

Vietnam and the USA: Immigration Politics

By Binh Vo, Jennifer Treadway, and Johnny Nguyen

The Road to Vietnam War

- ❖ 1954: French Defeated at Dien Bien Phu by Vietnamese Communists:
 - Division of Vietnam: 1954 Geneva Conference agree to split Vietnam at the 17th Parallel with Communist North and Capitalist South.
 - Civilians chose which side to live. (1 million went South and only 50,000 migrated to the North).
- ❖ 1957 : North Vietnam Army began the war against South Vietnam.
- ❖ 1964: Congress passed the Tonkin Gulf Resolution:
- ❖ 1965: President Lyndon B. Johnson sent U.S troops to fight the war.
- ❖ 1973: The U.S, North and South VN signed a cease-fire agreement
- ❖ 1975: The Fall of Saigon.

Opening Immigration's Pandora's Box

- ❖ 1965-Marked the year the National Quotas Act was repealed.
- ❖ The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (Hart-Cellar Act).
- ❖ 89th US Congress passed into law
- ❖ Passed house unanimously 318-95 in favor and 76-18 for the Senate.
- ❖ House approved Senate substitute unanimously 320-70.
- ❖ Impacts of the Pandora's Box:
 - Immigration demographics practically flip entirely
 - Since the repeal of National Quotas Act in 1965:
 - About 87% of immigrants were composed of previously mentioned countries.
 - European migration dropped or was made less noticeably since

The First Wave of Refugees

- ❖ The law under the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, which allowed 270,000 visas annually, applied to these immigrants.
- ❖ First wave of immigrants (1975-77) from Vietnam were predominantly highly educated and well connected to U.S and South Vietnam gov't.
- ❖ Approximately 86,000 left for Philippines or Guam.



The Second Wave of Refugees

- ❖ Second wave is considered between 1978-mid 1990's.
- ❖ Known as "The Flight of The Boat People" since they mostly escaped by boats .
- ❖ All at this time were considered refugees.
- ❖ Estimated a million and a half refugees left Vietnam.
- ❖ Mainly consisted of the less educated and with little or no English.
- ❖ Through boats or running through Thai jungles to get away.

Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986

- ❖ Gave unauthorized aliens opportunity to apply and gain legal status.
- ❖ Granted amnesty:
 - Some argue it did not.
- ❖ 99th US Congress passed unanimously (Senate: 69-30 House: 230-166)
- ❖ Joint Conference for Sub (House Passed 238-173, Senate passed 63-24)

With the Aid of Immigration Reform Act of 1990

- ❖ Increased the cap of visas given.
- ❖ 101st US Congress passed unanimously:
 - Senate passed 81-17
 - House passed 231-192
- ❖ Joint Conference on sub (House: 264-118 pass, Senate: 89-8 pass).
- ❖ Signed by George H.W. Bush on Nov 29, 1990.

The 3rd Wave & Vietnam and US relations

- ❖ 3rd Wave considered between mid 1990's to 2000
- ❖ Bill Clinton signed policy to lift trade embargo off Vietnam in 1994
 - It was with the advise of John McCain.
- ❖ Family Reunification Provision :
 - Gave more immigration opportunity to Vietnamese.