

# NATIONAL VIETNAM EXAMINATION

Distributed by: Students for a Democratic Society  
and Inter-University Committee for  
Debate on Foreign Policy

**Instructions:** This examination has been prepared to allow you to check your understanding of the war in Vietnam. For each question, indicate the correct answer or correct answers in the space provided. We believe in the importance in a democracy of putting the facts in the hands of every citizen to enable him to participate in decision-making. This is particularly true where the question is war and peace, and where the citizens are the young men who are called upon to fight.

1. The following statements were made by leading figures involved in the Vietnamese conflict. Match the quotations below with the author (more than one quotation can be attributed to the same individual).

- ☐ A) "I would like to see American students develop as much fanaticism about the U. S. political system as young Nazis did about their system during the war."
- ☐ B) "For years now in Southeast Asia, the only people who have been doing anything about the little man at the grassroots -- to lift him up -- have been the Communists."
- ☐ C) "The C.I.A. has employed some South Vietnamese and they have been instructed to claim they are Vietcong and to work accordingly... Several of these executed two village leaders and raped some women."
- ☐ D) "Do you think those (American) demonstrations were organized by some fine little social club? They were organized by an international apparatus; 95 per cent of the demonstrators are no more Communists than you and I, but the international Communist movement organized it and masterminded it."
- ☐ E) "The fever chart of every successful revolution... reveals a rising temperature of terrorism and counter-terrorism, but this does not of itself invalidate the legitimate goals that fired the original revolution. Most political revolutions--including our own--have been buoyed by outside aid in men, weapons and ideas."
- ☒ F) "... The Communists are closer to the people's yearning for social justice and an independent life than (my) own government."
- ☒ G) "The major part of the U. S. military task can be completed by the end of 1965, although there may be a continuing requirement for a limited number of U. S. training personnel."
- ☒ H) "I have only one (hero): Hitler "

- 1) John F. Kennedy
- 2) Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge
- 3) Premier Nguyen Cao Ky
- 4) Barry Goldwater
- 5) Senator Stephen Young of Ohio
- 6) Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara
- 7) Vice-President Hubert H. Humphrey
- 8) President Lyndon B. Johnson
- 9) Ho Chi Minh

2. Free elections are a major issue in South Vietnam today. The earliest time at which free elections were (are) supposed to take place was (is):

- ☒ (A) August, 1945
- ☒ (B) July, 1956
- ☐ (C) January, 1959
- ☐ (D) November, 1963
- ☐ (E) sometime in 1966

3. Which of the following accurately describe(s) the cause(s) of unrest in South Vietnam after 1956?

- ☒ (A) Saigon dissolved elected village councils and replaced them with appointed, often corrupt officials, many of whom were not from the villages they administered.
- ☒ (B) Saigon took land from farmers who had seized it during the war with the French (1946-54), and returned it to the former landlords who restored land rents.
- ☒ (C) Saigon cracked down on political dissidents.
- ☒ (D) From 1954 to 1956, the Saigon government gained substantial support and restored the economy to prosperity. Seeing no other way to gain control of South Vietnam, the North Vietnamese government ordered its agents in the South to begin a campaign of terror.

4. Which of the following statements about military operations in Vietnam, is (are) true?

- ☒ (A) American counter-insurgency forces arrived in South Vietnam as early as 1955.
- ☒ (B) South Vietnamese and American soldiers have infiltrated North Vietnam.
- ☒ (C) About three-quarters of the infiltrators from North Vietnam into South Vietnam from 1959 through 1964 were native Southerners.
- ☒ (D) In South Vietnam "anti-Diem guerrillas were active long before infiltrated North Vietnamese elements joined the fray."

5. According to Mike Mansfield, majority leader of the Senate, there are 230,000 Viet Cong troops inside South Viet Nam--of whom 73,000 are main force regulars including 14,000 North Vietnamese people's army men. Using these figures, what percentage of the total Viet Cong force is made up of North Vietnamese People's Army men?

- ☐ (A) 2%
- ☐ (B) 6%
- ☐ (C) 20%
- ☐ (D) 100%

6. There were approximately 540,000 South Vietnamese in all branches of the Saigon government's fighting forces in 1965. About how many South Vietnamese deserted during 1965?

- ☐ (A) 57
- ☐ (B) 500
- ☐ (C) 20,000
- ☐ (D) 82,000
- ☐ (E) 113,000

7. The statement below is part of an editorial entitled "What Kind of War is This?":

"It is hard to disagree with President Johnson's announced aims in Vietnam. He has proclaimed those traditional goals for which Americans have always been prepared to fight...yet something new and ugly is happening in the way we fight for those goals. It began perhaps, with the decision to drop bombs and napalm on communist dominated peasant villages, killing and maiming the people we profess to defend from aggression... A Buddhist monastery wrecked by bombs... at least two monks killed, 10 injured... South Vietnamese troops beat and torture prisoners... U. S. Marines, under sniper attack, set a number of peasant villages afire with grenades and flame throwers... In one case, a woman and four children are found burned to death in the wreckage... It used to be axiomatic that there could be no victory in Vietnam without the support of the Vietnamese people... Our commitment to the people of South Vietnam is a commitment to protect them, not to destroy them in the name of the 'Free World.'"

This statement appeared on the editorial pages of:

- ☐ (A) The Communist "Worker"
- ☐ (B) "The Marine Reservist"
- ☐ (C) The Students for a Democratic Society "New Left Notes"
- ☐ (D) "The Saturday Evening Post"

8. American planes on bombing missions in South Vietnam are sometimes unable to drop their bombs on specified targets. However, before returning to base, they must jettison their bomb loads. They are authorized to drop these bombs in a "free bomb zone." A free bomb zone is:

- ☐ (A) Sufficiently far out in the ocean so that noncombatants will not be injured
- ☐ (B) An unpopulated jungle area where ample warnings have been posted
- ☒ (C) An area in which any structure or movement can be bombed because the population is presumed to be "hostile" and therefore destroyable

9. The number of South Vietnamese civilian deaths caused by American and South Vietnamese military operations is:

- ☐ (A) 109 (from August 1, 1965 through March 1, 1966)
- ☐ (B) about 14,000 in January-February 1966 alone
- ☐ (C) none since only "hard-core Vietcong" are killed by American military operations
- ☐ (D) probably twice the number of Vietcong killed

10. Chemical crop destruction will have the following predictable effects on enemy-held territories:

- ☐ (A) Enemy military operations will be severely hampered by logistic shortages
- ☐ (B) Death from starvation will occur--first of all in young children and the elderly
- ☐ (C) Adult men are the least likely and last to suffer disease and death

11. The war in South Vietnam is supposed to be part of our policy to contain Communist Chinese aggression. How many Communist Chinese troops are actively engaged in combat in Vietnam?

- ☐ (A) None
- ☐ (B) 1,000
- ☐ (C) 50,000
- ☐ (D) 100,000
- ☐ (E) 500,000

12. The American Government claims that a main legal basis for fighting in Vietnam is our obligation under the mutual security clause of the South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). The co-signees of the SEATO Pact are France, Pakistan, Phillipines, New Zealand, Britain, Thailand, and Australia.

Of the approximately 850,000 troops fighting on the side of the Saigon government, how many come from SEATO countries other than the U. S.?

- ☐ (A) More than 100,000
- ☐ (B) About 75,000
- ☐ (C) About 45,000
- ☐ (D) Less than 5,000
- ☐ (E) None

13. The American government often denounces Communist terrorism. This terrorism is given as a reason why the U. S. must never accept a Communist government in South Vietnam.

In recent months, three hundred thousand persons have been slaughtered in one of the following countries, yet the U. S. has failed to make a public statement opposing this violence. Which country?

- ☐ (A) North Vietnam
- ☐ (B) Indonesia
- ☐ (C) Soviet Union
- ☐ (D) Communist China
- ☐ (E) Cuba

14. Which of the following American military heroes has, in the past, warned against committing a large number of American troops to a land war on the Asian mainland:

- ☐ (A) Gen. Douglas MacArthur
- ☐ (B) Pres. Dwight D. Eisenhower
- ☐ (C) Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway
- ☐ (D) Gen. Maxwell Taylor
- ☐ (E) Gen. James Gavin
- ☐ (F) Gen. Omar Bradley

15. One of the main obstacles to negotiations has been the American disagreement with Hanoi's insistence that the Vietnamese settle their internal affairs "in accordance with the program of the National Liberation Front of South Viet Nam (Viet Cong)." Which of the following points are contained in the NLF program?

- ☐ (A) The establishment of "a government of national and democratic union... composed of representatives of all social classes, of all nationalities, of all religions..."
- ☐ (B) "Implement essential democratic liberties: freedom of opinion, of press, of assembly, of movement, of trade unionism; freedom of religion without discrimination; and the right of all patriotic organizations of whatever political tendency to carry on normal activities."
- ☐ (C) "Elect a new National Assembly through universal suffrage."
- ☐ (D) "Support the national bourgeoisie in the reconstruction and development of crafts and industry."
- ☐ (E) "By negotiation and on the basis of fair prices, repurchase for distribution to landless peasants or peasants with insufficient land, those surplus lands that the owners of large estates will be made to relinquish if their domain exceeds a certain limit, to be determined according to regional particularities."
- ☐ (F) "Overthrow the camouflaged colonial regime of the American imperialists..."

16. Which of the following statements about the willingness of the North Vietnamese to negotiate are accurate?

- ☐ (A) The North Vietnamese only began to show some interest in negotiation after we began bombing them
- ☐ (B) There have been seven documented offers to negotiate by the North Vietnamese since September, 1964
- ☐ (C) "I must say that candor compels me to tell you that there has not been the slightest indication that the other side is interested in negotiations or in unconditional discussion although the United States has made some dozen separate attempts to bring them about." (President Johnson's speech, July 13, 1965)
- ☐ (D) The North Vietnamese have maintained that any negotiations must include the prior recognition of the Communist Chinese regime by the American government
- ☐ (E) The North Vietnamese and the National Liberation Front have maintained that the ultimate withdrawal of foreign troops be accepted as the basis of negotiation, but that such withdrawal does not have to precede negotiations

17. If the approximately \$13 billion the U. S. is expending this year to prosecute the war in Viet Nam were distributed equally among the South Vietnamese people, how much would each receive?

- ☐ (A) \$85
- ☐ (B) \$200
- ☐ (C) \$500
- ☐ (D) \$850

18. In order to be a conscientious objector (C.O.) to military service in the United States, you must:

- ☐ (A) Believe in God
- ☐ (B) Belong to a recognized church
- ☐ (C) Be against the use of force in any situation
- ☐ (D) Serve two years in a civilian hospital
- ☐ (E) None of the above



# ANSWERS

## TO NATIONAL VIET NAM EXAMINATION

1. (A)-8, public statements  
(B)-2, *New York Times*, Feb. 27, 1966  
(C)-5, *New York Herald-Tribune*, Nov. 21, 1965  
(D)-7, speech before Detroit Economic Club, Oct. 22, 1965  
(E)-1, then-Senator Kennedy in speech on the Senate floor speaking of the Algerian War, July 2, 1957  
(F)-3, an admission to James Reston, reported in the *New York Times*, Sept. 1, 1965  
(G)-6, White House Statement, Oct. 2, 1963  
(H)-3, *London Daily Mirror*, July 4, 1965
2. (B) As provided for by Article 7 of the Final Declaration of the 1954 Geneva Conference. Article 6 provided that "the military demarcation line (between North and South Vietnam) is provisional and should not in any way be interpreted as constituting a political or territorial boundary." Free elections for national reunification were to be held in both zones in July 1956, but they were not held because the American-supported South Vietnamese Premier, Ngo Dinh Diem, unilaterally abrogated the Geneva Agreements, and decided instead to hold a referendum in the South only. The only choices on this ballot, held in October 1955, were Diem himself and the fading Emperor, Bao Dai, and Diem won overwhelmingly. At the time of the referendum, the *London Economist* pointed out that the number who voted in the Saigon-Cholon area exceeded the number of registrants by 150,000. For the details, see the book by an Indian representative to the Geneva-established International Control Commission (which was to supervise the nation-wide election), B. S. N. Murti, *Vietnam Divided* (1965), pp. 125-162, especially pp. 140-143, 157. For a discussion of explicit American support of Diem's refusal to prepare for the 1956 elections, see Robert Scheer, *How the U. S. Got Involved in Vietnam* (1965).
3. (A), (B), & (C) are all accurate. See B. S. N. Murti, *Vietnam Divided* (1965); Jean Lacouture, *Vietnam: Between Two Truces* (1966), especially pp. 67-68; Philippe Devillers, "The Struggle for the Unification of Vietnam," in P. J. Honey (ed.), *North Vietnam Today* (1962). Specifically on (B), Bernard B. Fall gives these figures for land ownership in South Vietnam: 2% of the land owners hold 45% of the land, whereas 72% hold only 15%. See his *The Two Vietnams*, revised ed. (1964), p. 208. (D), the official U. S. position -- see the 1965 State Department White Paper, *Aggression from the North*, p. 26 -- is contradicted in Fall, pp. 289-315, and Lacouture, (above).
4. All are true according to leading authorities. (A) American counter-insurgency forces broke the Geneva agreements by entering South Vietnam in 1955 under the cover of numerous U. S. government agencies, including the CIA. (B) The facts on South Vietnamese infiltration of the North can be found in Bernard B. Fall, *The Two Vietnams*, p. 371. (C) can be calculated from the official American figures given in the 1965 White Paper. These were native Southerners who had fought against the French and only gone North in 1954 in accordance with the 1954 Geneva Agreements. The quotation in (D) is from Fall, *The Two Vietnams*, p. 344. Even the White Paper does not mention Northern infiltration before 1959, whereas South Vietnamese President Diem said in March 1959 that "at the present time Vietnam is a nation at war." (Devillers, in Honey, p. 37.)
5. (B), 6% is the correct answer. The small percentage of North Vietnamese troops compared to indigenous Viet Cong force belies the U. S. government's contention that the war in Viet Nam is not a civil war but aggression from North Viet Nam. The figures used in this question can be found in the article by Bernard B. Fall in the *New York Times Magazine*, March 6, 1966. Fall states that in 1965 "in spite of losses, the enemy had more than doubled its strength from within. It is the realization of this fact that led Senator Mansfield's study group to conclude that Communist forces escalated right along with the American troop increase."
6. (E) According to official sources (*New York Times*, 2-24-66), 113,000 South Vietnamese soldiers (or approximately 20 per cent of their armed forces) deserted in 1965, an increase of 50 per cent compared with the previous year.
7. (D) *Saturday Evening Post* of September 11, 1965.
8. The correct answer is (C).  
According to an article by Bernard Fall, internationally known expert on Viet Nam and former consultant to the U. S. Government, American pilots flying missions in South Viet Nam can drop their unused bombs anywhere -- "any target, any structure, any movement at all" -- in free bomb zones. "The free bomb zones in South Viet Nam change constantly, so it is difficult to give any accurate acreage for them--anyone living in these areas is presumed to be the enemy, or at least, presumed to be 'hostile' and therefore destroyable." --- (*Ramparts*, Dec., 1965)
9. (B) and (D) are correct, according to a report of the House Foreign Affairs Committee released March 17, 1966 by Rep. Clement Zablocki (D., Wis.). Zablocki added that "some recent search and destroy operations have resulted in six civilian casualties to one Viet Cong." (A) is the official figure, as released by Assistant Secretary of Defense John McNaughton on March 18. According to the *Washington Star* of August 19, 1965, the official figures "apparently are based on claims for civilian damages filed with the Vietnamese government." Peasant casualties have a hard time filing their claim with a remote and unpopular government. Against the official claim can be cited innumerable newspaper stories, including this Saigon dispatch on the American bombing raids in the South: "This is strategic bombing in a friendly allied country. Since the Viet Cong doctrine is to insulate themselves among the population and the population is largely powerless to prevent their presence, no one here seriously doubts that significant numbers of innocent civilians are dying every day in South Viet Nam." (Charles Moore *New York Times*, Sept. 5, 1965)

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port, Benjamin Spock, Arthur Waskow, Howard Zinn.

(B) and (C) are correct.

Jean Mayer of the Harvard School of Public Health writes: "I can say flatly that there has never been a famine or food shortage, (whether from natural causes, or by disruption of farming operations due to wars)... which has not first and overwhelmingly affected the small children. In fact, it is very clear that death from starvation occurs first of all in young children and in the elderly... I have already said that adults, and particularly adult men, survive much better than the rest of the population... destruction of food thus never seems to hamper enemy military operations, but always victimizes large numbers of children... to state it in other words, my point is not that innocent bystanders will be hurt by such measures, but that only bystanders will be hurt..." -- (Science, April 15, 1966)

11. The correct answer is (A) None. Neither the U. S. Government or Saigon claim Communist Chinese troops are involved in the war.

12. The correct answer is (D) -- Less than 5,000 troops (or 0.6 per cent of the total forces). Australians recently committed 4,500 men, while New Zealand has 200 troops stationed in Viet Nam. The other five countries -- France, Pakistan, Philippines, Britain, and Thailand have failed to recognize what the U.S. Government thinks is their obligation.

13. (B) About three hundred thousand "real or suspected Communists" in Indonesia have been killed in the past few months by the army and by anti-Communist mobs. This has been abundantly documented, e.g. in U. S. News and World Report, 4-25-66.

14. All have made such warnings.

MacArthur's, Eisenhower's, Taylor's, and Bradley's statements are summarized in U. S. News and World Report, April 25, 1966. Gen. Ridgway's statement can be found in the same magazine, January 3, 1966. Gen. Gavin's comments appeared in a letter to the editor of Harper's Magazine in Feb., 1966.

15. All of them.

The program of the National Liberation Front may be found in Viet Nam: History, Documents, and Opinions on a Major World Crisis, Marvin E. Gettleman (ed.) 1965, pp. 254-6.

16. (B) and (E) are the correct answers.

For example, soon after Diem's assassination (in the Fall of 1963), Hanoi expressed willingness to discuss the establishment of a coalition neutralist government in South Viet Nam. (See New York Times, March 9, 1965) In Sept., 1964, U.N. Sec'y-General, U Thant, conveyed a North Vietnamese offer to send a representative to Rangoon to meet with a U. S. representative. (See Eric Severeid in Look Magazine, Nov. 26, 1965.)

On the last day of the bombing lull in mid-May, 1965, Hanoi asked the French to convey to the U. S. their willingness to negotiate without prior withdrawal of U. S. troops. (See Joseph Kraft, Philadelphia Bulletin, Jan. 5, 1966) For further documentation of these and other four instances of Hanoi's willingness to negotiate, see Peace in Vietnam, a report prepared for the American Friends Service Committee, Hill and Wang, 1966. As for the prior withdrawal of American troops see William Warbey M. P. letter to the Times of London, April 1, 1965. Also see New York Times, July 20, 1965

17. The correct answer is (D), since there are approximately 15 million South Vietnamese. By the prevailing theory that Communism feeds on poverty and misery; which is more likely to become a Communist -- a Vietnamese subject to military harassment, or a Vietnamese with \$866 living in peace? This figure is about six times the Vietnamese per capita income.

In contrast, according to official U.S. figures, it costs the U. S. about \$300,000 for every captured or killed Viet Cong. (Bernard B. Fall, The New York Times Magazine, March 6, 1966.)

18. The correct answer is (E) None of the above.

The Supreme Court of the United States has ruled (in U. S. vs. Seeger, No. 50, October term, 1964) that a "religious agnostic" can be a conscientious objector if he sincerely holds a moral principle which "involves duties which... are superior to those arising from any human relationship," such as those imposed by the state. The beliefs must simply "occupy the same place in the life of the objector as an orthodox belief in God holds in the life of one clearly qualified for exemption." Thus, you do not have to believe in God in order to be a C.O., nor do you have to belong to a recognized church. As for the use of force, one may still be a C.O. if he makes clear his opposition to the use of organized, indiscriminate killing that occurs in war.

One may file for conscientious objection at any time -- even after being inducted. Finally two years of alternative service must be performed if you are granted your C.O. claim but the range of accepted activities extend into all aspects of American life. For more information, see The Guide to Conscientious Objection published by Students for a Democratic Society (SDS).

**Further sources:**

Bernard B. Fall and Marcus G. Raskin, eds., **The Vietnam Reader**, Random House.

I. F. Stone's Weekly, 5618 Nebraska Ave., N. W., Washington, D. C., Viet-Report, 133 W. 72nd. Street, New York, N. Y. 10023.

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