

AP United States History

Vietnam War

- Working Class War
 - 80% of troops were below or close to the poverty line
 - Middle class youth could get college deferment, rich people could get off
- The Air War: 1965-1968
 - 1965 sustained bombing of North Vietnam: Operation Rolling Thunder
 - Ongoing bombing of Hanoi nonstop for 3 years, especially Ho Chi Minh Trail
 - Napalm, agent orange kills trees and causes horrible chemical damage
- Tet Offensive: 1968 Turning Point
 - Multi-prong attack by Viet Cong showed their sophistication
 - They ultimately lost: 1600 US die 40000 North Vietnam die
 - However, domestic opinion turns when the public realizes that the US lied about winning the war
- Mai Lai Massacre: 1968
 - US troops kill 500 innocent people
 - Covered up until 1969 by US government, LBJ popularity drops 12 points
- Nixon and the War
 - "Honorable Peace" in Vietnam
 - Minimal public support for the war was a major reason for his election
 - Massive troop pullouts but US continues fighting until 1973, "Vietnamization"
- Kent State: 1970, Violent protests continue on College Campuses
 - 4 Students killed for protesting Vietnam
- Pentagon Papers: 1970
 - Exposes everything that the government hides about Vietnam
 - Mai Lai Massacre, Ho Chi Minh trail bombing, Involvement before 1963
 - Richard Nixon issues injunction on New York Times to prohibit them from publishing
 - Washington Post tries the same, Supreme Court case allows publishing

- Peace Treaty — 1973
 - Kissinger family signs peace treaty but it crumbles soon after United States leaves Vietnam
 - Communists take back over the country
 - Paris Accords in 1973
 - US forces withdraw in exchange for 500 Prisoners of War
- Costs of war
 - Millions of American + Vietnamese deaths
 - Great Society falls apart
 - \$150 billion in US spending
 - Loss in confidence in the government