

● **DURING 1959** — A specialized North Vietnamese unit is formed to create a supply route to aid Vietcong forces in the south. This becomes the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

● **Jan. 12, 1962** — U.S. helicopters conduct the first combat missions against the Vietcong.

● **APRIL - JUNE 1964** U.S. airpower is massively reinforced. Two aircraft carriers arrive off the Vietnamese coast.

● **MARCH 2, 1965** The bombing offensive, Operation Rolling Thunder, begins.

● **JAN. 8, 1966** — U.S. launches Operation Crimp, its largest operation of the war.

● **APRIL 24, 1967** U.S. attacks on North Vietnamese airfields begin.

● **JAN. 1969** President Nixon takes office.

● **APRIL 1969** U.S. combat deaths exceed deaths in Korea.

● **JAN. 27, 1973** All warring parties agree to a cease fire.

● **APRIL 30, 1975** — North Vietnamese troops enter Saigon, ending the war in Vietnam.



● **LATE 1961** — President Kennedy orders help for the South Vietnamese in its war against the Vietcong. Aid includes new equipment and more than 3,000 military advisors and support personnel.

● **EARLY 1962** — Use of herbicide "Agent Orange" begins to clear vegetation.

● **AUG. 7, 1964** — Congress passes Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. President Johnson can now take whatever action is needed to defend Vietnam.

● **AUG. 17, 1965** — Operation Starlite, the first major battle of the war, results in a resounding U.S. victory.

● **LATE MAY-JUNE 1966** Largest battle of the war to date breaks out at Dong Ha.

● **JAN. 30, 1968** — Vietcong units launch the Tet Offensive. Although a victory for the Americans, it's a serious blow to public support.

● **JAN. 1, 1972** Only 133,000 of roughly 400,000 U.S. troops remain in Vietnam.

● **MARCH 1973** The last U.S. combat soldiers leave South Vietnam.