

Greetings Fellow Veterans;

We have had a strange year with lots of VETERANS EVENTS and MEMORIALS cancelled due to the Weaponized Virus unleashed on the world by China. We had a very SAD MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND with many favorite ~ anticipated historical ~ events being cancelled just in COBB County alone. It is certainly a sad state of affairs when we as American Veterans cannot gather to honor and remember those who **sacrificed their all for us to have freedom**, nor to be allowed to freely gather. Hopefully the rest of this year will prove to be better for all VETERANS EVENTS.

As we enter the month of JUNE let's remember all those who did not return home from VIETNAM. Here are some Memories and thoughts from our years of History in Vietnam and around the months of May and June:

- **July 1954:** The Geneva Accords establish North and South Vietnam with the 17th parallel as the dividing line. The agreement also stipulates that elections are to be held within two years to unify Vietnam under a single democratic government. These elections never happen.
- **1955:** Catholic nationalist Ngo Dinh Diem emerges as the leader of South Vietnam, with U.S. backing, while Ho Chi Minh leads the communist state to the north.
- **May 1959:** North Vietnam forces begin to build a supply route through Laos and Cambodia to South Vietnam in an effort to support guerrilla attacks against Diem's government in the south. The route becomes known as the [Ho Chi Minh Trail](#) and is greatly expanded and enhanced during the [Vietnam War](#).
- **July 1959:** The first U.S. soldiers are killed in South Vietnam when guerrillas raid their living quarters near Saigon.
- **September 1960:** Ho Chi Minh, facing failing health, is replaced by Le Duan as head of North Vietnam's ruling communist party.
- **December 1960:** The National Liberation Front (NLF) is formed with North Vietnamese backing as the political wing of the antigovernment insurgency in South Vietnam. The United States views the NLF as an arm of North Vietnam and starts calling the military wing of the NLF the Viet Cong—short for Vietnam Cong-san, or Vietnamese communists.
- **May 1961:** President [John F. Kennedy](#) sends helicopters and 400 Green Berets to South Vietnam and authorizes secret operations against the Viet Cong.
- **January 1962:** In Operation Ranch Hand, U.S. aircraft start spraying [Agent Orange](#) and other herbicides over rural areas of South Vietnam to kill vegetation that would offer cover and food for guerrilla forces.
- **February 1962:** Ngo Dinh Diem survives a bombing of the presidential palace in South Vietnam as Diem's extreme favoritism toward South Vietnam's Catholic minority alienates him from most of the South Vietnamese population, including Vietnamese Buddhists.
- **January 1963:** At Ap Bac, a village in the Mekong Delta southwest of Saigon, South Vietnamese troops are defeated by a much smaller unit of Viet Cong fighters. The South Vietnamese are overcome despite their four-to-one advantage and the technical and planning assistance of U.S. advisers.
- **May 1963:** In a major incident of what becomes known as the "Buddhist Crisis," the government of Ngo Dinh Diem opens fire on a crowd of Buddhist protestors in the central Vietnam city of Hue. Eight people, including children, are killed.

- **June 1963:** A 73-year-old monk immolates himself while sitting at a major city intersection in protest, leading other Buddhists to follow suit in coming weeks. The United States' already declining confidence in Diem's leadership continues to slide.
- **November 1963:** The United States backs a South Vietnam military coup against the unpopular Diem, which ends in the brutal killing of Diem and his brother, Ngo Dinh Nhu. Between 1963 and 1965, 12 different governments take the lead in South Vietnam as military coups replace one government after another.
- **June 1965:** General Nguen Van Thieu of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam Governmental Military (ARVN), becomes president of South Vietnam. • **July 1965:** President Johnson calls for 50,000 more ground troops to be sent to Vietnam, increasing the draft to 35,000 each month.
- **1966:** U.S. troop numbers in Vietnam rise to 400,000.
- **June 1966:** American aircraft attack targets in Hanoi and Haiphong in raids that are among the first such attacks on cities in North Vietnam.
- **1967:** U.S. troop numbers stationed in Vietnam increase to 500,000.

**April-June 1970:** U.S. and South Vietnamese forces attack communist bases across the Cambodian border in the Cambodian Incursion. • **June 1970:** Congress repeals the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution to reassert control over the president's ability to use force in the war. • **June 1971:** *The New York Times* publishes a series of articles detailing leaked Defense Department documents about the war, known as the [Pentagon Papers](#). The report reveals the U.S. government had repeatedly and secretly increased U.S. involvement in the war.

*Painter Dickson Lester*

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