Vietcong, After Long Struggle, Attain a Vanguard Role in the South

Vietnam Times

In the emerald-green Vietnam became, as the war dragged on—mere tools of what was seen as a North Vietnamese invasion of South Vietnam. In the images of official American spokesmen, they were a faceless, tireless enemy in a long and fruitless war. In the minds of Vietnamese who had been willing to fight for the independence and unity of Vietnam, they were a means of resistance to the political and military aggression of the South Vietnamese government.

To many citified Vietnamese, the Communists, the Vietminh accepted the Geneva accords, which promised elections the Communists were confident of winning, and so withdrew troops and officials to the newly created Democratic Republic of Vietnam, which was to be the most visible carrier of the revolution until 1969, when the Provisional Revolutionary Government was created. It was a clear and simple fact that the United States was in Vietnam to stop the spread of Communism to the rest of Asia.

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Vietcong guerrillas chatting with North Vietnamese soldiers—wearing sun helmets—in Da Nang early last month, after Communists overran that city.