

## The Vietnam Era

### Lesson 4 Vietnam in the Nixon Years

#### ESSENTIAL QUESTION

*What motivates people to act?*

#### GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. *What steps did Nixon take to bring American forces home and end the Vietnam War?*
2. *Why did new antiwar protests take place as Vietnamization moved forward?*
3. *How did the peace talks lead to a withdrawal of all American forces in Vietnam?*

#### Terms to Know

**Vietnamization** President Nixon's plan calling for the South Vietnamese to take a more active role in fighting and for Americans to become less involved

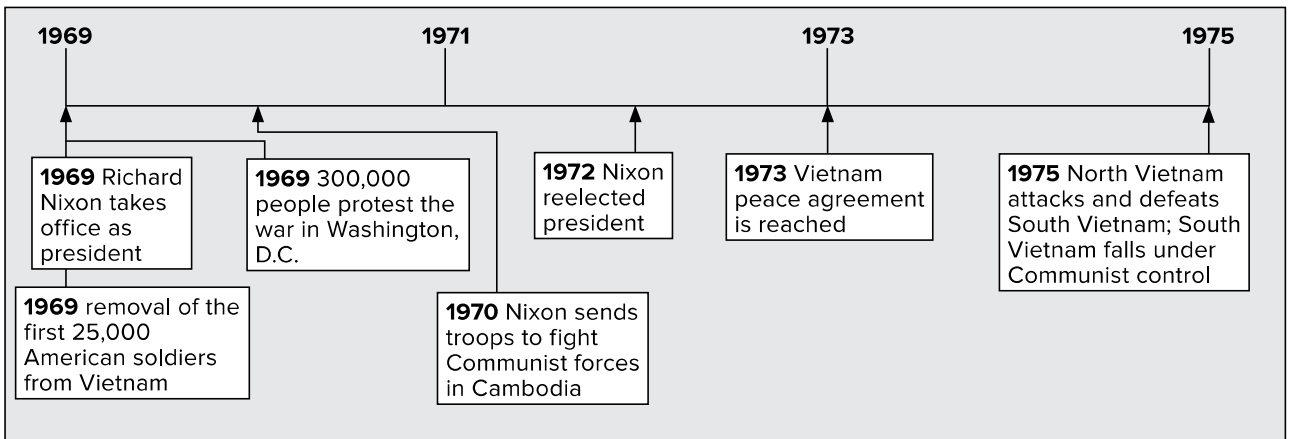
**martial law** emergency military rule

**MIA** American soldier classified as missing during a war or other military action

#### Where in the world?



#### When did it happen?



## The Vietnam Era

### Lesson 4 Vietnam in the Nixon Years, *Continued*

#### Nixon Takes Office

Richard Nixon had run for president with the promise of “peace with honor” in Vietnam. As president, he began working to end the United States’ role in the war.

Nixon named Henry Kissinger as his National Security Advisor. Kissinger had authority to help make peace in Vietnam. He had a plan he called “linkage.” The goal of this plan was to build better relationships with the Soviet Union and China. These countries were important because they gave support and supplies to North Vietnam. Kissinger hoped to get the Soviet Union and China to reduce their aid to North Vietnam. He hoped this would help to end the war.

Nixon’s plan for “peace with honor” had three parts: changing the draft system, giving South Vietnam a bigger role in fighting the war, and more bombing in North Vietnam.

#### Nixon’s “Peace with Honor” Plan

1. Changing the draft system to make it fairer
2. Getting South Vietnam to take on a bigger part in the fighting
3. Bombing more targets in North Vietnam

Nixon made the draft system more fair. College students no longer got deferments. Only 19-year-olds could be called for service, and young men were chosen at random in a lottery. Also the government drafted fewer young men. President Nixon promised to get rid of the draft completely in the future. People liked these changes.

Next, Nixon made a plan he called **Vietnamization**. This plan called for the South Vietnamese to take on more of the fighting. Americans soldiers would do less. In June 1969, Nixon pulled the first 25,000 American soldiers out of Vietnam.

Finally, to make things easier for the American soldiers still in Vietnam, Nixon ordered U.S. planes to bomb North Vietnamese supply routes. He also ordered U.S. forces to bomb Cambodia. However, he kept that order secret from the American public. He also announced the “Nixon Doctrine” which shifted some responsibility for fighting communism to other nations.



#### Listing

1. What were the three ways Nixon changed the draft system to make it more fair?

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#### Marking the Text

2. What did Nixon mean by “Vietnamization”? Underline the answer in the text. How would it affect American soldiers?

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#### Critical Thinking

3. In your opinion, was Henry Kissinger’s “linkage” policy a good plan for ending the war in Vietnam? Why or why not?

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**Lesson 4** Vietnam in the Nixon Years, *Continued*

**? Comparing**

4. How was the war in Cambodia similar to the war in Vietnam?

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**✓ Reading Check**

5. Describe one effect of each of these events.

Another war started in Cambodia; Effect:

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Nixon sent troops into Cambodia; Effect:

\_\_\_\_\_

Violent protest at Kent State University; Effect:

\_\_\_\_\_

Pentagon papers released; Effect:

\_\_\_\_\_

**? Analyzing**

6. Why did North Vietnam agree to return to peace talks?

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**The Protests Continue**

Nixon and Kissinger tried to get the North Vietnamese to agree to a peace deal, but the war continued.

Then another war started in Cambodia between Communist and non-Communist forces. Nixon sent troops to Cambodia to attack Communist bases there. Americans were angry that Nixon had gotten involved in this new war.

At home, Americans continued to protest the Vietnam War. There were protests all over the nation. In October 1969, more than 300,000 people joined a huge protest in Washington, D.C.

Many protests were on college campuses. Most were peaceful. A protest at Kent State University in Ohio turned violent. Ohio's governor declared **martial law**. Martial law means emergency military rule. The National Guard told the protesters to leave. Instead of leaving, some students threw rocks. National Guard members fired their weapons. Four students were killed. There was another violent protest at Jackson State University in Mississippi. This time two students were shot and killed.

Nixon also lost support in Congress. Its members were angry that he had not told them about the invasion of Cambodia. Then Daniel Ellsberg gave some secret papers to the *New York Times*. These papers were called the Pentagon Papers. The papers gave details about past presidents and the war. They showed that some officials had misled Congress and the public. Many Americans saw that the government had not been honest with them.

**Peace and the War's Effects**

President Nixon was still working to end the war. In 1972 he ordered a major bombing attack. The heaviest bombing of the war fell on North Vietnam. Nixon hoped this would convince North Vietnam to return to peace talks. His plan succeeded.

Americans pressured South Vietnam to accept peace terms. On January 27, 1973, all sides made a peace deal. The North Vietnamese agreed to return all American prisoners of war. The United States agreed to pull its troops out of Vietnam.

America's part in the Vietnam War was over. But the conflict was not. North Vietnam still wanted to bring all of Vietnam under Communist rule. In 1975 the North began a major attack. On April 30, 1975, South Vietnam fell to the Communists.

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**Lesson 4** Vietnam in the Nixon Years, *Continued*

More than one million Vietnamese people died in the war. Vietnam’s cities and countryside were in ruins. Also, more than 58,000 Americans died in Vietnam. Another 300,000 were wounded. Thousands of U.S. soldiers were missing in action—**MIA**. No one knew if they were dead or alive. Families of the MIA tried to find their loved ones. As the years passed, it became clear that there was little chance of finding them alive.

The war was also expensive for the United States. The government spent more than \$150 billion on the Vietnam War.

**Check for Understanding**

**What steps did Nixon take to bring American forces home and end the Vietnam War?**

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**Why did Ohio’s governor declare martial law during the Kent State protest?**

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**Defining**

**7.** What does “MIA” stand for?

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**8.** Place a two-tab Foldable vertically along the dotted line to cover the Check for Understanding. Label the anchor tab *Progress and Protests*. On the top tab write the question *What progress was made to end the war?* On the bottom tab write *What protests made national news and why?* Use both sides of the tabs to record what you remember about each. Use your Foldable to help answer Check for Understanding.

Glue Foldable here