Viet Nam *

- 1945: Vietnamese people declare national independence from France.
- 1950: U.S. military advisors sent to Viet Nam to assist France in reestablishing their colony in Indochina (Vietnam).
- 1954: French Foreign Legion defeated at Dien Bien Phu despite US economic and military aid. Viet Nam is divided pending elections for reunification.
- 1956: US prevents election for reunification and creates Republic of Vietnam in south, under Ngo Dinh Diem.
- 1961: National Liberation Front (NLF) formed in South to oppose Diem's persecution of anti-colonial nationalist forces.
- 1963: Ngo Dinh Diem, President of South Viet Nam, arrested and assassinated in CIA-backed coup d'etat in wake of his failures to stop rebellion.
- 1964: Gulf of Tonkin Resolution passed by US Congress, authorizing President Lyndon B. Johnson to "repel any armed attack." This justified the escalation of the war. Resolution resulted from claim that US ship was attacked. Not until 2005 did declassified documents reveal that the attack never took place.
- March 8, 1965: First US. combat troops arrive in Viet Nam—3,500 Marines join 23,000 American military advisers already in Viet Nam.
- 1973: A cease-fire is declared. Vietnamization policy instituted, building up Vietnamese forces to cover withdrawal of US troops.
- 1975: last US troops leave Viet Nam following collapse of South Viet Nam.
- **Casualties:**

  58,800 US Military dead and 350,000 wounded
  More than 100,000 G.I.s dead from suicides or drug overdoses since the end of the war 2,000,000 -3,000,000 Vietnamese dead

- Financial Cost to US: $584 billion

*The Vietnamese language is monosyllabic, and the divided spelling "Viet Nam" is the transliteration used by the Vietnamese. The single word "Vietnam" was utilized by the French, and thus connotes colonial status, not sovereignty.