

VIRGINIA MODEL UNITED NATIONS



Vietnam War: South Vietnam Cabinet
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Dossier

Vietnam War: South Vietnam Cabinet

The positions in this cabinet consist of members of the United States, South Vietnam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, Laos, South Korea, and more.

Nguyen Van Thieu, President of the Republic of Vietnam

Nguyen Van Thieu is the President of the Republic of Vietnam and has held office ever since 1965 when he overthrew Ngo Dinh Diem. In the aftermath of the Tet Offensive, Thieu has declared Martial law in South Vietnam and requested the mobilization of the general population. As Prime Minister of the US backed state, Thieu has tremendous resources at his disposal with over 500,000 US troops in addition to the sophisticated military tactics and technology they bring with them. Whilst he is a popular leader in South Vietnam, he is known for his favoritism among members of his government as well as the armed forces. Despite his position of power, he is treading on thin ice as he has to look after the interests of his people as well as deal with constant pressure from Washington.

Nguyen Cao Ky, Vice President of Republic of Vietnam

Nguyen Cao Ky is the Vice President of the Republic of Vietnam. He is a former army officer, who was involved in the coup staged against the Diem Government in 1965. While he and Thieu were previously political rivals, they decided to run in the 1971 Presidential election together and enjoyed the military's backing. Upon winning the election, Thieu took the seat of President with Ky becoming his deputy. Despite the reconciliation, the two still have differences and there are factions of the military and administration that support Ky. With President Thieu significantly enhancing his personal power and making every effort to eliminate all possible political opposition in the wake of the Tet Offensive, Ky faces an uphill task of trying to stay relevant in South Vietnamese politics.

Nguyen Van Vy, Minister of Defense Republic of Vietnam

Vy was born in Hanoi, and served in the French Military until occupation ended. Vy moved to South Vietnam following the end of the Diem regime. In 1968, President Nguyen Van Thieu appointed Vy Minister of Defense. His term is already rampant with claims of possible corruption.

Cao Van Vien, Chief of Staff of the Joint General Staff (Chief of JGS)

Vien was appointed as the Chief of Staff of the Joint General Staff of the South Vietnamese Army in 1964, before the beginning of President Thieu's term. Despite the term change, Vien maintained his position, despite a brief stint as the Minister of Defense. As Chief of JGS, he controls troop movements in and around the capital. Vien is considered fairly apolitical, but that makes him appealing to all parties in Vietnam. Currently, he is one of the Chief strategists in the movements of troops.

Ngo Quang Truong, South Vietnamese General

Ngo Quang Truong is a General in the South Vietnamese army with an illustrious reputation of quelling uprisings with well organised and coordinated military strategy. Recently, during the Tet Offensive, Truong led the 1st Division of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam in the Battle of Hue where he eliminated Communist presence from the historic town and recaptured the all important Citadel. This led to his promotion to a Major General, a position that he currently holds. Known to have a sharp mind and the ability to handpick the best officers for combat, Truong's military experience will prove invaluable in dealing with the Guerilla tactics of the Viet Cong.

Head of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam Special Forces (LLDB)

The head of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam Special Forces is surrounded in mystery. The Special Forces are the elite class of the ARVN, and were trained by the CIA to recruit and train small tactical groups. These forces worked in conjunction with the

Civilian Irregular Defense Groups (CIDG), a program by the US Special Forces to train small civilian guerilla units. So far, the Vietnamese Special Forces have not been very successful, but they will likely need to take greater responsibility if the rumors of the US pulling out of Vietnam are true.

Ellsworth Bunker, US Ambassador to South Vietnam

Being the US Ambassador to South Vietnam, Bunker has the crucial role of being a liaison between the US Government in Washington and the South Vietnamese Government in Saigon. His primary interest in this committee will be to ensure that US interests in Vietnam and the rest of Indochina are protected. Even though he knows the ground situation the best, his powers are subject to the Congress providing him with the resources he needs to ward off the Communist threat from North Vietnam.

Walter P. McConaughy, US Ambassador to China

McConaughy started his career in the State Department by serving in Mexico and Japan. Following the start of the Pacific War, he was reassigned to Bolivia, but later returned to Asia to serve in Pakistan. In 1948, he was posted in Shanghai, but moved to Hong Kong following the communist victory in China. McConaughy is the direct line between the United States and China, an important background player in this conflict.

Charles Woodruff Yost, US Ambassador to the UN

Woodruff is a career ambassador who has been working with the State Department since 1946. He has been stationed in Thailand, Laos, Syria, and Morocco. In January of 1969, he was appointed as the Representative to the United Nations. He will be a major influence in getting other nations to support the South Vietnamese cause.

William Rogers, Secretary of State

Being the Secretary of State of the US in the new elected Nixon Government, Rogers is largely responsible for implementation of Nixon's policy on the Vietnam War. At the

time he has assumed office, there are over 500,000 American troops in Vietnam with an additional 30,000 troops having already lost their lives since 1961. With the death toll rising each day and the number of American deaths growing exponentially since 1968, Rogers has a tough task at hand. In addition to the problems on the ground, there is massive discontent among the American people about the Vietnam war with protests taking place across the country against American involvement in Vietnam. Another thing that America will have to keep in mind is the Sino-Soviet split as well as the backdrop of the Cold War.

Melvin Laird, Secretary of Defense

Melvin Laird is a major figure in Nixon's cabinet. As secretary of defense, he is responsible for deciding what to do with American troops in Vietnam, whose count is at an all time high and death toll rising day by day. While dealing with the North Vietnamese on one hand, he will also have to consider the implications of his actions on other countries.

Earle Wheeler, Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff

Earle Wheeler was appointed Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1964 by President Johnson and has held the post ever since. Under the Johnson administration, Wheeler was largely responsible for expanding US military presence in Vietnam and constantly sent more and more troops to the south east asian country. In response to the Tet Offensive, Wheeler has been calling for more military support in Vietnam and increased bombing of North Vietnam. He will be in for a challenge as Nixon is widely believed to be in favor of reducing American presence in Vietnam.

Creighton Abrams, Commander of Vietnam

Abrams served in World War II and the Korean War, making him extremely experienced. He was appointed to his position as Commander of Vietnam in 1968, but the American public was already disillusioned with Vietnam at this time. He has started

implementing programs to win the hearts of the South Vietnamese people, many of whom are beginning to or already support Ho Chi Minh. Abrams is hoping to break down the large American forces into smaller units to better combat guerilla warfare.

Elmo Zumwalt, Commander Naval Forces Vietnam

Zumwalt launched his career in the navy at the US Naval Academy. Following his enlistment, he rose quickly in the ranks. After serving in World War II, Zumwalt gained larger commands in the Navy, and in 1968 was appointed as the Commander Naval Forces Vietnam. This means he's responsible for all Naval operations relating to the Vietnam conflict. Much of the responsibility will boil down to monitoring and responding to any Chinese naval actions.

John Grey Gorton, Prime Minister of Australia

Gorton was educated at Oxford University, and served in the Australian army during World War II before running for office in the Senate. He is known as a strong opponent of communism and a liberal, and after a turbulent beginning in public service, he was elected as Prime Minister in January of 1968. Though he was very popular at the start, the Australian people have slowly been losing confidence in Gorton's ability to lead. A success in Vietnam would go a long way in repairing his public image and securing re-election.

Lieutenant General Thomas Daly, Chief of General Staff, Australian Army

Daly is a senior Australian army officer and is currently the Chief of General Staff. He served in World War II as well, and has significant military experience. After his appointment to Chief of General Staff in 1966, he has been well regarded. Currently, the politics of Canberra are in flux, and the military strategy is open to negotiation with the Americans and the South Vietnamese.

Alister Murdoch, Chief of Air Staff, Australia

Murdoch is a senior ranking officer in the Australian Air Force. Having served in World War II, he has a lot of Air Force experience. He was appointed as Chief of Air staff in 1965. Some of his major changes include investing in increasing the size and technological advancement of the Air Force.

Praphas Charusathien, Chief of the Royal Thai Army

Charusathien holds the joint office of Commander in Chief of the Royal Army as well as the minister of interior in the Thai Government. His politics have generally been pro American and anti communist in line with the Prime Minister. Using his influence, he managed to convince the Thai Government to intervene in the Vietnam war.

Chae Myung Shin, Commander of the Republic of Korea Armed Forces in Vietnam

Chae, a Korean military strongman is a staunch supporter of American ideology and despises Communism. During his presence in Vietnam, he has helped the South Vietnamese develop sophisticated military techniques to counter guerilla warfare from the north. He has been involved in taking hostages and killing south vietnamese on suspicion of allegiance to the north. His harsh tactics have brought him under some pressure from the US, however he continues to defend his position by blaming the VietCong for numerous war atrocities.

Chiang Kai-Shek, President of the Republic of China (Taiwan)

Since being expelled from China in 1950, Chiang Kai-Shek has served as the President of the Republic of China. He's a staunch anti-Communist and anti-Soviet, and is popular with Western leaders, despite his lack of control over mainland China. However, some criticize his dictator-like tendencies.

Keith Holyaoke, Prime Minister of New Zealand

Holyaoke was elected Prime Minister of New Zealand in 1960. He's liberal and part of the National party. In fact, he's well liked due to the abolition of capital punishment. Furthermore, he's a proponent of American involvement in Vietnam and has sent troops to support the South Vietnamese cause.

Vang Pao, Major General, Royal Lao Army

Vang was born as a member of the Hmong village, and joined the French Military at the age of 15, following the Japanese invasion of Indochina. After serving in the military through World War II, Vang rose in the ranks of the Royal Lao Army. He's the highest ranking member of the Hmong within the Royal Lao Army. Currently, he heads a "secret army" unit within the Royal Lao Army that focuses on surveillance and espionage.

Souvanna Phouma, Prime Minister of Kingdom of Laos

Phouma has had a tumultuous career as Prime Minister of Laos. He has served many times since 1955, but been forced out by coups or elections. He's the cousin of the current King of Laos. As Prime Minister, he serves as the head of the Parliament of Laos.

Lon Nol, Prime Minister of Cambodia

Nol started his career as a magistrate and enforcer of French rule. He served under the Sihanouk administration for many years, and has been Prime Minister before. He briefly retired from politics following a car accident, but returned only a year later. Though technically Nol became Prime Minister later in 1969, for the purposes of this committee we will assume that he was appointed in January of 1969.

Manual Yan, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines

Yan has served in World War II, as well as the Cabinet secretary under multiple generations. He is extremely committed to the Filipino government. He was appointed as the Chief of Staff in 1968. He is considered a strong strategist and negotiator.

We appreciate your feedback about our conference. Please direct all inquiries and comments to our Secretary-General.

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