

- Oct 9, 1954 – day Geneva Accords mandated turn over of Hanoi
 - It = cold & damp; streets = empty & silent
 - It grew louder as General Giap's army appeared
 - Red flags with yellow stars appeared
 - In South, atmosphere very different
 - Ngo Dinh Diem – new prime minister – arrived in Saigon
 - He was greeted by small crowd of Catholic supporters, FR officials & foreign diplomats
 - Diem = 53 yrs old
 - Was fervent nationalist & anti-Communist
 - In 1954, Emperor Bao Dai foresaw end of FR rule
 - » So appointed Diem as Prime Minister in hopes his connections might be able to draw US into Vietnamese scene
 - BUT, Diem had flaws
 - Diem had to stabilize South Vietnam
 - Ex. In city – Binh Xuyen
 - » It = made \$\$ by kidnapping/ransom & piracy
 - » Bao Dai needed troops
 - » Bảy Viễn = Major General
 - » Binh Xuyen controls of own affairs
 - Ex. Countryside = vacuum
 - » Many peasants under Viet Minh

- » Others lived in under Cao Dai or Hoa Hoa
- » Cao Dai = syncretistic religion
- » Hoa Hoa = another religion
 - Members of both HIGHLY devoted to faith
 - Both concerned with Diem's Catholicism
- Diem's initial control limited to Saigon
 - Vietnamese National Army
 - Vacuum after partition = time
 - CIA dispatched Saigon Military Mission
 - » Led by Edward G. Lansdale
- US leaders united in stopping Communism in Southeast Asia.
 - Sept 8, 1954, SEATO created
 - » It = response to efforts of Communist expansionism
 - » Purpose = defensive only
 - » Primary activity = mutual aid to "check" communists
 - » Unlike NATO, SEATO had no standing forces
 - Ike moves to support Diem
 - » US Navy resettles refugees
 - » MAAG expanded
 - » Diem moves to assert control
- Diem's regime gains traction
 - Most loyal followers = Catholics

- US money buys army & bureaucracy
- BUT, gov't = fragile
- Some US officials have doubts
 - » Ex. Gen J. Laughton Collins
- Fate saves Diem
 - Collins convinced Ike Diem had to go
 - Battle of Saigon begins
 - » Binh Xuyen controled national police force
 - » United Front of National Forces formed
 - Diem's ultimatum
 - » Binh Xuyen ignores
 - April 28th fight erupts in Saigon
 - By 2nd day, VNA gains upper hand.
 - By May 2, Binh Xuyên = broken
 - Battle convinced many to stick with Diem
- Diem consolidates control
 - Moves against Cao Dai & Hoa Hao
 - Rejects reunification elections
 - Hold referendum on monarchy
 - Republic of Vietnam created (RVN)
 - It = authoritarian regime
 - » Ex. 1 Ngo Dinh Nhu

- » Ex. 2 Madame Nu (aka Dragon Lady)
- » Ex 3. Ngo Dinh Can
- » Ex. 4. Ngo Dinh Thuc
- Ruled over nation of 16 million
- RVN impacted by FR legacy
- Vietnamese also impacted
- RVN had no base nor national identity
- AND Diem NOT democratic consensus builder
- Diem launches Denunciation of Communists Campaign
 - Goal = destroy remnants of Viet Minh & enemies
 - Ordinance No. 6
 - Campaign inflicted serious damage
 - Denunciation used to extend control into countryside
 - Reserved land-reform measures
 - Short-term = stabilized situation
 - Long-term = sown seeds of own demise
- Ike Admin paid less attention to Vietnam
 - Ike & Sec of State Dulles preoccupied by Cold War crises
 - Result = policy lacked firm guidance
- Fall 1955 – Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) created
 - MAAG head – Gen. Samuel T. Williams
- Diem welcomed transformation

- Wanted large army
- BUT, had little understanding
- NOTE: senior officers trained by FR
- MAAG started training ARVN officers
 - On paper, ARVN = formable
 - BUT, MAAG officers, time = short
- By 1957-58, popular discontent emerges
 - In cities, fear/resentment
 - In rural areas, remnants of Viet Minh organize peasant
 - Gov't labels as – *Việt gian cộng sản*
 - Initially Williams unconcerned by unrest
 - Diem viewed as military & admin problem
 - US officials = slow to detect
 - Critical reports to DC
 - BUT, Diem & US officials in different worlds
- Nov 11, 1960 seriousness of crises = obvious
 - Paratroopers launch surprise rebellion
 - Leaders of coup = naïve & disorganized
 - Diem engages in negotiations
 - Coup reveals shakiness of regime
- To the North, things = different.
 - 1954, most Viet Minh go north

- NOTE: 15,000 cadres stay
- Democratic Republic of Vietnam = Marxist-Leninist state
 - Power concentrated in hands of Lao Dong
 - Communist ruling elite held power
 - Oppositional groups banned
 - Focus = complete revolution
- Initially hesitant to involve in South Vietnam
 - North = most action in Indochinese War
 - Needed time
- Hardest challenge = food production
 - North = mountainous & shortage of arable land
 - Solution = 5-year economic plans of USSR & CCP
 - Ho's 3-year plan began with implementation of socialism
- Basis of system = "collectivization"
 - Developed by Stalin
 - Process dictated by Lao Dong
 - Carried out by cadres
 - Identification of *dia chu*
 - » NOTE: some = *a chu cuong hao gian ac*
 - Focus NOT justice or retribution
- Lao Dong targets other ideological opponents
 - Religious; intellectuals; wealthy & middle classes

- Some suspects whisked away
- Estimate = 500,000 murdered
- NOTE: mass uprising in Nam Dan = crushed
- By 1960, Lao Dong's reforms yield results
 - 40k cooperatives
 - 3-year plan set ambitious targets
 - » Ex. by 1960, North able to:
 - BUT industrialization had problems
 - PLUS – little cash
- Lao Dong also expands military
 - Basis = belief that military confrontation inevitable
 - People's Army of North Vietnam (PAVN)
 - USSR & CCP not enthusiastic about war
 - » Khrushchev emphasized peaceful coexistence
 - » Mao believed would be protracted struggle
 - » Lao Dong dared not defy benefactors
- Revolutionaries not content to sit back forever
 - Viewed Diem's regime as corrupt & repressive
 - Believed Diem's efforts alienate peasants
- Lao Dong not resist taking action for long
 - Takes control of movement in south
 - » Authorizes shift to an armed rebellion

- Lao Dong makes 3 additional decisions:
 - 1959, 1st arms shipment to south
 - April 1960, introduces conscription
 - PAVN embraces Western military practices
 - Dec 1960, delegates met with PAVN officers
 - » Formation of National Liberation Front (NLF)
 - Result = Diem no longer faced scattered opposition
- Relationship between Lao Dong & NLF = paradoxical
 - It = indigenous rebellion – BUT directed from North
 - Communist hid objectives - manipulated non-Communists
 - NFL's program = broad appeal
 - NLF spreads rapidly
 - » Support both in urban & rural areas
 - » In cities, no “mass” base
 - » Real base = among peasantry
 - List of grievances = long
 - NLF shrewdly exploits
 - NLF moves
 - » 1st murder/intimidate local officials
 - » 2nd, political education & psychological reorientation
 - » To achieve, NLF breaks down traditional values
 - Challenge – peasants = primitive agricultural society

- » Initially NLF soldiers ineffective
- » Had to transform peasants into soldiers
- Building revolutionary apparatus = slow
 - 1957-1958, groups went into action
 - End of 1959, NLF activity thruout South
 - Ex. July 8 1959, VC squad attacked US advisers in Bien Hoa
 - » Major Dale R. Buis & Master Sergeant Chester M. Ovnand killed
 - » Captain Howard Boston wounded
 - VC small = ~12,000
 - » BUT able to shift to effective military action