

# REMEMBERING VIETNAM QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

The conflict in Vietnam involves a mind-boggling mass of acronyms, a lengthy cast of characters, and a multiplicity of terms. Use this guide to help you keep track of the architects, fighting forces, and battle sites of the Vietnam War.

## COMBATANTS

Official Name | American Name

People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN)

North Vietnamese Army (NVA)

Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN)

South Vietnamese Army (SVA)

U.S. Armed Forces

U.S. Armed Forces

People's Liberation Armed Forces (PLAF)

Viet Cong



## LEADERS

### Democratic Republic of Vietnam



**Ho Chi Minh**  
President (1945-69)



**Vo Nguyen Giap**  
Principal Commander First Indochina War (1946-54) and Vietnam War (1960-75)



**Le Duan**  
General Secretary Communist Party Vietnam (1960-86)

## LEADERS

### Republic of Vietnam



**Ngo Dinh Diem**  
President (1955-63)



**Ngo Dinh Nhu**  
Brother and chief Political Adviser to President Diem



**Nguyen Van Thieu**  
Head of State (1965-67) and President (1967-75)

## United States



**Harry Truman**  
President (1945-53)



**Lyndon Johnson**  
President (1963-69)



**Dwight Eisenhower**  
President (1953-61)



**Richard Nixon**  
President (1969-74)



**John F. Kennedy**  
President (1961-63)



**Gerald Ford**  
President (1974-77)

## ABOUT THE TERM "VIET CONG"

Americans and their South Vietnamese allies referred to the South Vietnamese insurgents as "Viet Cong," a derogatory term that roughly translates to "Vietnamese traitor" or "Vietnamese communist." The insurgents called themselves liberators. Officially, the "Viet Cong" were known as the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam and the People's Liberation Armed Forces.



**Robert McNamara**  
U.S. Secretary of Defense (1961-68)



**McGeorge Bundy**  
National Security Adviser (1961-66)



**Henry Kissinger**  
National Security Adviser (1969-75)



**William Westmoreland**  
Commander U.S. Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) (1964-68)