

Write a paragraph response for two of the following four questions:

- Why was the Vietnam War so controversial?
- Why did America lose the Vietnam War?
- What were the policies of LBJ and Richard Nixon, the stated reasons for those policies, and the results?
- How did nationalism play a role in the war from the Vietnamese perspective?

The United States lost the Vietnam war largely because it could not be won. When Ho Chi Minh's Viet Minh government succeeded in resisting France's imperial intentions from 1945 until 1954, France realized Vietnam was not an area that could be won, and they departed. However, seeing Vietnam become a communist domino was not a move that the United States could endorse. As a result, the USA were drawn into a long, expensive, embarrassing war that could not be won. The media played a large role in the war as journalists and television crews sent scenes of the war back to the American people. By the time of the Tet Offensive in 1968, the American public was not supportive of the war and saw the losses of one American for every 10 losses by the Vietnamese as unacceptable. The United States simply did not have an answer to stop the movement of supplies along the Ho Chi Minh trail. Intensive bombing was not getting the job done. Americans were unimpressed by the inflation caused by a \$2 billion a week cost to maintain the war (in 1968), and were encouraged by counter-culture movements similar to the one described by Arlo Guthrie's song Alice's Restaurant. In the end, the USA could not get out of the embarrassing war using their nuclear power because of the Soviet involvement in the war. Even Nixon's process of Vietnamisation cost the American people two-thirds of their 55,000 casualties.