam by the end of 1965?

### Reviewing Themes

- 3. Global Connections** How did President Johnson gain congressional approval to use American forces in Vietnam?

### Critical Thinking

- 4. Making Inferences** Explain how Americans' view of communism influenced policy to support South Vietnam.
- 5. Organizing Information** Re-create the diagram below and explain the purpose of the military strategies.

Strategy	Purpose
Search-and-destroy missions	
Operation Rolling Thunder	

### Analyzing Visuals

- 6. Picturing History** Examine the photograph on page 875. Write a caption expressing what you think the soldier is saying to his fallen comrade.

### Interdisciplinary Activity

**Research and Sequencing** Use books, magazines, and newspapers to learn about the plight of American POWs (prisoners of war) and MIAs (soldiers missing in action) in Vietnam. Make a time line to show what the government and private citizens have done on their behalf.

# SECTION 3

# The Vietnam Years at Home

## Guide to Reading

### Main Idea

Many Americans opposed the nation's involvement in Vietnam. Many others believed that U.S. leaders were not doing enough to win the war.

### Key Terms

counterculture, deferment, dove, hawk, credibility gap, silent majority

### Reading Strategy

**Organizing Information** As you read the section, re-create the diagram below and state how you think people known as doves and hawks differed on these issues.

	The Draft	Escalation
Doves		
Hawks		

### Read to Learn

- what factors contributed to the rise of the protest movement.
- how Americans at home responded to the war in Vietnam.

### Section Theme

**Continuity and Change** As the war continued, disagreement over the nation's role in Vietnam grew.

### Preview of Events

◆ 1967

**October 1967**

War protesters march on Pentagon

◆ 1968

**April 1968**

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., is assassinated

**June 1968**

Robert F. Kennedy is assassinated

◆ 1969

**November 1968**

Richard Nixon wins presidency



*Demonstration at the Pentagon*

## AN American Story

As the Vietnam War dragged on, Americans became divided over the U.S. presence in that country. Even reporters showed their biases when they covered the antiwar demonstrations at the Pentagon in 1967. On one hand, older reporters, who stood behind the police, wrote about radicals storming the Pentagon. On the other side of the police barricade, younger reporters wrote about the brutality of the U.S. Marshals. Each side of the generation gap firmly believed that its version of the story was correct.

### The Youth Protest

While fighting raged in Vietnam, the American people disagreed sharply over the war. Prowar and antiwar groups attacked each other with mounting anger. Antiwar demonstrators called President Johnson and his supporters "killers." Supporters of the war referred to the protesters as "traitors." The war seemed to split America—and much of the division resulted from what people called the **generation gap**.



As United States involvement in the war increased, so did opposition to it. Some Americans felt that the conflict in Vietnam was a civil war and should not involve the United States. Others were concerned that the cost of America's commitment to Vietnam was hurting domestic programs. All condemned the devastation of the countryside and lives lost during the course of the war.

Many who opposed the war were part of the **counterculture**, a movement that rejected traditional American values. Some common symbols of the counterculture—torn blue jeans and long hair for males—aroused opposition from parents. Popular music played a role in communicating the ideas of the counterculture.

Other parts of the counterculture represented a more serious challenge to traditional middle-class values. Some young people refused to follow customary social roles of study, work, and family. They aimed to reject aspects of American society—the competition for material goods and personal success.

### Opposition to the Draft

Student protests targeted the selective service system—the **draft** that supplied soldiers for the war. The law required all men to register for the draft when they reached age 18. Opposition to the draft had two sources.

Those strongly opposed to American involvement in Vietnam believed that by forcing an end to the draft they could halt the supply of soldiers needed to fight there. Others called the draft unfair. Draft boards had the power to give



*Texas business executive H. Ross Perot attempted to deliver food, medicine, mail, and clothing to U.S. prisoners of war in Vietnam.*

people **deferments** that excused them from the draft for various reasons. Full-time students attending college—mostly from the middle class—received such deferments. As a result an increasing percentage of soldiers came from poor or working-class families. Many who opposed the draft argued that deferments discriminated against the poor.

Some protesters became **conscientious objectors**, claiming that their moral or religious beliefs prevented them from fighting in the war. Other protesters showed their opposition by burning their draft cards—their military registration forms. Congress responded with a law making the burning of draft cards a crime.

### Doves and Hawks

Students and other opponents of the Vietnam War came to be called **doves**. Supporters of the war became known as **hawks**.

Across the nation more and more Americans came to view the war unfavorably. Some thought the United States should not be fighting in Vietnam. Others opposed the way the government conducted the war. Both hawks and doves criticized President Johnson for his handling of the war in Vietnam, and his approval rating declined dramatically.

### The War Loses Support

As opposition to the war mounted, the opponents staged larger demonstrations. In October 1967, more than 50,000 people marched to the **Pentagon**—headquarters of the Defense Department—to protest the war.

Attacks by opponents of the war grew sharper and more bitter. The Secret Service, charged with guarding President Johnson, feared for his safety and urged him not to speak in public. He began to appear only before crowds known to be sympathetic.

The president had often urged people to come together to discuss issues calmly. “Let us reason together,” he had said. By 1968 Americans showed less willingness to talk reasonably, and violent events often overtook discussion.

 **Reading Check** **Explaining** What are draft deferments? Who received them?



*Reacting against the antiwar demonstrations, many Americans countered with demonstrations in support of American troops.*

## 1968—Year of Crisis

The year 1968 opened with a shock for the American people. On January 23, North Korean boats seized the **USS *Pueblo***, a navy spy ship cruising in international waters off the coast of Korea. The news that a foreign country had captured an American ship and its crew shocked the nation.

The next week brought another staggering blow as North Vietnam launched a major series of attacks in South Vietnam. As Americans soon learned, 1968 would be a long, dramatic, and very difficult year.

### The Tet Offensive

On January 31, 1968, the North Vietnamese and Vietcong launched a series of attacks throughout South Vietnam. The attacks, which began on the Vietnamese new year—Tet—became known as the **Tet offensive**. Tet marked a turning point in the Vietnam War.

The Tet offensive targeted American military bases and South Vietnam's major cities. Vietcong troops raided the United States embassy in **Saigon**, the capital. The Vietcong also struck in **Hue**, the ancient capital of Vietnam, and fought for almost a month.

All across South Vietnam, Americans and South Vietnamese troops fought bravely to retake the cities. They finally drove the Vietcong back and inflicted thousands of casualties. The enormous losses that the Vietcong suffered

forced North Vietnam to take over a larger share of the fighting. In military terms, the Americans and the South Vietnamese won the battle.

### Impact Back Home

In the United States, however, the Tet offensive turned many more Americans against the war—and against President Johnson. The sight of Vietcong guerrillas killing Americans in the embassy shocked television viewers. The many days needed to defeat the assault on Hue undermined the army's statements about the United States winning the war.

Major newspapers and magazines openly criticized the Johnson administration's conduct of the war. The *Wall Street Journal* wrote, "The American people should be getting ready to accept . . . the prospect that the whole Vietnam effort may be doomed."

Most Americans seemed to agree. Fewer people believed that the army was making progress in the war. More people believed that the army was losing ground. The Johnson administration developed a **credibility gap**—fewer people trusted its statements about the war.

As opposition to the war grew, President Johnson faced challenges in his own party. In late 1967, Democratic senator **Eugene McCarthy** of Minnesota had announced that he would run for the party's nomination for the presidency as a protest against the war. Not well known, McCarthy seemed to have little chance of winning. In the March 12 primary in New Hampshire, however,

# TWO VIEWPOINTS

## Should We Be Fighting the Vietnam War?

As the war in Vietnam dragged on, political support for it began to evaporate. While government politicians coaxed Americans to support goals of liberty and democracy, antiwar protesters counted the corpses sent home and argued that the war was useless.

### President Johnson addresses the nation, March 31, 1968

Tonight I renew the offer I made in August—to stop the bombardment of North Vietnam. We ask that talks begin promptly, that they be serious talks on the substance of peace. . . .

There is division in the American house now. There is divisiveness among us all tonight. And holding the trust that is mine, as President of all the people, I cannot disregard the peril to the progress of the American people and the hope and the prospect of peace for all peoples. . . .

Accordingly, I shall not seek, and I will not accept, the nomination of my party for another term as your President.

But let men everywhere know, however, that a strong, a confident, and a vigilant America stands ready tonight to seek an honorable peace—and stands ready tonight to defend an honored cause—whatever the price, whatever the burden, whatever the sacrifices that duty may require. . . .

### Walter Cronkite, news broadcaster, after the Tet offensive, February 27, 1968

We have too often been disappointed by the optimism of the American leaders, both in Vietnam and Washington, to have faith any longer in the silver linings they find in the darkest clouds. . . . To say that we are closer to victory today is to believe, in the face of evidence, the optimists who have been wrong in the past. To suggest we are on the edge of defeat is to yield to unreasonable pessimism. To say that we are mired in stalemate seems the only realistic, yet unsatisfactory conclusion. . . . [I]t is increasingly clear to this reporter that the only rational way out then will be to negotiate, not as victors, but as an honorable people who lived up to their pledge to defend democracy, and did the best they could.



Walter Cronkite

### Learning From History

1. What does Johnson mean by “division in the American house”?
2. Why might Americans like Walter Cronkite be frustrated with the war?
3. Do the president’s words seem realistic? How might Cronkite respond to the president’s address?

McCarthy surprised everyone by taking 42 percent of the popular vote. Although Johnson won the primary, McCarthy’s strong showing indicated widespread opposition to the war.

Later, another antiwar candidate entered the race. **Robert F. Kennedy**, attorney general during his brother’s presidency and now a senator from New York, announced that he, too, would seek the Democratic nomination.

### The President Responds

Events in Vietnam and the growing antiwar movement disturbed President Johnson. Following the Tet offensive, the American commander in Vietnam, General **William Westmoreland**, had requested still more troops. Instead of agreeing, the president ordered a reevaluation of the war. He also reevaluated his own campaign for reelection in 1968.

On March 31, 1968, after consulting advisers, President Johnson appeared on television to announce a “new step toward peace”—he would halt the bombing of North Vietnam’s cities. He asked North Vietnam for a comparable action so that peace negotiations could begin.

The president concluded his speech with a startling announcement. He said, “I shall not seek, and I will not accept, the nomination of my party for another term as your president.”

**Reading Check Identifying** What candidates from President Johnson’s own party challenged him?

### Violence Erupts

A few days after Johnson’s withdrawal from the presidential race, tragedy struck the nation. A sniper in Memphis, Tennessee, shot and killed



### **Picturing History**

After Robert Kennedy's death in June 1968, a divided Democratic convention met in Chicago. Chicago mayor Richard Daley had barbed wire set up at the convention hall to keep out antiwar protesters. **How did most Americans react to the violence in Chicago?**



**Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**, the leading activist in the civil rights movement.

The King assassination triggered a rash of riots across the country. Army troops were called on to control unruly crowds in various cities. Already saddened by King's death, Americans worried about the renewed urban violence.

While the nation agonized over unrest at home and war abroad, the presidential race picked up speed. Vice President **Hubert H. Humphrey** joined Eugene McCarthy and Robert Kennedy in seeking the Democratic nomination. Kennedy edged out McCarthy in a number of primary elections, but McCarthy rebounded and scored a primary victory in Oregon. Humphrey, meanwhile, avoided the primaries. He gathered support among Democratic Party leaders, who in some states chose the delegates.

In early June 1968, Kennedy and McCarthy faced each other in the primary election in California, the state with the most delegates. That night, after Kennedy won, an assassin shot and killed him—and the nation reeled with the shock of yet another assassination.

### **The Democratic Convention**

By the time the Democrats held their convention in **Chicago**, Humphrey appeared to have enough votes to win the nomination. As a long-time supporter of civil rights and labor causes, Humphrey had considerable backing in his party. As a supporter of Johnson's Vietnam policy, however, Humphrey was linked to the prowar faction of the party.

Antiwar Democrats felt angry and excluded from the convention. Tension filled the air. When trouble broke out, though, it did not occur as much in the convention hall as in the city's streets.

Frustrated by the almost certain victory of Humphrey, thousands of antiwar activists flocked to Chicago to protest. Chicago's mayor, **Richard J. Daley**, feared violence from the demonstrators and had the police out in force. The police made some arrests the first two nights, but no major problems developed.

On the third day, the antiwar protesters planned to march to the convention site to protest Humphrey's nomination. Police blocked the marchers at the hall. When the marchers headed in another direction, the police stopped them again. The protesters began to pelt the police with sticks and bottles. The police threw tear gas and charged in, wielding nightsticks. They pursued those who fled, beating some and arresting many.

Humphrey won the Democratic nomination, but the violence outside and the anger within the hall—all shown on television—had damaged his candidacy. The Democrats appeared unable to control their own convention. Humphrey admitted, "Chicago was a catastrophe."

**✓ Reading Check Identifying** What two popular leaders were assassinated in 1968?



## Election of 1968

A majority of Americans disapproved of the police action in Chicago, but at the same time, strongly opposed the actions of the protesters. The years of protest and dissent had taken their toll and a backlash had set in. Most Americans fervently wished for a return to “law and order.”

### The Wallace Candidacy

One presidential candidate who used the “law and order” theme was Governor **George C. Wallace** of Alabama. Running as a third-party candidate, Wallace promised to crack down on “long-hair . . . draft card-burning youth.” In addition, he criticized efforts to integrate schools by busing students and ridiculed “pointy-headed” bureaucrats in Washington for telling people how to run their lives.

Wallace’s tough stand on law and order and his appeal to racial fears attracted many voters. Some political reporters predicted Wallace could win as much as 20 percent of the vote.

### The “Silent Majority”

The Republican presidential nominee, former vice president **Richard M. Nixon**, also tried to tap into voters’ growing conservative sentiment. Nixon pledged to represent the “quiet voice” of the “great majority of Americans, the non-shouters, the nondemonstrators.” He called

these people the “**silent majority.**” Declaring that the “first civil right of every American is to be free from domestic violence,” Nixon promised a return to law and order.

Nixon remained vague on his views of Vietnam. He promised that he would achieve “peace with honor,” but he would not provide details of his plan.

During the election campaign, Nixon sought to win some of the traditionally Democratic Southern states with the law-and-order issue. This “Southern strategy” paid off. Although Wallace did take five Southern states and 46 electoral votes, Nixon won seven Southern states and their 78 electoral votes.

### Nixon Wins

The popular vote was close. Nixon edged out Humphrey by about 500,000 votes—a difference of less than 1 percent. In the electoral vote, however, Nixon won a solid majority—301 votes to Humphrey’s 191.

Nixon entered the presidency with the votes of only 43.4 percent of the people. Nixon and Wallace together, however, had won almost 57 percent of the vote. It seemed that a substantial majority of Americans wanted the government to restore order.

 **Reading Check Identifying** What presidential candidate provided a strong third-party challenge in 1968?

## SECTION 3 ASSESSMENT

### Checking for Understanding

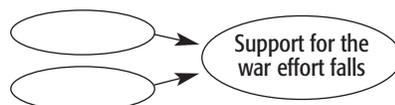
- Key Terms** Define **counterculture**, **deferment**, **dove**, **hawk**, **credibility gap**, **silent majority**.
- Reviewing Facts** What did conscientious objectors declare?

### Analyzing Themes

- Continuity and Change** What was the result of the 1968 presidential election?

### Critical Thinking

- Making Inferences** How do you think the credibility gap affected Johnson’s ability to be an effective president?
- Determining Cause and Effect** Re-create the diagram below and explain why support for war in Vietnam eroded.



### Analyzing Visuals

- Picturing History** Look at the photographs on page 879. Write a paragraph to describe what is happening.

### Interdisciplinary Activity

**Research** Interview friends and relatives who lived during the Vietnam War era to see how people in your community reacted to the conflict. Present an oral report of your findings.



# Technology SKILLBUILDER

## Building a Database

### Why Learn This Skill?

Have you ever collected baseball cards or cataloged the CDs in your collection? Have you ever kept a list of the names and addresses of your friends and relatives? If you have collected information and kept some sort of list or file, then you have created a database.

### Learning the Skill

An electronic database is a collection of facts that are stored in files on the computer. The information is organized in fields.

A database can be organized and reorganized in any way that is useful to you. By using a database management system (DBMS)—special software developed for record keeping—you can easily add, delete, change, or update information. You give commands to the computer telling it what to do with the information, and it follows your commands. When you want to retrieve information, the computer searches through the files, finds the information, and displays it on the screen.

### Practicing the Skill

*Richard M. Nixon is one of the presidents discussed in this chapter. Follow these steps to build a database of the political and cultural events that took place during his presidency.*

- 1 Determine what facts you want to include in your database.
- 2 Follow instructions in the DBMS you are using to set up fields. Then enter each item of data into its assigned field.



*Nixon greets well-wishers at a campaign rally.*

- 3 Determine how you want to organize the facts in the database—chronologically by the date of the event, or alphabetically by the name of the event.
- 4 Follow the instructions in your computer program to place the information in order of importance.
- 5 Check that the information in your database is all correct. If necessary, add, delete, or change information or fields.

### Applying the Skill

**Building a Database** Bring current newspapers to class. Using the steps just described, build a database of political figures mentioned in the newspapers. Explain to a partner why the database is organized the way it is and how it might be used in this class.

# SECTION 4 Nixon and Vietnam

## Guide to Reading

### Main Idea

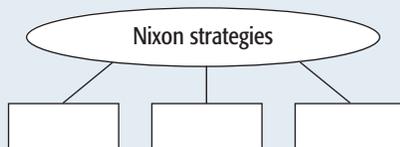
President Nixon put a plan in place to train and equip South Vietnamese soldiers to take the place of American troops.

### Key Terms

Vietnamization, martial law, MIAs

### Reading Strategy

**Organizing Information** As you read the section, re-create the diagram below and identify three strategies Nixon used to end the war.



### Read to Learn

- what steps Nixon took to end the war in Vietnam.
- what the costs of the Vietnam War were.

### Section Theme

**Continuity and Change** President Nixon changed the strategy of the conflict that included intense bombing and Vietnamization.

### Preview of Events

◆ 1968

**June 1969**

Nixon begins to withdraw troops from Vietnam

◆ 1970

**April 1970**

Nixon sends troops to Cambodia

◆ 1972

**May 1970**

Six students killed at Kent State and Jackson State

◆ 1974

**January 1973**

Paris peace accords end U.S. involvement in Vietnam



*Nixon inaugural button*

## AN American Story

President Nixon's inauguration in January 1969 took place on a cold, gloomy day. Hundreds of demonstrators chanting antiwar slogans and holding anti-Nixon posters stood along Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. At one point Nixon's limousine was pelted with sticks, stones, and bottles. Offended by this behavior, World War II veterans shouted at the demonstrators, labeling the protesters "communists" and "traitors." This marked the first time an inaugural parade was disrupted in the 180 years of the presidency.

### A New Strategy

In his Inaugural Address in January 1969, **Richard M. Nixon** appealed to the American people for calm:

“We cannot learn from one another until we stop shouting at one another—until we speak quietly enough so that our words can be heard as well as our voices.”



Nixon had campaigned on a pledge of “peace with honor” in Vietnam. He wanted to pull American forces out of Vietnam, but he did not want American withdrawal to be seen as a sign of defeat. Nixon’s strategy of peace with honor had three parts—reform of the selective service system, giving South Vietnam more responsibility in fighting the war, and expanding the bombing campaign.

Under President Nixon the selective service system changed. College students could no longer obtain draft deferments, only 19-year-olds could be called for service in Vietnam, and draftees would be chosen by lottery on the basis of their birthday. Protests against the draft faded with these reforms because the government began calling up fewer young men and because President Nixon promised to eliminate the selective service in the future.

President Nixon started withdrawing American troops from Vietnam in June 1969. He did not, however, want to abandon South Vietnam to the Communists. By the end of the year, Nixon had developed his plan of Vietnamization and announced it to the American people. **Vietnamization** called for the army of South Vietnam to take a more active role in fighting the war—and for Americans to become less involved. While stepping up the training of South Vietnamese soldiers, American ground troops would gradually withdraw from the country.

When Nixon took office in January 1969, more than 540,000 American troops were in Vietnam. By the end of 1970, the number had fallen to 334,000 and by 1971 to about 60,000.

In the third part of his Vietnam policy, Nixon expanded the bombing campaign. Hoping to relieve pressure on troops in South Vietnam, the president ordered the bombing of enemy supply routes and hideouts in neighboring Cambodia and Laos. Although the Nixon administration sought publicity for changes to the draft and the

withdrawal of troops, it kept the bombing of Cambodia secret.

**Reading Check Explaining** Why did the U.S. expand its bombing campaign?

## Renewed Opposition at Home

A new round of antiwar demonstrations began in late 1969, reflecting the growing sentiment for ending the war. In October more than 300,000 people took part in an antiwar protest in Washington, D.C.

The government also tried to end the war through peace talks with North Vietnam. **Henry Kissinger**, the president’s national security adviser, represented the United States in the Paris talks. The United States had launched the bombing campaign to persuade the North Vietnamese to agree to settlement terms, but the North Vietnamese adopted a wait-and-see attitude. They believed that the strength of the antiwar movement in the United States would force the Americans to withdraw.

The new antiwar protests and North Vietnam’s unyielding attitude alarmed President Nixon. In his speech on Vietnamization in November, he appealed to the “silent majority” of Americans for support for his policy. “North Vietnam cannot defeat or humiliate the United States,” he said. “Only Americans can do that.”



*American soldiers on patrol*

### Expanding the War

Further conflict gripped Southeast Asia when Cambodia plunged into a civil war between Communist and non-Communist forces. Nixon decided in April 1970 to send American troops to destroy Communist bases in Cambodia.

The attack aroused outrage in Congress and elsewhere. By sending American troops to Cambodia, critics charged, Nixon invaded a neutral country and overstepped his constitutional authority as president.



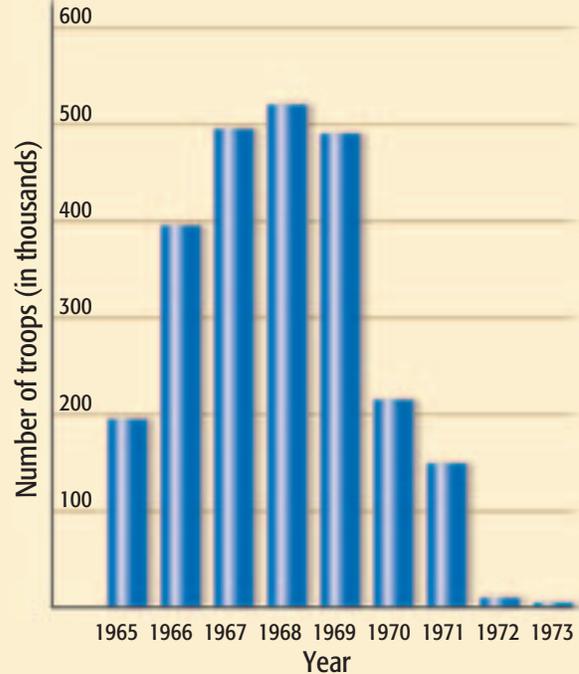
**Geography Skills**

Throughout the war United States troops and the government of South Vietnam controlled the major cities.

- 1. Location** Along what line of latitude did the demilitarized zone run?
- 2. Analyzing Information** Through which countries did the Ho Chi Minh Trail run?

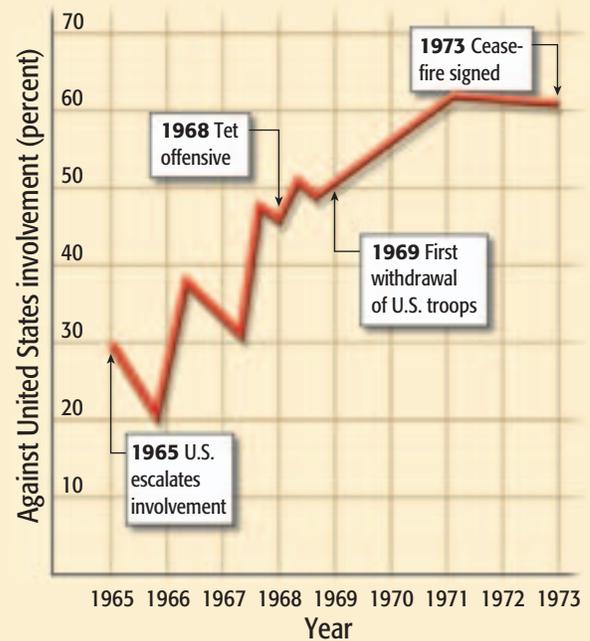
**United States in the Vietnam War**

**United States Troops in Vietnam, 1965—1973**



Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States.

**Opposition to the War**



Source: The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion.



### **Picturing History**

A stunned woman kneels beside the body of a student killed at Kent State. **What event sparked the student unrest at Kent State?**



## **Kent State**

The Cambodian invasion provoked a storm of antiwar protests on campuses across the nation. Most proceeded peacefully. However, two protests ended in tragedy.

At a protest at Kent State University in **Kent, Ohio**, students burned a military building on campus. Ohio's governor declared **martial law**—emergency military rule—on the campus and ordered 3,000 National Guard troops to Kent.

On May 4 armed troops arrived on campus. Eighteen-year-old Leone Keegan, a freshman, remembered going to class that morning:

“I saw all these young men in uniforms standing on the street corners with their rifles, and I was thinking, What is this?”

At noon students gathered for a protest rally on the campus lawn. The National Guard members—young, inexperienced, and nervous—told the protesting students to leave. “Evacuate the area. You have no right to assemble,” they shouted through bullhorns. The students shouted back, “We don’t want your war.” Some students threw stones.

The troops shot tear gas toward the students; many students ran. One National Guard unit chased some students between two buildings.

Then—for reasons that are unclear—the troops opened fire. “. . . [T]hey’re killing us,” screamed one student in disbelief. Four students were dead and at least nine more were wounded.

## **Jackson State**

Violence flared again on May 15 at the nearly all-African American college of **Jackson State** in Mississippi. Following a night of campus violence, two students were shot and killed. Witnesses charged that the police had recklessly blasted the residence hall with shotguns. The police claimed they were protecting themselves from sniper fire.

A wave of student strikes followed the tragedies at Kent State and Jackson State. Hundreds of colleges and universities suspended classes or closed down completely.

The president took a hard line. The Kent State shootings, he said, “should remind us once again that when dissent turns to violence it invites tragedy.” A commission that investigated events at Kent State found that the shootings were unjustified. A majority of Americans, however, seemed to agree with the president.

**✓ Reading Check Identifying** Who represented the United States in the Paris talks?



### **Picturing History**

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., designed by Maya Lin, carries the names of more than 58,000 Americans who died in Vietnam. **Why do you think this memorial has such an impact on those who see it?**

## **“Peace Is at Hand”**

Meanwhile, the Nixon administration continued to negotiate with representatives of the North Vietnamese government. These talks stalled, however.

In March 1972, the North Vietnamese launched another major offensive in the South. Because the United States had few troops left in Vietnam, Nixon resumed bombing. Nixon ordered American planes to bomb targets near **Hanoi**, the capital of North Vietnam. He also ordered the navy to plant mines in North Vietnamese harbors.

The president stopped insisting that North Vietnam remove all its troops from South Vietnam before a full American withdrawal. Nixon sent Henry Kissinger to negotiate. In the fall of 1972—just before the presidential election in the United States—they reached a tentative agreement. “Peace is at hand,” Kissinger announced.

His statement came too soon. The agreement collapsed because the South Vietnamese president objected to allowing North Vietnamese forces to remain in South Vietnam.

## **Paris Peace Accords**

After his reelection, Nixon unleashed American airpower against North Vietnam. In December 1972, the heaviest bombardment of the war fell on North Vietnam’s cities, provoking outrage in the United States and abroad.

Nixon stood firm, and North Vietnam returned to the peace talks. The Americans pressured the South Vietnamese to accept the peace terms. On January 27, 1973, the negotiators signed the peace agreement.

The United States agreed to pull its remaining troops out of the country. The North Vietnamese agreed to return all American prisoners of war. While the Paris peace accords ended American involvement in Vietnam, they did not end the conflict.

## **The War Ends**

The North Vietnamese never abandoned their goal of unifying Vietnam under their control. In early 1975 they launched a final major offensive. The weakened South Vietnamese army collapsed suddenly on all fronts. Within a few weeks, North Vietnamese tanks reached the outskirts of Saigon.



CLICK HERE

**HISTORY**  
*Online*

**Student Web Activity**  
Visit [taj.glencoe.com](http://taj.glencoe.com) and click on **Chapter 30—Student Web Activities** for an activity on the Vietnam War.

As North Vietnamese forces closed in on Saigon, the last Americans scrambled to escape the country, some by helicopter from the roof of the American embassy. Thousands of Vietnamese citizens who had supported or worked for the Americans also fled to the United States. Many more could not escape. In the early hours of April 30, 1975, Saigon fell to the Communists. Soon after, South Vietnam surrendered. The long war was over.

**Reading Check Analyzing** What was the result of the Paris peace agreements?

## Legacy of the War

The Vietnam War took a staggering toll of life and suffering. More than one million Vietnamese—civilians as well as soldiers on one side or the other—died between 1965 and the end of the conflict. Vietnam lay in ruins with many villages destroyed.

More than 58,000 Americans were dead; 300,000 were wounded, many of them permanently disabled. The United States had poured more than \$150 billion into the war.

About 2.7 million Americans had served in Vietnam. Unlike the veterans of World War II, they found no hero's welcome when they returned home. Many Americans simply wanted to forget the war. They paid little attention to those who had fought and sacrificed in Vietnam.

The relatives of the American soldiers who had been classified as missing in action, or as **MIAs**, continued to demand that the government press the Vietnamese for information. The Vietnamese did allow a number of American groups to search the countryside. As the years passed, however, the likelihood of finding anyone alive faded.

## A Step Toward Healing

The construction of the **Vietnam Veterans Memorial** in Washington, D.C., provided a step toward healing the country's wounds. Designed by **Maya Ying Lin**, the striking memorial is a polished black granite wall in the shape of a private's stripes. It bears the names of all the Americans who died or were missing in action in the conflict.

When they visit the wall, families, friends, and comrades in war seek out the names of those who fought in Vietnam and did not return. Since the memorial was dedicated in 1982, visitors have left thousands of keepsakes and remembrances there. The flowers, letters, poems, and pictures left at the wall pay a proud and moving tribute to the Americans who died in the service of their country.

**Reading Check Identifying** What are MIAs?

## SECTION 4 ASSESSMENT

### Checking for Understanding

- Key Terms** Define **Vietnamization**, **martial law**, **MIAs**.
- Reviewing Facts** Why did Nixon's actions in Cambodia anger many people?

### Analyzing Themes

- Global Connections** Explain the process of Vietnamization. Who proposed this plan?

### Critical Thinking

- Drawing Conclusions** Do you think Nixon succeeded in attaining "peace with honor?" Explain.
- Sequencing Information** Re-create the time line below and identify key dates and events in the Vietnam War during the Nixon presidency.

June 1969			April 1975
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

### Analyzing Visuals

- Geography Skills** Examine the map on page 886. Where was the demilitarized zone located?

### Interdisciplinary Activity

**Expository Writing** Imagine you are a reporter during the Vietnam era. Research and write a news story on an aspect of the war that you find interesting. Use creative word choice and expression.



# Chapter Summary

## The Vietnam Era

### 1954

- Geneva Accords divide Vietnam

### 1957

- Soviet Union launches *Sputnik*

### 1959

- Civil War begins in Vietnam

### 1961

- Bay of Pigs invasion fails
- Berlin Wall erected

### 1962

- Cuban Missile crisis occurs

### 1963

- John F. Kennedy is assassinated
- Lyndon B. Johnson sworn in as president

### 1964

- Gulf of Tonkin Resolution passed

### 1967

- More than 500,000 U.S. troops in Vietnam
- War protesters march on Pentagon

### 1968

- North Korea captures USS *Pueblo*
- North Vietnamese launch Tet offensive
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., is assassinated
- Robert Kennedy is assassinated
- Violence erupts at Democratic convention in Chicago
- Richard Nixon wins presidency

### 1969

- Neil Armstrong walks on the moon
- Nixon begins to withdraw troops from Vietnam

### 1970

- Nixon sends troops to Cambodia
- Six students killed at Kent State and Jackson State

### 1973

- Paris peace accords end U.S. involvement in Vietnam

### Reviewing Key Terms

On a sheet of paper, use all of the following terms to write sentences relating to the information in the chapter.

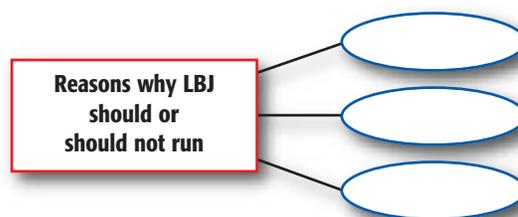
- flexible response
- hot line
- Vietcong
- domino theory
- escalate
- deferment
- Vietnamization
- MIAs

### Reviewing Key Facts

- Why did the Soviets build the Berlin Wall?
- Why did President Kennedy blockade Cuba?
- In what way did the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution extend President Johnson's power?
- What is Agent Orange?
- What was the Tet offensive?

### Critical Thinking

- Comparing** Why do you think most Americans supported the war effort during World War II, but many did not support the Vietnam War?
- Drawing Conclusions** President Johnson made the decision not to run for reelection in 1968. Determine whether you believe that President Johnson's decision was a good one or a bad one for the country. On a diagram like the one shown, write at least three reasons to support your decision.



### Practicing Skills

- Using a Database** Prepare a database of the major battles of the Vietnam War involving United States troops. At your local library, research to find information about the sites of the battles, who the commanding officer was, how many American soldiers were killed or wounded at the sites, and how many North Vietnamese were killed or wounded. Share your database with the rest of your class.



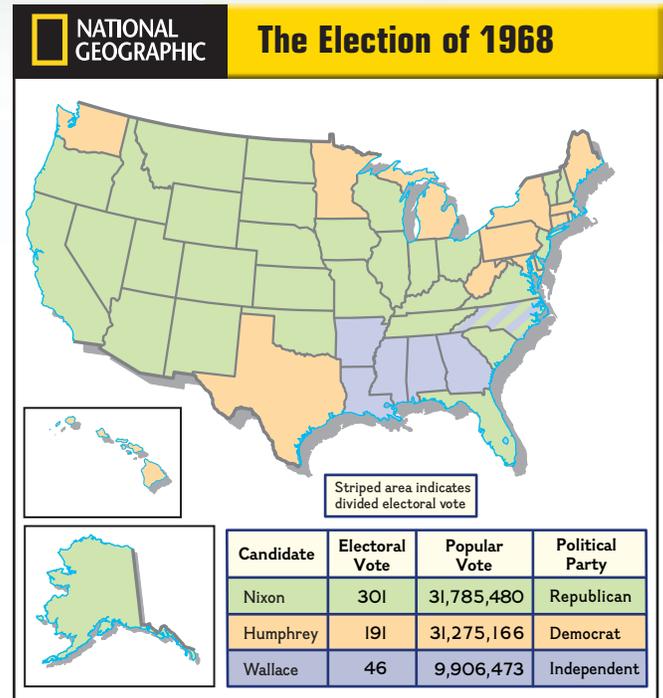
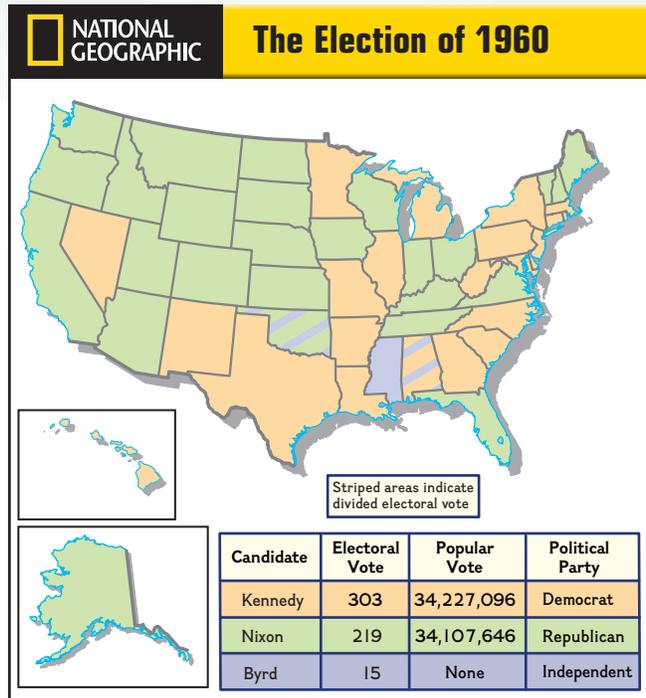
Self-Check Quiz

Visit [taj.glencoe.com](http://taj.glencoe.com) and click on **Chapter 30—Self-Check Quizzes** to prepare for the chapter test.



**Geography and History Activity**

Study the two maps on this page; then answer the questions that follow.



- Region** In what regions of the country did Kennedy receive the strongest support in the 1960 election? In which regions was support for Kennedy weakest?
- Region** What regions supported Nixon in 1960? In 1968?
- Region** Explain why you agree or disagree with the following: The Northeast was Nixon's strongest region in 1968.

**Citizenship Cooperative Activity**

- Individual Involvement** With two other students, research to find what opportunities exist in your community for individual involvement on issues. For example, does your community have a recycling program? Find out what you might do to assist in these efforts. Report your findings to the class.



**Alternative Assessment**

- Portfolio Writing Activity** United States involvement in Vietnam officially ended in 1973. What effects of the war are still part of American life? Write a paragraph discussing what these effects are.



**Standardized Test Practice**

**Directions: Choose the best answer to the following question.**

- What happened in Vietnam after the last American troops left?
- The process of Vietnamization began.
  - South Vietnam surrendered to North Vietnam.
  - The two sides met at Paris.
  - President Johnson decided not to seek a second term.

**Test-Taking Tip**

Be aware of the order of events asked about in a question. This question asks about events in Vietnam after the United States pulled out. Choice A is an event that occurred before the pull out.