

Analysis of the Impact of the Vietnam War on American Society

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Abstract: In the history of the Cold War, the series of issues raised by the Vietnam War are of great research value. The Vietnam War is also one of the most studied parts of the U.S.-Soviet Cold War. This paper takes the Vietnam War as the centerpiece of the study and delves into the process of the Vietnam War and its impact on American society and the rest of the world. This paper uses social background research and literature to analyze the causes of the Vietnam War and its significant impact on American society, through understanding the Vietnam War, studying the U.S.-Soviet Cold War behind the Vietnam War, and in-depth study of the Vietnam War's blow to the U.S. domestic society, through a series of research and analysis, this paper concludes that the Vietnam War was a product of the U.S.-Soviet struggle for supremacy and the ideological confrontation between the two superpowers, and its result was a victory for the Soviet Union.

Keywords: Cold War, Vietnam War, history, American society

1. Introduction

The clash of ideologies in the Cold War was the original cause of the struggle [1]. This concept is clearly explained in the book "Wars of Ideas and the War of Ideas" by Antulio Joseph Echevarria. The fact that the history of the Cold War and the Vietnam War have been well researched in various fields of scholarship and that the advancement of these topics seems to have reached its zenith does not mean that the study of these topics is useless. The reason to continue exploring is that many studies are still full of controversy, and as questions and investigations are delved into, conclusions are drawn, not just historical conclusions, but more importantly, historical problems and mistakes are used to re-examine the emerging issues of the present day, such as ideological confrontation of modernization, faulty strategies, and faulty implementation of social policies. This paper reacts to the ideological confrontation by analyzing a segment of the Cold War and presents the results of the ideological confrontation and the effects on their own or other countries. This essay will examine the Vietnam War by organizing historical background information, as well as social research. This article may provide some help and clues to researchers who study international social studies or will revisit a series of issues such as ideological confrontation or social policy studies in some ways.

2. Introduction to the Vietnam War

2.1. Causes, Course, and Outcome of the War

The Vietnam War (1955-1975), or simply the Vietnam War, is also known as the Vietnam War Against the United States, the Second Indochina War, and the Second Vietnam War [2]. Vietnam was a French colony before World War II, and after the surrender of Japan, Vietnam was eventually divided into "South Vietnam" and "North Vietnam" under the influence of various forces. Since then, the two sides have experienced border incursions and armed conflicts. At first, the United States did not directly intervene in the conflict between the two countries but provided material support and military assistance to the South Vietnamese regime. However, with the destabilization of the South Vietnamese regime and the gradual disadvantage of the U.S.-backed South Vietnam in the political and armed conflicts between the two countries, the U.S. economic subsidies and military assistance to South Vietnam gradually escalated. As the war escalated, the U.S. began to directly intervene in the war, but the U.S. intervention did not have a positive impact on the war, as time went by, the battle line was gradually stretched, the U.S. invested a large amount of money in South Vietnam, the army. But in the process, the United States did not occupy any strategic advantage and even can be said to have had no progress, and a long time of capital investment and military service policy of the wrong implementation of the United States nationals are very dissatisfied. Finally, in 1973, the United States troops withdrew from South Vietnam, North Vietnam in 1976, the complete reunification of Vietnam, the formation of the new Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The Vietnam War was declared officially over [3].

2.2. Study of the Historical Background and Ideological Confrontation

The Vietnam War did not arise as a mere conflict between the United States and North Vietnam but as an ideological confrontation. Due to the background in the Cold War period, at that time, in Europe and the United States, and other countries with a capitalist system, the Soviet Union communism as the leader of the socialist countries had a huge contradiction, the two camps to draw other countries in the international community, to join their camp to make great efforts. For example, the Cuban Missile Crisis was a demonstration of the Cold War exchanges between the United States and the Soviet Union, and similarly, the Vietnam War was a demonstration of the same. Some scholars have done some research on the reason why the United States was obsessed with getting the support of the Vietnamese government and finding ways to unify North Vietnam. One piece of writing argues that For the U.S., the mandate was clear: limit Soviet power in Southeast Asia and halt the spread of communism. The first American death was in 1945. Direct U.S. involvement in Vietnam grew following the surrender of the French and the partition of North and South Vietnam in 1954 [4]. This view is also the main current world academic understanding of the Vietnam War. The U.S. hoped to use South Vietnam to compete with Soviet-backed North Vietnam, and to further strengthen the U.S.'s own position internationally through other means, such as war. But there is no doubt that the Vietnam War ended in failure. The Vietnam War was extremely unfavorable to the United States in terms of economic, political, and social development. Due to the far-reaching effects of the Vietnam War on the domestic and foreign affairs, society, and culture of the United States.

In the Cold War, conflicting ideologies and military pressure were the main causes of U.S. hostility toward communist countries such as the Soviet Union. How to contain these communist countries became the main strategic plan of the United States. Containment of the countries led by Soviet communism began to take place through a policy of containment involving all the various sites of containment, throughout all the various administrations, but most prominently in Indochina, and was given a different status by different administrations. Expressed in terms of the perceptions of U.S.

policymakers, these three purposes were to preserve U.S. security in a geostrategic sense, to safeguard U.S. worldwide political-ideological interests, and to maintain U.S. prestige, especially the credibility of U.S. power and its promises [5]. The Soviet Union's communist policies, and their widespread influence throughout the world, made the U.S. feel progressively more oppressed by the presence of the Soviet Union, and the rise of communist power. The rise of communist power also made the U.S. fear the weakening of its own influence in the world, as expressed in a scholarly research article, the U.S. understood that the Soviet threat could be primarily categorized as political and psychological rather than military; the main reason for the problem was due to what the U.S. leadership perceived to be the growing loss of confidence and will of the middle and upper classes of society due to the internal turmoil in European countries caused by the Second World War, which provided favorable conditions for the Soviet Union's expansion of its influence provided favorable conditions[5]. A great deal of information can be gleaned from the above research indicating why the United States persisted in an unnecessary war against Vietnam and the unique and irreplaceable significance of the Soviet Union's presence throughout the Vietnam War.

3. American Domestic Society in the Context of the Vietnam War

During the Vietnam War, there was strong discontent within the American domestic community. There were two main reasons why the U.S. domestic community was dissatisfied with the U.S. military action against Vietnam. First, the United States in military operations against Vietnam for the first time in the form of live broadcast presented to the domestic public, but due to the United States did not achieve the original expected results, the United States intended to show the military's strong, as well as the control of the war situation, but in fact, the U.S. military in the Vietnam battlefield did not make effective progress, but instead there are this huge casualties and losses, with the advancement of the war, the United States has never abandoned As the war progressed, the U.S. never gave up on Vietnam and was still paying for it in terms of military funding and troop replenishment, which led to strong protests from the American domestic public. The second reason was that many Americans believed that the U.S. intervention in the war was wrong [6].

3.1. Anti-War Wave of Negative Social Sentiment

Protests broke out from time to time in the U.S. By 1968, anti-war demonstrations had spread throughout the country. Under the mood of discontent at all levels of society, bloodshed continued to break out within the U.S. In May 1970, the Kent State University shooting, in protest of the Ohio National Guard shot and killed four students involved in protests the Vietnam War and the U.S. invasion of Cambodia at Kent State University, in the wake of which the first nationwide student general strike in U.S. history erupted, with more than 100,000 students flooding Washington, D.C., to protest. to protest [7-8]. As the U.S. draft became increasingly harsh during the Vietnam War, draft-eligible young men became fearful, and much of the population began to choose to resist military service, with thousands of young American men choosing to flee to Canada or Sweden to avoid the risks of the draft, and the Swedish government's welcoming of young U.S. draft dodgers once caused a strain in Swiss American relations [9]. As the anti-war wave grew, people from all walks of life began to join the movement.

3.2. Negative Effects of the Vietnam War on the United States

Under the pressure of domestic public opinion and enormous economic pressure, the withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam in 1973 signaled the complete withdrawal of the United States from the Vietnamese civil war and its non-interference in Vietnamese politics. On July 2, 1976, North and South Vietnam were reunited, and the U.S. war deployment in Vietnam was declared a failure. As a

result, the U.S. suffered a great blow both internally and externally. Within the United States, anti-war marches and waves led to a negative attitude towards the government. The Vietnam War was the longest war in American history. Over ten years of the Vietnam War cost the United States at least two hundred and fifty billion dollars [10]. From an external point of view, it was not just a loss of the war for the United States, but also a turning point in the Cold War when the United States and the Soviet Union confronted each other. The Vietnam War changed the Cold War in some ways, as the U.S. loss in Vietnam led to the strengthening and expansion of the ideology of Soviet Communism, and to a certain extent weakened U.S. dominance over the Third World. The U.S. war also consumed many human resources according to the website National Archives, statistics show that the U.S. in Vietnam as of 2008, according to statistics, there were 58,220 deaths, while another source shows that the number of deaths from 1960 onwards has risen sharply every year, the highest figure in 1968 deaths reached 16,899 [10]. This side projection shows that the US military was relatively passive during the Vietnam War and shows the failure of the US in this military operation. Also, the negative effects were that the Vietnam War exacerbated racial and civil rights issues within the United States, the anti-war movement made the national system fragile and led to a disconnect between the American popular level and the governmental level, as well as creating a lot of discontent amongst the American masses, which had a great negative impact on the American society.

4. Conclusion

This paper examines international relations during the Vietnam War as well as American social issues during the Vietnam War, centering on the Vietnam War. It is concluded that the Vietnam War arose because of the Cold War. The social conflicts within the United States were intensified as a result of the Vietnam War. There is still room for further improvement and enhancement of this paper. This paper does not go into depth through other aspects of the U.S.-Soviet Cold War. Future research can conduct a deeper study of the history of the Cold War and the study of international relations and social conflicts.

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