

The First Indochinese War

U.S. History 2020

The Set Up

- Contextual understanding of the ongoing conflict in Vietnam
- Who is involved? For how long? Why?
- The aftermath of WWII as it relates to Vietnam
 - Remember the Potsdam Conference???
- **Domino Theory**
- **U.S. involvement with and in Vietnam**

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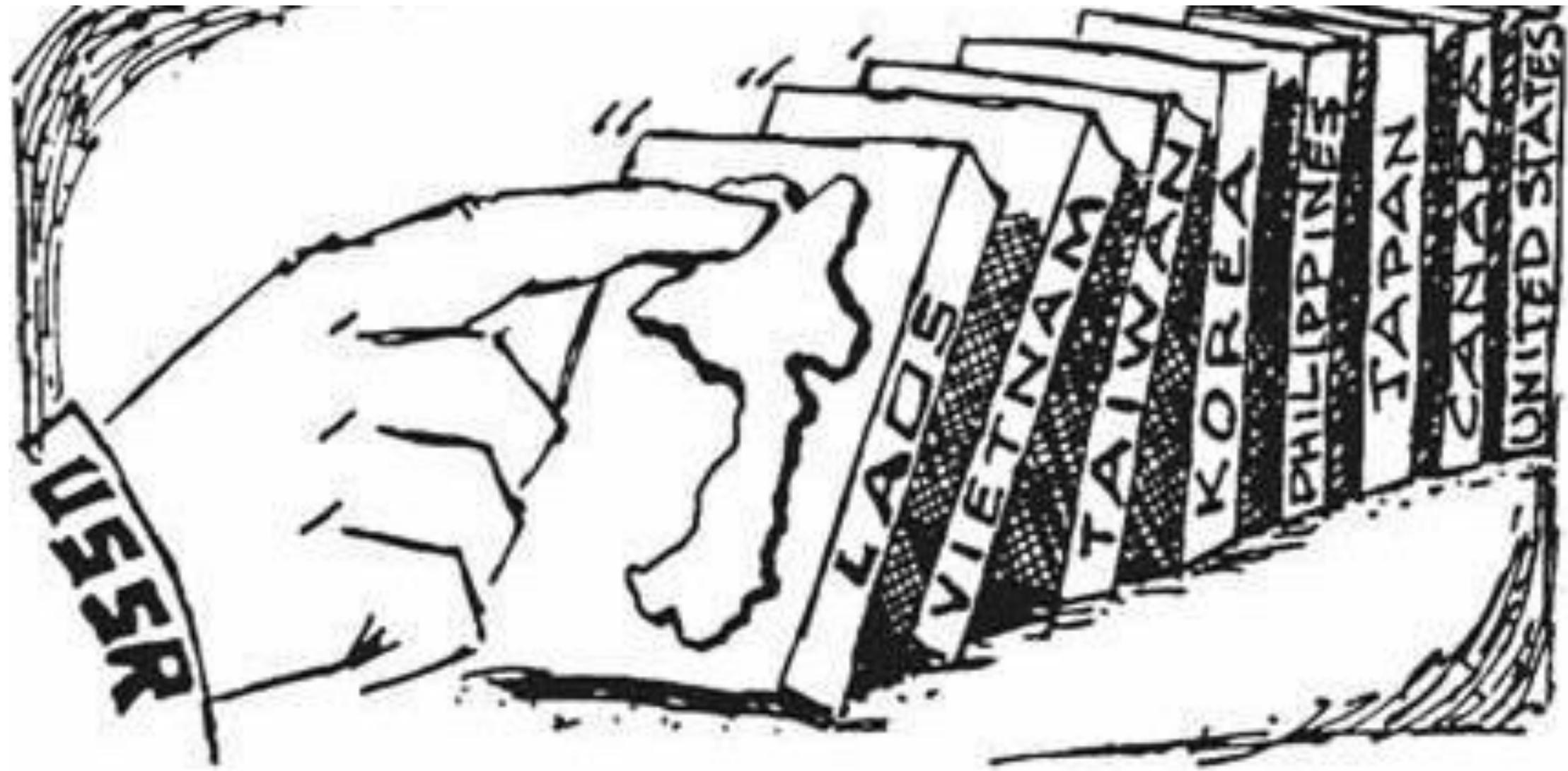
- After WWII, the British returned authority of Vietnam to the French. However, Ho Chi Minh declared Vietnam independent .
- When negotiations break down, a revolutionary war begins.
- The French pledge to help the anti-communist army under the former emperor, splitting Vietnam's population.

The First Indochinese War

- **1950**
- Chinese, Soviets offer weapons to Vietminh (Communists in South Vietnam)
- The United States sends **\$15 million dollars in military aid** to the French for the war in Indochina. Included in the aid package is a military mission and military advisors.
- **1954**
- Vietminh defeat French in a decisive battle at Dien Bien Phu.

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- Responding to the defeat of the French, President Eisenhower outlines the **Domino Theory**: "You have a row of dominoes set up. You knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is the certainty that it will go over very quickly."
- **Geneva Conference** convenes to end of hostilities in Indochina. The idea of partitioning Vietnam is first explored at this forum.
- Vietminh and French sign the *Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities in Vietnam*. As part of the agreement **the 17th parallel** will divide Vietnam (pro-communist North/pro-Western South) until nationwide unification elections are held in 1956.
- The United States does not accept the agreement, neither does the “nationalist” government under Bao Dai & **Ngo Dinh Diem**.



Setting the Stage

- French colonization
- Vietnamese Nationalism
- **Geneva Accords**
 - Divided near the 17th parallel
- **Eisenhower introduces domino theory**
 - Theory that if one country falls to communism, they all will
- North Vietnam under Communist rule
- Elections to be held in 1956 to unify country
 - South refused – remain divided

Setting the Stage

- **Repressive dictatorial rule by Diem**
 - Diem's family holds all power
 - Wealth is hoarded by the elite
 - Buddhist majority persecuted
 - Torture, lack of political freedom prevail
- **The U.S. aided Diem's government**
 - Ike sent financial and military aid
 - 675 U.S. Army advisors sent by 1960.

Vietnam: United States' 30 Year War

