

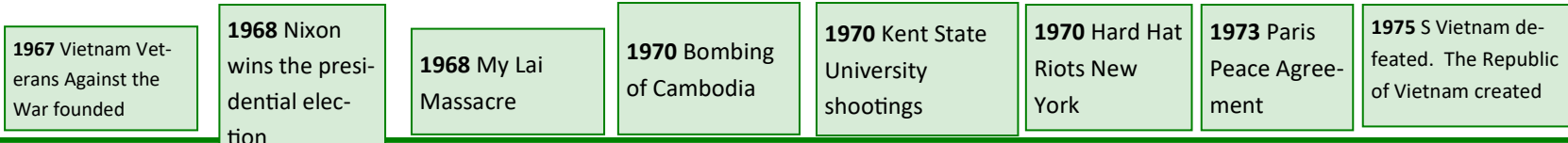


Summary

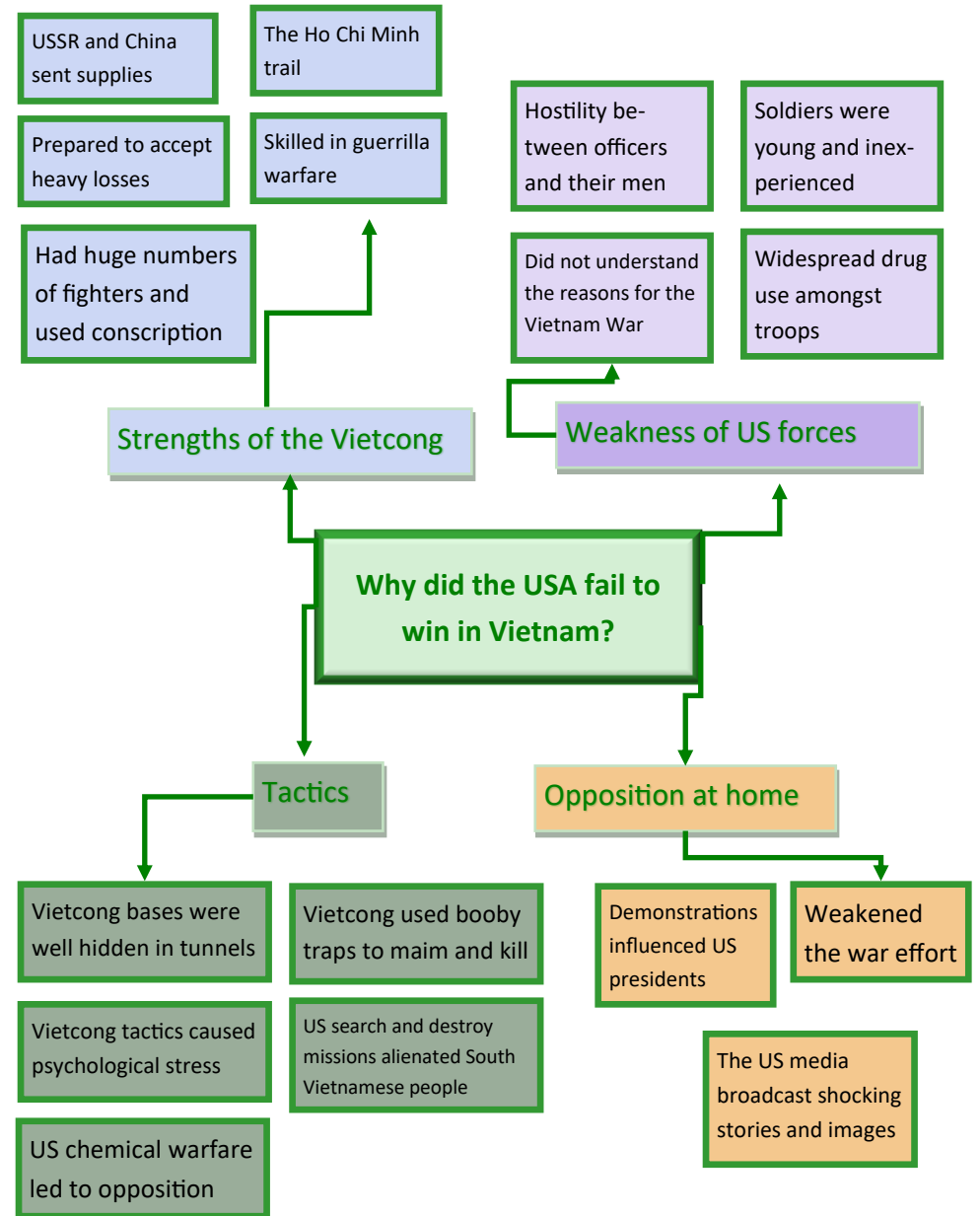
Opposition to the Vietnam war in the USA emerged in the 1960s. It grew due to TV coverage of the conflict and the growing number of US casualties (58,000 US soldiers lost their lives in Vietnam). Many young men resisted 'The Draft' which called them up for war. Rallies and protest marches against the war took place and government reaction to these protests culminated in the Kent State University shootings in 1970. During this protest four young American protesters were shot dead. This opposition to the war meant that President Johnson did not stand for re-election in 1968 and the newly elected president, Richard Nixon, promised to bring peace. However, a significant number of American people DID support the Vietnam War, Nixon termed this group 'The Silent Majority.' Peace talks began in 1968 but were delayed by petty disagreements. In March 1973 the last American troops left Vietnam. Vietnam was finally reunited in 1975 when the North conquered and occupied the South.

Key Figures

Muhammed Ali	American heavyweight boxing champion who refused The Draft in 1966. He was arrested and stripped of his boxing titles.
LBJ—President Johnson	Criticised for his handling of the Vietnam war including US tactics and his abandonment of the Great Society initiative.
Lieutenant Calley	Found guilty of murder after his platoon wiped out the village of My Lai in 1968 (347 people tortured and killed). Sentenced to 20 years hard labour, he served only 3.
Le Duc Tho	Negotiated a peace agreement with Henry Kissinger. Refused to accept the Nobel Peace Prize "my country is not at peace."
Henry Kissinger	Respected and well known journalist who reported from Saigon during the Tet Offensive. He was shocked by the apparent success of the Vietcong.



TIMELINE OF THE VIETNAM WAR





The Economic and Human Costs of the Vietnam War for the USA

Economic Cost	By 1968 the USA had spent \$26.5 billion on the Vietnam War. Some of this money came from funds for Johnson's Great Society. The war meant that the USA was spending more than it was earning from 1965 a situation that could not go on indefinitely (this is called a deficit). The US Treasury convinced President Nixon that the war HAD to end.
Human Cost	58,000 US soldiers were killed and more than 300,000 were injured. The widespread availability of drugs like heroin meant that addiction was a real problem in the US army. Official estimates say 30% of American troops used heroin. Over 3 million men and women served in Vietnam. Those who refused to go were called 'draft dodgers'.



'If this boy of yours is real, how come we gotta wind him up all the time?'

Other Resources

- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zv7bkqt/revision/5>
- <https://www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war/vietnam-war-timeline>



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Key Vocabulary

veteran	Someone who has fought in a war. Veterans of the Vietnam war reported being poorly treated when they returned home.
Great Society	President Johnson's plan to reduce poverty by investing money in education, healthcare, housing. The funds for this were diverted to pay for the Vietnam War
casualties	Dead or wounded people. 58,000 US soldiers died in Vietnam. It is estimated that 2,000,000 civilians were killed.
Vietnam Veterans Against the War	Founded in 1967. Returning soldiers protested against the war in cities across the USA
Conscription	Being forced to serve in the armed forces
The Draft	The name given to conscription for the Vietnam War
Vietcong	Name used for Communist forces fighting in South Vietnam
Operation Phoenix	The CIA used undercover agents to target suspected Communists. Some suspects were tortured to make them confess.
Mad Man Theory	President Nixon wanted the North Vietnamese to believe he was mad enough to use a nuclear bomb against them.
Kent State University	Four students here were shot dead in 1970 during a demonstration against the invasion of Cambodia.
Operation Linebacker II	11 day bombing campaign against North Vietnam during peace talks in December 1972.
Cambodia	Country next to Vietnam which was bombed by the USA in 1970 despite not being at war. This caused protests across America. 2 million civilians were left homeless.
Silent Majority	Phrase used by President Nixon to describe Americans who supported the Vietnam war.
Hard Hat Riots	Construction workers in New York attacked students demonstrating against the war. Only 6 people were arrested.

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Challenge
Research the peace talks in more detail and draw up a timeline 1968-1975..
"US opposition to the war was the main reason for it's defeat." Do you agree? Explain why.