

0. VIETNAM'S WAR WITH FRANCE - Story Preface

1. HO CHI MINH

2. VIETNAM'S WAR WITH FRANCE

3. A FRENCH DEFEAT

4. SCENES DURING FRENCH RULE

5. PLACES IN QUIET AMERICAN

6. LESSONS NOT LEARNED

Once Chinese aid flowed into Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh's strategy was to make sure that border towns were not under French control. Movement of supplies and personnel from China were critical to fuel Viet Minh successes. By the fall of 1950, France was forced to evacuate the entire border region. When they retreated, French soldiers left behind large supplies of ammunition.

With the northern border area free of French control, the Viet Minh were able to make raids into the Red River Delta. The French electorate, increasingly upset with their military's losses and needing resources to rebuild their own country following World War II, did not support ongoing military spending or involvement in Vietnam. By 1952, South Vietnam's military - which were supplied by the French - were still using equipment made in 1939. French aircraft carriers (like the *La Fayette*) were few and far between, and French-built railroads could not insure safety for the Legionnaires.

The Viet Minh were well aware of the growing disillusionment of the French people. As a direct result, the insurgents concentrated their efforts on wearing down the French military. They attacked the weakest French outposts. They employed guerilla tactics and maximized the physical distance between engagements so they could keep French forces on the run. The communists also increased their political activity until, by late 1952, more than half the villages of the Red River Delta were under Viet Minh control.

Geography, of course, favored the Viet Minh. Land terrain, and the knowledge of how to best navigate it, nearly always benefits the people who live on that land. Even if French forces had unlimited access to the best military supplies in the world, it took months to receive shipments. America supplied tanks (made before 1945), but it was difficult to move them around. Commanders had to make battle decisions based on whether it was the dry or rainy season. Was it "go" or "no go" for armored vehicles?

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/VIETNAM-S-WAR-WITH-FRANCE-Quiet-American-The>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/VIETNAM-S-WAR-WITH-FRANCE-Quiet-American-The>