

Inquiry Lesson

## Why was the Vietnam War so Controversial?

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Prepared for Grade 12 U.S. History

## **OVERVIEW**

In March of 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson sent the first U.S. combat troops into South Vietnam to fight the spread of Communism from North. The casualties of this long war, from both sides, were extensive and brutal due to guerilla warfare and the use of chemical weapons. This information was televised in detail, sparking anti-war movements and weakening the morale of Americans fighting in Vietnam. Also known as “America’s Longest War,” U.S. involvement in Vietnam War did not end until 1973. Although the United States won the war in a numerical sense, having far less casualties than North Vietnam, the U.S. did not accomplish what they had set out to do. The Communist North took control of South Vietnam. Students will critically analyze the primary and secondary sources provided in order to generate hypotheses and formulate and support a conclusion to the inquiry question: Why was the Vietnam War so controversial?

## **RATIONALE**

It is important for students to engage in this inquiry lesson because it discusses vital issues related to citizenship in a democratic society. Key issues/values discussed might include the promotion of democracy, human rights, justice, patriotism, and the freedoms of speech and assembly. During the Vietnam War, many of these values came into conflict with one another. This lesson will challenge students to confront the problems associated with conflicting values, which is an issue that is relevant in democratic societies today.

## **AUDIENCE**

This inquiry lesson targets 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. History students. This inquiry lesson requires students to be able to think critically and have the ability to analyze and extract meaning from data sets containing primary and secondary sources. With modification to the data sets, this inquiry lesson could be implemented successfully in a 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. History or Global Perspectives classroom, assuming that students have adequate background knowledge to be able to engage in meaningful discussion.

## **OBJECTIVES**

By engaging in this inquiry lesson, students will:

- Identify multiple causes and effects of the Vietnam War (B.12.15).
- Identify possible reasons for controversy surrounding the Vietnam War by constructing reasonable hypotheses (B.12.1, B.12.15).
- Analyze and critically evaluate multiple primary and secondary sources as a means of supporting, refuting, or generating new hypotheses (B.12.2).
- Verbally and in writing, present evidence to either support or refute a particular viewpoint or perspective regarding controversies of the Vietnam War (B.12.1).

- Identify fundamental rights presented in the United States Constitution and the Declaration of Independence and explain how they are supported or violated during the Vietnam War.
- Express a respectful or mournful attitude toward those who lost their lives, regardless of whether they fought for North Vietnam, South Vietnam, or the United States.

<b>WISCONSIN MODEL ACADEMIC STANDARDS ADDRESSED</b>
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- B.12.1** Explain different points of view on the same historical event using data gathered from various sources, such as letters, journals, diaries, newspapers, government documents, and speeches
- Students will meet this standard by analyzing various types of primary and secondary sources that represent conflicting points of view. Students will have the opportunity to explain these differing points of view by engaging in substantive conversation with their peers following the presentation of each data set and by recognizing multiple points of view in their formally assessed short essays.
- B.12.2** Analyze primary and secondary sources related to a historical question to evaluate their relevance, make comparisons, integrate new information with prior knowledge, and come to a reasoned conclusion
- Students will meet this standard by analyzing primary and secondary sources embedded in the data sets and by forming and revising hypotheses as new information is presented.
- B.12.4** Assess the validity of different interpretations of significant historical events
- Students will meet this standard by analyzing and interpreting various primary and secondary source documents.
- B.12.15** Identify a historical or contemporary event in which a person was forced to take an ethical position, such as a decision to go to war, the impeachment of a president, or a presidential pardon, and explain the issues involved
- Students will meet this standard by generally engaging in discussion about the Vietnam War. The data sets will lead students to acknowledge conflicting values that lead to controversies surrounding the war, and also why the United States decided to become involved.
- B.12.17** Identify historical and current instances when national interests and global interests have seemed to be opposed and analyze the issues involved
- Students will meet this standard by analyzing the data sets, which include information regarding conflicts between national and global issues. They will have the change to communicate these conflicts during discussion and in short essays.

<b>TIME</b>
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This inquiry lesson requires five 45-minute class periods. This inquiry lesson may be shortened or extended based on the amount of meaningful discussion generated by the data sets.

## MATERIALS

The materials needed to complete this inquiry lesson include:

- Copies of the *Hypothesis/Evidence Worksheet* for each student
- Copies of data set packets for each student
- Audio version of “I Feel Like I’m Fixin’ To Die” by Country Joe and the Fish
- Smart-Board/Video Projector
- Dry-Erase board (if smart Smart-Board is unavailable)
- Dry-Erase markers
- Computer with Internet access
- Internet sites:
  - Vietnam in HD - E02: Search & Destroy (1966-1967) video found at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I09jM1q6fWo&feature=relmfu>
  - Lyndon B. Johnson's Speech on The Vietnam War 1966 video found at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j17cDGMRM1U>
  - Data Set Nine Accompaniment- Album version of “I Feel Like I’m Fixin’ To Die” by Country Joe and the Fish video found at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8rArmFRkaFY>
  - Post-Inquiry Data Set- Cleaning Agent Orange video found at: <http://www.nytimes.com/video/2012/08/09/world/asia/100000001713916/cleaning-agent-orange.html>

## PROCEDURE

### I. ENGAGEMENT IN THE INQUIRY

This inquiry lesson should be introduced by showing students a web-streamed video-clip from The History Channel documentary series “Vietnam in HD” via You Tube, titled “Vietnam in HD- E02: Search & Destroy.” The episode, in its entirety, is approximately 43 minutes long. Due to time restrictions, only the first 8 minutes of the episode should be shown. This 8 minutes segment will serve as a review to students as to why the United States entered the Vietnam War and some of the hardships faced by U.S. soldiers in Vietnam. This video-clip can be found at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I09jM1q6fWo&feature=relmfu>.

Students will then view the web-streamed video-clip of President Lyndon B. Johnson speaking of his intentions regarding the Vietnam War via You Tube, titled “Lyndon B. Johnson’s Speech on The Vietnam War 1966.” This video-clip is approximately 2 minutes long, and should be viewed in its entirety. This video-clip can be found at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j17cDGMRM1U>.

## **II. ELICIT HYPOTHESIS**

After viewing the video-clips, write the following inquiry question on the board: “Why was the Vietnam War so controversial?” This question should be clearly displayed throughout the entire lesson. Provide a review of background information regarding the Vietnam War. This review should be brief, as students should already be familiar with the topic. Next, each student should be given a copy of the *Hypothesis/Evidence Worksheet*. Students will then be instructed to come up with multiple hypotheses that might serve to answer the inquiry question. This portion of the activity should be done silently and individually. Next, the instructor will divide the class into groups of 4-5 students each. Students will be instructed to discuss their individual hypotheses and to generate new ones as a group. Each group should then take turns sharing one of their hypotheses with the class until each group has run out of hypotheses. A student volunteer should be chosen to record these answers on an overhead copy of the *Hypothesis/Evidence Worksheet*. Students should be instructed to record these hypotheses on their individual copy of the *Hypothesis/Evidence Worksheet* as they are recorded on the overhead. After all reasonable hypotheses are recorded, each group of students should be instructed to generate an “unlikely” or “out there” hypothesis. These hypotheses should also be shared with the class and recorded on the *Hypothesis/Evidence Worksheet*.

## **III. GATHERING DATA AND REVISING HYPOTHESES**

Distribute the data set packets to the class. A student volunteer should be chosen to read the initial data set out loud to the class. If needed, the instructor should then provide the class with any additional information that may aid them in better understanding the data set. Students should then discuss the data set within their group. The instructor should then ask groups to share which hypotheses the data set either supports or undermines. Following this portion of the discussion, students should be asked if the data set elicits any new hypotheses. As these class discussions are taking place, confirming or disconfirming data, as well as new hypothesis, should be recorded on the overhead copy of the *Hypothesis/Evidence Worksheet*. Students should also be recording this information on their individual copies. This process should be repeated for each of the remaining data sets.

## **IV. CONCLUSION**

Students should complete the remainder of this inquiry lesson individually. Ask students to choose one or two hypotheses that they believe are best supported by the data sets. After being told of the expectations and receiving a writing rubric, students should then be instructed to write a short essay that includes a thesis, supporting evidence gathered from the data sets, and a conclusion. After students have completed these essays and turned them in, distribute the post-inquiry data set. This *New York Times* video-clip, titled “Cleaning Agent Orange,” serves to inform students that the Vietnam War is still a relevant topic discussed in recent news. An accompanying *New York Times* article, titled “4 Decades on, U.S. Starts Cleanup of Agent Orange in Vietnam,” can be shared with the class if the instructor chooses to do so. Classroom discussion can follow as to whether

this new information supports or undermines students' individual hypotheses regarding the inquiry question or just generally discussing the lasting effects of the Vietnam War. Students should understand that the conclusions they have drawn are tentative and that they should be reevaluated, as new evidence is uncovered.

## **ASSESSMENT**

The instructor should assess students both informally and formally. Informal assessment should include instructor observation of group discussions. The instructor should record the number of students actively participating in discussion and evaluate the substance of their comments. Do comments demonstrate a deep understanding of the information presented? Formal assessment should be based upon the students' *Hypothesis/Evidence Worksheet* and their completed essays. Instructors should provide feedback to the student regarding each of these assessment categories.

## INQUIRY LESSON REFLECTION

### PASS STANDARDS

<b>PASS STANDARD I: HIGHER ORDER THINKING</b>
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<b>SCORE: 5</b>
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This inquiry lesson should be entirely successful in promoting the use of higher order thinking amongst students. Students will use higher order thinking by evaluating multiple data sets containing primary and secondary sources in order to arrive at reasoned and tentative conclusions. After the presentation of each new data set, students will have the chance to alter their hypotheses and must explain their conclusions to group members or to the rest of the class. Students will also have the opportunity to explain their conclusions in writing at the end of the lesson. Because discussion is not scripted, and because students may differ in their interpretations of the data sets, educational outcomes are unpredictable. The instructor's main objective, per this standard, is to create activities or environments that facilitate higher order thinking amongst students. This objective is met because the essence of the inquiry lesson prompts almost all students, almost all of the time, to engage in higher order thinking.

<b>PASS STANDARD II: DEEP KNOWLEDGE</b>
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<b>SCORE: 5</b>
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This inquiry lesson will provide students with the opportunity to gain deep knowledge surrounding the topic of the Vietnam War. Because this lesson is intended for U.S. History students at an 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade level, students should have sufficient background knowledge regarding the topic. The inquiry process itself will give students the chance to build extensively on their pre-existing knowledge. The range of information in the data sets will prompt students to look at the controversial/problematic nature of the Vietnam War. They will demonstrate their understanding by developing tentative hypotheses or conclusions that are supported by both new and existing knowledge. Students will have the opportunity to demonstrate their deep knowledge during small group and classroom discussion that asks them to provide support both orally and in writing for their tentative hypotheses.

<b>PASS STANDARD III: SUBSTANTIVE CONVERSATION</b>
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<b>SCORE: 5</b>
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This inquiry lesson will sufficiently facilitate the engagement of students in substantive conversation. In asking students to discuss the conclusions drawn from each data set and share their reasoning with their peers, students should build a better understanding of issues surrounding the Vietnam War. The controversial nature of many of the data sets should serve to prompt differing opinions and force students to argue their reasoning. Again, the conversation is not scripted, so the discussion is merely an exchanging of ideas. During the data gathering/hypothesis revision portion of this lesson, the instructor engages in little to no direct lecture, being present only to facilitate conversation. Students have the opportunity to engage in substantive conversation both within their small groups and with the class as a whole.

<b>PASS STANDARD IV: CONNECTIONS BEYOND THE CLASS</b>	<b>SCORE: 4</b>
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In using the post-inquiry data set about the lasting effects of the use of chemicals in the Vietnam War, students will see that certain aspects of the war have contemporary significance. Although this is a real world and ongoing issue, it might not be seen as directly related to students in a U.S. classroom. However, students should be able to relate personal experiences, or at least generate dispositions, overarching themes related to the Vietnam War. Themes discussed might include basic human rights and democracy. Because of the controversial nature of some of the data sets, and the topic itself, the instructor should expect that students will make attempts to share their newly acquired knowledge with people outside of the classroom.

<b>PASS STANDARD V: ETHICAL VALUING</b>	<b>SCORE: 5</b>
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This inquiry lesson will successfully prompt students to engage in extensive ethical valuing. Core democratic values discussed in this lesson about the controversy of the Vietnam War will include the right to life, the pursuit of happiness, the common good, justice, patriotism and individual rights, such as freedom of speech and assembly. Students will have to consider instances in which these values conflict with one another, which happened quite often during the Vietnam War. Many of the data sets will serve to prompt conversation/debate about these conflicting values. The instructor will help students to understand which values might arise in discussion of the data sets and will facilitate the discussion in such a way that requires students to discern possible solutions to the aforementioned conflicts. Because discussion is an essential component of this inquiry lesson, students will express their positions regarding these values and support their positions with evidence from the data sets.

<b>PASS STANDARD VI: INTEGRATION</b>	<b>SCORE: 5</b>
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This inquiry lesson is interdisciplinary in that it combines elements of history, government and, to some extent, the social sciences. From the history discipline, this lesson takes the use of a historical event and data, and also the idea of “thinking like a historian.” From the government discipline, this lesson utilizes issues surrounding the role of the U.S. government in the Vietnam War. From the social sciences, it involves discussion surrounding the effects that the Vietnam War had on U.S. soldiers and the Vietnamese. In discussion of the data sets, the issues surrounding the draft and anti-war movements will arise, prompting students to take a sociological perspective. During the process of ethical valuing and in making connections beyond the classroom, students will integrate themes of this historical topic to the present day. The integration of knowledge and skills is essential in the use of inquiry. Students will integrate the two in their analysis of primary and secondary source documents and in formulating and revising hypotheses. These are both important in considering the essence of historical inquiry.

## **GENERAL IMPORVEMENTS AND CHANGES**

In reviewing this inquiry lesson, I think that I could elaborate even more on the procedure/process of the inquiry. I could add comments and questions that would be useful in facilitating discussion amongst students. Although I feel that the data sets are fairly straight forward, I could add details regarding the significance of each data set to the lesson plan. Both of these items would provide added support to a substitute teacher presenting this lesson that might not have the background knowledge that I do. Looking back, I think that I would add a couple more data sets that include government documents regarding the Vietnam War, and possibly use even more technology-based media. Maps or picture depicting the geographical layout of the warzone might also be a useful means of prompting students to think like a soldier fighting the war. In altering some of the data sets or the number of data sets, in changing the formal assessment requirements, or in adding more instructor involvement in the discussions, I think that this lesson could easily be presented to students in lower grade levels. However, I do not think it would be beneficial to present this lesson outside of a middle school or high-school history classroom. The nature of the data sets could also be altered in order to better involve student with learning disabilities. Previously stated as general improvements, the use of more audio or visual sources, or sources that are lower in level and easier to read and understand, could be used to better facilitate students with learning and particular physical disabilities.

## **TRANCENDENT TEACHING AND LEARNING ISSUES**

In developing this inquiry lesson plan, I have learned a new way to significantly increase student involvement in the classroom. Since history is stigmatized by many students as “boring” and “irrelevant,” the engagement and discussion required of this type of lesson would serve to bring more liveliness into any History classroom. I think that this is a technique that I will utilize often in my own classroom, as it satisfies the majority of the PASS Standards.

## Hypothesis/Evidence Worksheet

<b>HYPOTHESIS</b>	<b>SUPPORTING EVIDENCE (+)</b>	<b>UNDERMINING EVIDENCE (-)</b>

## DATA SET ONE

"Draft Resistance Flyer"

# YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO

- \* You can help us confront the draft. If one faces induction or preinduction physical soon, there are ways to confront the draft without going to jail or in the Army. We are involved in making draft resistance a mass movement of American men. We must build support for resistance in every corner of the nation. Already anti-draft groups, such as ours, are springing up all over the country. We need your help in reaching others.
- \* You may be eligible for a deferment, and you still have time to apply. For example, if you are supporting a child, or if your wife is pregnant, you cannot be drafted. Students and men in certain jobs may be eligible for deferment. Altogether there are 14 categories of deferments and exemptions. We can help you get a deferment.
- \* You can become a conscientious objector. Conscientious objectors spend their time working to help people instead of killing them. Growing numbers of people whose consciences will not allow them to serve in the military are becoming C. O.'s.
- \* You can go to Canada. We can give you information about how to do this.
- \* You can refuse to go. You will not be alone. More and more people are simply saying: "Hell no, we won't go." when faced with induction. Draft Resistance-Seattle actively supports induction refusers.
- \* If you decide to confront the draft, don't act alone. We will discuss with you your draft problems and offer support. We have experienced draft counselors and can obtain for you free legal assistance.

## WE OPPOSE THE DRAFT

BECAUSE... We are opposed to the war in Vietnam. Although we claim to be fighting for freedom, in reality we are supporting a military dictatorship. We are inflicting enormous loss of life and destruction on a small country that has not known peace for a generation. We are preventing the Vietnamese from solving their own problems and we are neglecting our own problems here at home, because we are fighting an unjust, illegal war.

BECAUSE... The government has no business forcing men into the army, forcing them to go to war, to kill and be killed. Young men should be free to determine their own future, free from coercion. If America's young men thought we were in a just war, there would be no need for conscription. They would go on their own free will!

# DRAFT RESISTANCE

GENERAL MEETINGS:  
Monday nights, 7:30  
FREE UNIVERSITY  
4144 UNIVERSITY WAY NW  
SEATTLE, WASH. 98105

**SEATTLE**

INFORMATION:  
Write DRAFT RESISTANCE-SEATTLE  
P. O. BOX 713  
Seattle, Wash. 98111

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## DATA SET TWO

### “Agent Orange”

#### **Operation Ranch Hand and Agent Orange**

From 1961 to 1972, the U.S. military conducted a large-scale defoliation program aimed at destroying the forest and jungle cover used by enemy North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops fighting against U.S. and South Vietnamese forces in the [Vietnam War](#). U.S. aircraft were deployed to spray powerful mixtures of herbicides around roads, rivers, canals and military bases, as well as on crops that might be used to supply enemy troops. During this process, crops and water sources used by the non-combatant peasant population of South Vietnam could also be hit. In all, Operation Ranch Hand deployed more than 19 million gallons of herbicides over 4.5 million acres of land.

herbicides used was Agent Orange, named for the orange stripe painted on the 55-gallon drums in which the mixture was stored. It was one of several "Rainbow Herbicides" used, along with Agents White, Purple, Pink, Green and Blue. U.S. planes sprayed some 11 million to 13 million gallons of Agent Orange in Vietnam between January 1965 and April 1970. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Agent Orange contained "minute traces" of 2,3,7,8-tetrachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin (TCDD), more commonly known as dioxin. Through studies done on laboratory animals, dioxin has been shown to be highly toxic even in minute doses; human exposure to the chemical could be associated with serious health issues such as muscular dysfunction, inflammation, birth defects, nervous system disorders and even the development of various cancers.

#### **Effects of Agent Orange on Vietnam**

In addition to the massive environmental impact of the U.S. defoliation program in Vietnam, that nation has reported that some 400,000 people were killed or maimed as a result of exposure to herbicides like Agent Orange. In addition, Vietnam claims half a million children have been born with serious birth defects, while as many 2 million people are suffering from cancer or other illness caused by Agent Orange.

In 2004, a group of Vietnamese citizens filed a lawsuit against more than 30 chemical companies, including the same ones that settled with the U.S. veterans in 1984. The suit, which sought billions of dollars worth of damages, claimed that Agent Orange and its poisonous effects left a legacy of health problems and that its use constituted a violation of international law. In March 2005, a federal judge in Brooklyn, [New York](#), dismissed the suit; another U.S. court rejected a final appeal in 2008.

### DATA SET THREE

“I Feel Like I’m Fixin’ To Die”

Country Joe and the Fish

Lyrics- 1967

Well come on all of you big strong men,  
Uncle Sam needs your help again,  
He got himself in a terrible jam,  
Way down yonder in Vietnam,  
Put down your books and pick up a gun,  
We're gonna have a whole lotta fun

And its 1,2,3 what are we fighting for?  
Don't ask me I don't give a damn,  
The next stop is Vietnam,  
And its 5,6,7 open up the pearly gates,  
Well there ain't no time to wonder why,  
WHOOPEE we're all gonna die

Well come on generals let's move fast,  
Your big chance is come at last,  
Gotta go out and get those reds,  
The only good commie is one that's dead,  
And you know that peace can only be  
won,  
When you blow them all to kingdom  
come

And its 1,2,3 what are we fighting for?  
Don't ask me I don't give a damn,  
The next stop is Vietnam,  
And its 5,6,7 open up the pearly gates,  
Well there ain't no time to wonder why,  
WHOOPEE we're all gonna die

Well come on wall street don't be slow,  
Why man this is war go go go,  
There's plenty good money to be made,  
By supplying the army with the tools of  
the trade,  
Just hope and pray that if they drop the  
bomb  
They drop it on the Vietcong.

And its 1,2,3 what are we fighting for?  
Don't ask me I don't give a damn,  
The next stop is Vietnam,  
And its 5,6,7 open up the pearly gates,  
Well there ain't no time to wonder why,  
WHOOPEE we're all gonna die

Well come on mothers across the land,  
Pack your boys off to Vietnam,  
Come on fathers don't hesitate,  
Send your sons off before its too late,  
Be the first one on your block,  
To have your boy come home in a box

And its 1,2,3 what are we fighting for?  
Don't ask me I don't give a damn,  
The next stop is Vietnam,  
And its 5,6,7 open up the pearly gates,  
Well there ain't no time to wonder why,  
WHOOPEE we're all gonna die

This data set is to be accompanied by an audio version of the song.

A video featuring the audio to accompany these lyrics can be found at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8rArmFRkaFY>

**DATA SET FOUR**  
**Excerpts from "Aggression from the North"**  
**State Department White Paper on Vietnam**  
**February 27, 1965**

...South Vietnam is fighting for its life against a brutal campaign of terror and armed attack inspired, directed, supplied, and controlled by the Communist regime in Hanoi. This flagrant aggression has been going on for years, but recently the pace has quickened and the threat has now become acute.

...For in Vietnam a totally new brand of aggression has been loosed against an independent people who want to make their way in peace and freedom.

...In Vietnam a Communist government has set out deliberately to conquer a sovereign people in a neighboring state. And to achieve its end, it has used every resource of its own government to carry out its carefully planned program of concealed aggression.

...For more than 10 years the people and the Government of South Vietnam, exercising the inherent right of self-defense, have fought back against these efforts to extend Communist power south across the 17th parallel. The United States has responded to the appeals of the Government of the Republic of Vietnam for help in this defense of the freedom and independence of its land and its people.

...This aggression (from the North) violates the United Nations Charter. It is directly contrary to the Geneva Accords of 1954 and of 1962 to which North Vietnam is a party. It is a fundamental threat to the freedom and security of South Vietnam.

...The United States seeks no territory, no military bases, no favored position. But we have learned the meaning of aggression elsewhere in the post-war world, and we have met it.

...If peace can be restored in South Vietnam, the United States will be ready at once to reduce its military involvement. But it will not abandon friends who want to remain free. It will do what must be done to help them. The choice now between peace and continued and increasingly destructive conflict is one for the authorities in Hanoi to make.

## DATA SET FIVE

### "Napalm"



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Excerpt from: "Dow Chemical and the Use of Napalm"

For such a simple thing to make, napalm had horrific human consequences. A bit of liquid fire, a sort of jellied gasoline, napalm clung to human skin on contact and melted off the flesh. Witnesses to napalm's impact described eyelids so burned they could not be shut and flesh that looked like "swollen, raw meat." In Vietnam, the first televised war, viewers began to see images of the civilian casualties caused by napalm bombs, and a January 1967 article in *Ramparts* magazine presented color photographs of mutilated Vietnamese children. The pictures helped Martin Luther King Jr. decide to go public with his opposition to the war. And at colleges across America, students brandished the photographs as they began protesting Dow recruiters. The first demonstrations occurred in October 1966 at the Berkeley campus of the University of California and Wayne State University in Michigan, and over the next year, more than a hundred other protests would take place. The two key student demonstrations at the University of Wisconsin, in February and October 1967, were both triggered by Dow recruitment on campus.

Photo from: "Napalm Girl': An Iconic Image Of War Turns 40." NPR. Retrieved October 24, 2012 from <http://www.npr.org/2012/06/03/154234617/napalm-girl-an-iconic-image-of-war-turns-40>

Text from: "Dow Chemical and the Use of Napalm." PBS. Retrieved October 24, 2012 from [http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/twodays/peoplevents/e\\_napalm.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/twodays/peoplevents/e_napalm.html)

## **DATA SET SIX**

“Estimate of American Casualties during Vietnam War”

Casualty Category	Number of Records
ACCIDENT	9,107
DECLARED DEAD	1,201
DIED OF WOUNDS	5,299
HOMICIDE	236
ILLNESS	938
KILLED IN ACTION	40,934
PRESUMED DEAD (BODY REMAINS RECOVERED)	32
PRESUMED DEAD (BODY REMAINS NOT RECOVERED)	91
SELF-INFLICTED	382
Total Records	58,220

Hostile or Non Hostile Death Indicator	Number of Records
HOSTILE DEATH	47,434
NON HOSTILE DEATH	10,786
Total Records	58,220

Race	Number of Records
AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKA NATIVE	226
ASIAN	139
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	7,243
HISPANIC ONE RACE	349
NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER	229
NON-HISPANIC MORE THAN ONE RACE	204
WHITE	49,830
Total Records	58,220

## DATA SET SEVEN

### “Kent State Incident”



...On April 30, 1970, President Richard M. Nixon appeared on national television to announce the invasion of Cambodia by the United States and the need to draft 150,000 more soldiers for an expansion of the Vietnam War effort. This provoked massive protests on campuses throughout the country. At Kent State University in Ohio, protesters launched a demonstration that included setting fire to the ROTC building, prompting the governor of Ohio to dispatch 900 National Guardsmen to the campus...

...During an altercation on May 4, twenty-eight guardsmen opened fire on a crowd, killing four students and wounding nine. Following the killings, the unrest across the country escalated even further. Almost five hundred colleges were shut down or disrupted by protests. Despite the public outcry, the Justice Department initially declined to conduct a grand jury investigation. A report by the President's Commission on Campus Unrest did acknowledge, however, that the action of the guardsmen had been "unnecessary, unwarranted, and inexcusable." Eventually, a grand jury indicted eight of the guardsmen, but the charges were dismissed for lack of evidence.

## **DATA SET EIGHT**

### **The Senate Debates the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, August 6-7, 1964**

To Promote the Maintenance of International Peace and Security in Southeast Asia

Whereas naval units of the Communist regime in Vietnam, in violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law, have deliberately and repeatedly attacked United States naval vessels lawfully present in international waters, and have thereby created a serious threat to international peace; and

Whereas these attacks are part of a deliberate and systematic campaign of aggression that the Communist regime in North Vietnam has been waging against its neighbors and the nations joined with them in the collective defense of their freedom; and

Whereas the United States is assisting the peoples of southeast Asia to protect their freedom and has no territorial, military or political ambitions in that area, but desires only that these people should be left in peace to work out their own destinies in their own way: Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled.

That the Congress approves and supports the determination of the President as Commander in Chief, to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression.

SEC.2. The United States regards as vital to its national interest and to world peace the maintenance of international peace and security in Southeast Asia. Consonant with the Constitution of the United States and the Charter of the United Nations and in accordance with its obligations under the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty, the United States is, therefore, prepared, as the President determines, to take all necessary steps, including the use of armed force, to assist any member or protocol state of the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty requesting assistance in defense of its freedom.

SEC. 3. This resolution shall expire when the President shall determine that the peace and security of the area is reasonably assured by international conditions created by action of the United Nations or otherwise, except that it may be terminated earlier by concurrent resolution of the Congress.

MR. NELSON:

[Gaylord Nelson, Dem.-Wis.] . . . Am I to understand that it is the sense of Congress that we are saying to the executive branch: "If it becomes necessary to prevent further aggression, we agree now, in advance, that you may land as many divisions as deemed necessary, and engage in a direct military assault on North Vietnam if it becomes the judgment of the Executive, the Commander in Chief, that this is the only way to prevent further aggression"?

MR FULBRIGHT:

[William Fulbright, Dem.-Ark] As I stated, section I is intended to deal primarily with aggression against our forces.... I do not know what the limits are. I do not think this resolution can be determinative of that fact. I think it would indicate that he [the President] would take reasonable means first to prevent any further aggression, or repel further aggression against our own forces...I do not know how to answer the Senator's question and give him an absolute assurance that large numbers of troops would not be put ashore. I would deplore it...

MR. NELSON: . . . My concern is that we in Congress could give the impression to the public that we are prepared at this time to change our mission and substantially expand our commitment. If that is what the sense of Congress is, I am opposed to the resolution. I therefore ask the distinguished Senator from Arkansas if he would consent to accept an amendment [that explicitly says Congress wants no extension of the present military conflict and no U.S. direct military involvement].

MR.FULBRIGHT: . . . The Senator has put into his amendment a statement of policy that is unobjectionable. However, I cannot accept the amendment under the circumstances. I do not believe it is contrary to the joint resolution, but it is an enlargement. I am informed that the House is now voting on this resolution. The House joint resolution is about to be presented to us. I cannot accept the amendment and go to conference with it, and thus take responsibility for delaying matters.

MR. GRUENING: [Ernest Gruening, Dem.-Alaska] . . . Regrettably, I find myself in disagreement with the President's Southeast Asian policy. . . The serious events of the past few days, the attack by North Vietnamese vessels on American warships and our reprisal, strikes me as the inevitable and foreseeable concomitant and consequence of U.S. unilateral military aggressive policy in Southeast Asia.... We now are about to authorize the President if he sees fit to move our Armed Forces . . . not only into South Vietnam, but also into North Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, and of course the authorization includes all the rest of the SEATO nations. That means sending our American boys into combat in a war in which we have no business. Which is not our war, into which we have been misguidedly drawn, which is steadily being escalated. This resolution is a further authorization for escalation unlimited. I am opposed to sacrificing a single American boy in this venture. We have lost far too many already....

MR. MORSE: [Wayne Morse, Dem.-Ore.] . . . I believe that history will record that we have made a great mistake in subverting and circumventing the Constitution of the United States. . . I believe this resolution to be a historic mistake. I believe that within the next century, future generations will look with dismay and great disappointment upon a Congress which is now about to make such a historic mistake.

SOURCE: *Congressional Record*. August 6-7, 1964. pp18132-33. 18406-7. 18458-59, and 18470-71.

## POST-INQUIRY DATA SET

### **4 Decades on, U.S. Starts Cleanup of Agent Orange in Vietnam**

By THOMAS FULLER

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DA NANG, Vietnam — In the tropical climate of central Vietnam, weeds and shrubs seem to grow everywhere — except here.

Forty years after the United States stopped spraying herbicides in the jungles of Southeast Asia in the hopes of denying cover to Vietcong fighters and North Vietnamese troops, an air base here is one of about two dozen former American sites that remain polluted with an especially toxic strain of dioxin, the chemical contaminant in Agent Orange that has been linked to cancers, birth defects and other diseases.

On Thursday, after years of rebuffing Vietnamese requests for assistance in a cleanup, the United States inaugurated its first major effort to address the environmental effects of the long war.

“This morning we celebrate a milestone in our bilateral relationship,” David B. Shear, the American ambassador to Vietnam, said at a ceremony attended by senior officers of the Vietnamese military. “We’re cleaning up this mess.”

[The program](#), which is expected to cost \$43 million and take four years, was officially welcomed with smiles and handshakes at the ceremony. But bitterness remains here. Agent Orange is mentioned often in the news media, and victims are commemorated annually on Aug. 10, the day in 1961 when American forces first tested spraying it in Vietnam. The government objected to Olympics sponsorship this year by Dow Chemical, a leading producer of Agent Orange during the war. Many here have not hesitated to call the American program too little — it addresses only the one site — and very late.

“It’s a big step,” said Ngo Quang Xuan, a former Vietnamese ambassador to the United Nations. “But in the eyes of those who suffered the consequences, it’s not enough.”

Over a decade of war, the United States sprayed about 20 million gallons of Agent Orange and other herbicides in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, halting only after scientists commissioned by the Agriculture Department issued a report expressing concerns that dioxin showed “a significant potential to increase birth defects.” By the time the spraying stopped, Agent Orange and other herbicides had destroyed 2 million hectares, or 5.5 million acres, of forest and cropland, an area roughly the size of New Jersey.

Nguyen Van Rin, a retired lieutenant general who is now the chairman of the

Vietnam Association for Victims of Agent Orange/Dioxin, has vivid memories of hearing American aircraft above the jungles of southern Vietnam and seeing Agent Orange raining down in sheets on him and his troops. Plants and animals exposed to the defoliant were dead within days. Many of his troops later suffered illnesses that he suspects were linked to the repeated exposure to Agent Orange, used in concentrations 20 to 55 times that of normal agricultural use.

“I would like to have one message sent to the American people,” Mr. Rinh said in his office, where a large bust of Ho Chi Minh, the wartime leader and icon, stared down from a shelf behind his desk. “The plight of Agent Orange victims continues. I think the relationship would rise up to new heights if the American government took responsibility and helped their victims and address the consequences.”

Those who have worked on the issue say the American government has been slow to address the issue in part because of concerns about liability. It took years for American soldiers who sprayed the chemicals [to secure settlements](#) from the chemical companies that produced them. The United States government, which also lagged in acknowledging the problem, has spent billions of dollars on disability payments and health care for American soldiers who came into contact with Agent Orange.

Mr. Shear, the American ambassador, sidestepped a reporter’s question after the ceremony about whether the United States would take responsibility for the environmental and health effects of Agent Orange.

“There is a disconnect between what America has done for its soldiers and what America has done for Vietnam,” said Charles Bailey, the director of the [Agent Orange in Vietnam Program](#), an effort by the Aspen Institute, a nongovernmental organization based in Washington, to reach common ground between the United States and Vietnam on the issue. “I’m sometimes glad I’m not a U.S. diplomat in trying to square that circle.”

A class-action case against chemical companies filed in the United States on behalf of millions of Vietnamese was dismissed in 2005 on the grounds that supplying the defoliant did not amount to a war crime and that the Vietnamese plaintiffs had not established a clear causal effect between exposure to Agent Orange and their health problems. The United States government is rolling out a modest \$11.4 million program to help people with disabilities in Vietnam, but it is not explicitly linked to Agent Orange. The oft-repeated American formulation is “assistance regardless of cause.”

When environmental factors are linked to disease, proof positive is sometimes hard to determine. American military studies have outlined connections between Agent Orange and myriad ailments, while [Dow Chemical maintains](#) that the “very substantial body of human evidence on Agent Orange establishes that veterans’ illnesses are not caused by Agent Orange.”

In Vietnam, there are many cases in which links to Agent Orange appear striking. Nguyen Van Dung, 42, moved to Da Nang in 1996 with his wife and newborn daughter and worked at the former American base, wading through the knee-deep mud of drainage ditches and dredging them with a shovel. During the first 10 years, he, like other employees, harvested fish and eels from the large ponds and canals on the air base grounds, taking them home almost daily. Studies later showed high concentrations of dioxin in the fat tissue and organs of the fish.

The couple's first daughter is now at the top of her class, but their second child, also a girl, was born in 2000 with a rare blood disease. She died at 7.

Their son Tu was born in 2008, and he was quickly found to have the same blood condition. With regular transfusions, he has defied his doctor's prediction that he would not live past 3, but he is nearly blind, with bulging eyes that roll wildly, and he speaks in high-pitched tones that only his parents can understand. His chest cavity is so weak that he cannot breathe if he lies on his stomach.

What caused the birth defects, and who is to blame? Detailed medical tests are out of the question for Tu's parents, whose combined monthly income is the equivalent of \$350, much of which goes to medical care.

But Luu Thi Thu, the boy's mother, does not hesitate to assign blame.

"If there hadn't been a war and Americans hadn't sprayed dioxin and chemicals into this area, we wouldn't be suffering these consequences," she said.

"What happened to my son is already done, and nothing can change that," she said. "The American and Vietnamese governments need to clean up the Da Nang airport so that the next generation will not be affected."

Le Ke Son, a doctor and the most senior Vietnamese official responsible for the government's programs related to Agent Orange and other chemicals used during the war, said the debates should take a back seat to aid. "We spend a lot of time arguing about the reason why people are disabled," he said. "One way or another they are victims and suffered from the legacy of the war. We should do something for them."