

NY Times
**U.S. Spent \$141-Billion
In Vietnam in 14 Years**

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WASHINGTON, April 30 (AP) —From 1961 until the surrender of the Saigon Government, the United States spent more than \$141-billion in South Vietnam, or more than \$7,000 for each of South Vietnam's 20 million people.

By the time the Paris peace accords were signed in January, 1973, more than 56,000 American servicemen had died in Vietnam, 46,000 of them in combat.

Measuring the full cost of Vietnam fighting to the United States inevitably goes far beyond the statistics. For example, many economists link the rapid inflationary spiral of the late nineteen sixties directly to large Federal deficits that resulted from United States spending in Vietnam.

Critics of the late President Lyndon B. Johnson maintain that he tried to finance his Great Society domestic programs and an expensive war simultaneously without a corresponding increase in Federal taxes. When huge Federal deficits appeared, the purchasing power of the dollar fell, a decline that continues eating into the pocketbooks of American consumers today.

Million Battle Deaths

Although America's involvement in the war was costly in both casualties and dollars spent, it set no U.S. record for either category. In the Civil War 498,332 Americans died, and combat deaths were higher in both World Wars I and II than they were in Vietnam.

Casualties and combat deaths among the South Vietnamese and Communist forces went far beyond American losses.

The Pentagon estimates that there were over 241,000 South Vietnamese combat deaths and more than one million combined Vietcong and North Vietnamese combat deaths.

The dollar cost of the United States involvement in the war

Everything from rifles to uniforms to ships to fighter planes cost less in previous conflicts.

Salaries of the 2.6 million servicemen who served in Vietnam over 11 years accounted for much of the cost of the Vietnam war, as did the 4,900 helicopters and more than 3,700 jets and other American-made planes lost in the fighting.

American-made military weaponry and equipment valued at more than \$2-billion were in the hands of the South Vietnamese Army before it stopped fighting.

Record tonnages of ammunition, including artillery and B-52 bombs, expended by the United States in Vietnam also added to the cost of the war.

The Soviet Union and China have also poured in staggering amounts of military and economic aid into North Vietnam.

Hanoi Received \$7-Billion

As of January, 1975, it was estimated that the Soviet Union and China had provided more than \$7.5-billion in aid to the North Vietnamese, with about 40 per cent being military. But Pentagon officials cautioned that all such estimates are at best rough guesses.

Nonetheless, the March 1975 intelligence estimate said: "Total Communist military and economic aid to North Vietnam in 1974 was higher than in any previous year."

When the role of American fighting men in Vietnam ended on Jan. 27, 1973, the conflict was the longest in American history. It took eight years for the Revolutionary War to end; the Spanish-American War of 1898 ran only four months.

In the period 1967 to 1970, the United States spent successively \$22.2-billion, \$26.3-billion, \$26.5-billion and \$18.5-billion.

In the current fiscal year, after sending almost \$700-million in aid to South Vietnam, President Ford was still pressing for additional millions when the end came.