



[Fall 2009](#) ► [HST 195 F09 \(Escobar 21820\)](#) ► [Forums](#) ► [Episode 6 and 7 Forum](#) ► [Episode 6 and 7 Forum](#)


Episode 6 and 7 Forum
 by [Joe Escobar](#) - Saturday, 14 November 2009, 11:18 PM

How did the Tet Offensive and its aftermath affect American politics, society, and the military and diplomatic course of the war in Vietnam?

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)


Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum
 by [Kelly Culhane](#) - Wednesday, 18 November 2009, 11:41 AM

I think that the aftermath of the Tet Offensive has tainted America even until present day. Politically, the demise of two presidents had occurred. Johnson, who never even bothered to run for a second term. Then Nixon, who was so consumed to not make the same mistakes or appear weak, managed to make the same mistakes and more. He became so paranoid that he tried to violate Americans' civil rights by approving the Huston Plan. This plan would allow intelligence agencies to open mail, use electronic surveillance methods, and even burglarize to spy on Americans.(pg295)

The affects that it had on society was overwhelming. There became more and more antiwar protests, and the Nixon administration had done almost everything in its power to stop the movement. The growing unrest amongst the general population had finally started to come to a blow in 1970 after Nixon had gone into Cambodia. Violence ahd not only erupted in the battlefield, but also on the homefront as well. Four students at Kent State Ubniversity in Ohio and also two from Jackson State College in Mississippi were killed during confrontations between protesters and the National Guard and the police.(pg293) These instances only enflamed an already volatile situation.

The military also started to show some discourse. The veterans were not happy with the way the war was going. In 1971 the veterans had formed Vietnam Veterans Against the War and had begun to investigate war crimes that had been committed during the war.(pg298) There was also descent among the ranks of soldiers fighting in the war. Soldiers refusing to follow their orders, desertions, and outright killing of their superiors while in the battlefield. Soldiers were also coming home addicted to drugs, with no help available.(pg301)

I think the greatest affect that the Tet Offensive had on America is that of the diplomatic kind. The failure of the war overall has lead other countries to recognize our strengths but also see our weaknesses. I believe that other countries no longer feel like America is an honorable country. After the bombings in Cambodia, the Soviets and the chinese both protested Nixon's bombing of Cambodia. The swedish prime minister compared the bombing as an act of cruelty to those perpetrated by the Nazis.(pg317)Between the Tet Offensive and the bombings in Cambodia, the rest of the world probably does have some apprehension towards trusting American politicians. I believe that things have only gotten worse since Vetnam as far as the rest of the world goes. We are no longer seen as a powerful force, terrorism against the United States and Americans worldwide is on the rise. I believe this is directly due to our foreign policies and inability to know when enough is enough.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate...

**Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum**by [Jeffrey Harmon](#) - Wednesday, 18 November 2009, 12:58 PM

So which one do you think affected the U.S more? Politically, Military, Diplomatic or Society opinion? Let's get the ball rolling and start talking.:)

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate...

**Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum**by [Kelly Culhane](#) - Wednesday, 18 November 2009, 07:29 PM

I can not decide between the diplomatic and social aspects of the aftermath. The people of the United States had begun to question their government and the decisions that it had made. I do not think that society has really ever recovered from that. Especially nowadays when corruption and lobbyists seem to run Washington D.C. We are noe in yet another war that is based on lies, manipulation, and refusal to know when enough is enough.

I also believe that the damage done to our worldwide image is jus as bad. I think that other countries no longer fear the United States. If there was fear in the rest of the world I do not think that there would be so much terrorist activities that are associated with America here in the United States or citizens traveling abroad. I think another reason why Americans are so disliked is our sense of self-righteousness. Americans would never stand for other countries having their militaries stationed or occupying territories here in America. Yet, we feel that because we are who we are that it is our right to be in someone else's country. Why is it necessary for us to still feel like we are the only powerful country in the world? Especially when we are in so much debt to many other countries that have been helping support our own war in Iraq and helping us recover from our own greed and miscalculations? Just a question.....

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate...

**Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum**by [Tiffany Adrian](#) - Thursday, 19 November 2009, 02:37 PM

I agree I can't decide either, but what it does seem that both the diplomatic and social outcomes were severely detrimental to our nation. We have to remember that this was the first televised war and after the Tet offensive the media seemed to cover the war in a negative way. If the Vietnam War hadn't been televised, would the outcome of the war and people's way of viewing it be different? Even when Johnson was in office the doves protested the war, but it seems that the escalation of the protests began when Nixon came into office.

Nixon not only escalated the war thinking that we would negotiate faster leading to our withdrawal; he also escalated a somewhat new war here on our own soil. America was at war not only with Vietnam, but at war with the people here in America protesting the war. Nixon's administration took on a new offensive and started blaming the doves for failure in his policies. This resulted in some of the biggest protests today including the protest at Kent State and Jacksonville State College in 1970, where six students were killed during their protest. Nixon's administration not only escalated the war, but ended up sacrificing more U.S. soldiers. What is to say about an administration that was voted for by the people to go into a war and cause more bloodshed then needed? In the end the United States was made to look bad in the eyes of the rest of the world. We had gone to war with another country out of false pretenses and then elected another president who made thing s even worse and who ultimately started to wage his own private war on the citizens of America amending their right to "freedom of speech." Did the doves do more harm than good by protesting the war? Would the outcomes have been less tragic or would it

have given the Nixon administration free reign to do whatever they wanted without consequence?

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate... 



Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum

by [Michael Bellamy](#) - Saturday, 21 November 2009, 04:05 PM

I like the discussion we have going here, this is a great question to debate on. This is a very hard question to answer, especially after writing an initial post that equally addresses each of those themes. When you look at our country, the Tet Offensive and its aftermath certainly damaged us politically, and had a great affect on our society due to the realization of the severity of the war. However, with the big picture of the Tet Offensive itself affecting our country that way, the individual incidents of the Tet Offensive had the biggest affect on our military because after all, they were the one who were there having to experience it and deal with its consequences first hand. There were massive amounts of casualties on both ends and the incidents affected the individual surviving soldiers who had either lost friends or their confidence or even their hope of ever returning to the United States.

Tiffany – I like what you bring up about the issues of the media in your first paragraph, in fact I think that would make for a good assignment itself. I definitely think the American public's views on the war would have been highly different had it not been for the media. The fact that you could listen to everything on the radio and even watch televised battles probably had the biggest impact out of anything back home in the United States. Because of this I believe that the media was the reason for the majority of the protesters, whose views were only being fueled by the images they saw on their television screens.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate... 



Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum

by [Patrick Brady](#) - Saturday, 21 November 2009, 04:09 PM

I agree with you when you said that it greatly effected the military, but I also believe that parts of society did alot of damage to the military as well.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate... 



Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum

by [Kelly Culhane](#) - Saturday, 21 November 2009, 08:29 PM

I also like that you brought up about the media. I can not honestly say that public opinion was swayed due to the war being televised. I think that it definitely did hurt public opinion, but I believe that public opinion would have been swayed due to many other reasons as well. For instance, the amount of casualties between loss of life, and wounded. I think that the fact that people, especially younger people were more outspoken also had an affect on public opinions. I think that many people were slowly becoming less and less trusting of their government and were not afraid to express their opinions, even if they got into trouble for it.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate... 



Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum

by [Jeffrey Harmon](#) - Friday, 20 November 2009, 11:28 AM

I agree with you, I can not figure out either. All four are valuable to our nation. Yes, our worldwide image around the world has just been flung threw the mud for years now. Yeah, not many are afraid of us anymore, and it shows with more and more countries ignore our words or threats. But I do believe we need to be stationed in some countries because of things they have done in the past. Like World War 2, we need to be their in those places from the actions that they have done in the past. Hitler ruined that. Same as Korea, I believe that they can no longer be trusted, and we are good over their also. In my opinion, the public does not know anything about the governments actions, what they want to do, or are going to do. Things are bigger than we all know, and I believe we need to do these things to keep us safe. Now when it comes to the wars now, I do feel a little different. I am still mixed with feelings. I have always been at a pro-war stance, because I come from a military family. I believe we have to appear as a powerful country or more terrorist attacks like 911, big ones. So the more I think and respond I think we lost most on Diplomatic aspect was definitely the biggest aftermath of the war for me. Just to finish it off, I believe if we get less powerful more Terrorist attacks would occur, and why should we change how we live for how other people feel? Just a question...

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate... 



Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum

by [Kelly Culhane](#) - Friday, 20 November 2009, 02:53 PM

I do not really think that it is not a matter of changing how we live or anything like that. I believe that it is more that we need to stop being so self-righteous and telling other countries how THEY should live. The thought of every country being a democracy sounds good and all, but it is not realistic. Just because something works for us, does not mean that it will work everywhere else. I lived in Pennsylvania when that 9/11 attacks occurred. Our highways as well as almost everything else was shut down immediately. That was not an isolated event. It was not the first, nor will it be the last time that Americans are attacked.

A lot of my family is in the military as well. I would not want to lose any of them simply because politicians are quick to engage instead of trying to find a way to disengage. Yes, there are times to fight wars, and there are wars that are worth fighting, but that is just not always the case. I do not think that anyone can argue that if it were not for mistakes where foreign policy is concerned, some of the occurrences of terrorism may not have occurred. That also can be stated for home grown terrorists as well.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate... 



Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum

by [Jeffrey Harmon](#) - Wednesday, 18 November 2009, 12:52 PM

The tet offensive definitely started the movement of the american public turning against the war in vietnam. Around 80,000 Vietcong guerrillas and North Vietnamese troops launched the nationwide offensive on January 31, 1968, simultaneously attacking 36 of 44 provincial capitals across South Vietnam, 64 district capitals, and five of the six major cities. The role of the January 1968 Tet Offensive (named for the lunar New Year holiday) is generally considered decisive for this shift in public opinion, marking a turning point in U.S. politics and for the first time since World War II confronting the United States with the limits to its own power. It changed party lines in the 1970's. It became the reason of a failing president. It was evident however that the United States could not control the war's scope and duration

Most people agree that tet was instrumental in changing united states policy because they knew it caused a shift in public opinion about the war. Clark Clifford, the Defense Secretary said victory could not be guaranteed

even with 206,000 extra troops. It became clear that the war in 1968 had become a standoff. Even before the war was over, the opposition and the attempt to define the “lessons” of the war began. As anyone observing debates about U.S. foreign policy in the last 30 years will have observed, while the “Vietnam Syndrome” encouraged caution on the part of America’s presidents and mistrust of military adventures by Congress and the public, presidents from Reagan to George W. Bush have attempted to define the “lessons” of Vietnam in their own ways.

The tet offensive did have a negative backlash with the american people. There were more protests, killings of college students protesting. The war changed how leaders looked at other countries , and how the people looked at the government. Diplomacy seems to be a better option than rushing into something you are unsure of.

Also the Tet offensive was the time the troops were becoming increasingly unhappy. The veterens were not happy with how the war was being handeled. Troops began not listening to comanders and were going AWOL, and i think that is the time Polatitions started to be seen as not always truthful.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate... 



Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum

by [Glenn Dalgleish](#) - Wednesday, 18 November 2009, 01:18 PM

The Tet offensive “left Washington in a state of troubled confusion and uncertainty,” (233) and a growing number of Republicans and Democrats were demanding explanations for reasons to expand the war and increase troops. American politics were greatly influenced by the offensive, due to public opinion changing drastically.

LBJ’s was loosing support and, “an overwhelming majority of Americans (78 percent) were certain that the United States was not making any progress in Vietnam.” (243) The Diplomatic affects the Tet offensive had were enough to push Johnson out of a re-election and change how our government was seen by other countries.

The American public, who had thought we were winning the war in Vietnam, suddenly realized that we were far from it. This offensive came as a shock to many people who were naïve to believe that America was making substantial progress and nearing victory. Public opinion of our military efforts were stepped up with an increase in troops and supplies, since this was seen as a way to get the upper hand against the North Vietnamese and NLF, because they could not afford the heavy losses sustained during the Tet Offensive.

American society was hit with an increase in protests and dislike for the war, as well as war policies carried out. Violence also escalated, as seen through the Kent State attacks and other attacks and protests. Although the North Vietnamese suffered devastating losses, they still had the power to “wake the American public” and test the will of our leaders.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate... 



Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum

by [Rebecca Mellnik](#) - Wednesday, 18 November 2009, 02:31 PM

In January 1968, the United States is caught off guard as the North Vietnamese ad Vietcong armies invade and take over many cities in South Vietnam including its capital, Saigon. Within a few days, the US turn back most of the areas to South Vietnamese control. The Tet offensive was a huge victory for the northern communists. It showed what a massive impact one strong and forceful blow could do to South Vietnam and the United States. Herring states that “many officials feared that Tet was only the opening phase of a larger

Communist offensive" (233). The US's reaction to this was to send more troops to Vietnam because they were not ready to let Vietnam succumb to communist rule.

Because of the United State's harsh reaction to Tet and its massive fears of a communist take over, many disturbing events were set into motion. After the Army of the Republic of Vietnam's reaction to Tet, they started to believe that the idea of "Vietnamization" might work for the south. The objective of this plan was to move the burden of defeating the communists onto the South Vietnamese Army and away from United States involvement.

In hopes of scaring Hanoi into negotiating on the US's terms, Nixon launched a massive fifteen-month bombing on Cambodia. He wished to destroy some of the trails and supply routes that the communists were using. By deliberately keeping these plans and actions from most of the government and the American people, anti-war movements began to sprout around the country.

Several Anti-War protests began to erupt, such as the one at the Democratic Convention in Chicago. Herring describes, "The radicals were in the ascendancy, and yuppies circulated rumors that the Chicago water supply would be laced with drugs and 1,000 protesters would float nude in Lake Michigan" (261). The National Guard and police were ordered to stop the protesters, which resulted in "bloody battles in the streets" (261). There were also several anti-war protests on college campus' across the country including Ohio's Kent State University, where the death of four college students started massive strikes on campus' across the nation and the closing of hundreds of schools.

The events during and directly after the Tet offensive changed the American view on the war more than it had been before. Because of the military and political choices made, the country began to see a drastic divide between the doves and the hawks. These extremists still exist in present day situations. There are many aspects to current situation in Iraq which mirror the feelings the American people had of the Vietnam War. While some think that it is necessary for us to step in and help out other counties against rebels and terrorists, other s believe that it is not our place to invade another country and try to do everything for them. There may never be any resolution to the things that were sparked from the Tet offensive.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate... 



Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum

by [Patrick Brady](#) - Wednesday, 18 November 2009, 05:01 PM

Although the Tet offensive was a victory to the military, it was a political loss. Before the Tet offensive William Westmoreland had been saying that there was an end in sight, and that they were breaking the will of the NLF and the North. Towards the end of 1967 the NLF was trying to draw U.S. forces away from cities to weaken the defense. . In previous years during Tet (the Vietnamese new year) both sides would observe a cease-fire. On January 31, 1968 (Tet) while the cities of South Vietnam were unsuspecting, NFL and North Vietnam troops attacked many provincial capitals and cities, and Caught the U.S. and ARVN off-guard. The U.S. quickly responded but this raised critical questions about Westmoreland's credibility along with the Johnson administration. With these questions being raised, who was going to soothe the pain?

The Tet offensive revealed to the nation that there was no end in sight, and with the war causing economic strains on the American people there was bound to be a lot of discouraged people. The offensive not only showed that there was no end in sight, but that an additional 206,000 troops were needed. In 1968 " some 200 demonstrations erupting at more than 100 colleges during the spring semester"(p.261) lead to very publicized and violent demonstrations with 12 people being killed as a result.

During Nixon's presidency there were accounts of U.S. soldiers "fragging" or trying to kill their superiors, and "more than 200 incidents were reported in 1970 alone"(p.301). I believe that the Tet offensive revealed that there was no end in sight and many of the American soldiers started to believe that they were fighting in a never-ending war. Another reason the U.S. soldiers were showing unrest is because of what was going on back in the home front at the time.

With 78% of Americans believing that the U.S. was making no progress in Vietnam called for a change in plan. Before

the Tet offensive, President Johnson refused to sit at the the conference table with North Vietnam, but after he felt that he had more power at the conference table.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate... 



Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum

by [Tish Bottensek](#) - Saturday, 21 November 2009, 05:34 PM

Patrick,

I found your post very well written, your opinions were supported by information supporting your opinions. I have to say that I completely agree with your opinion and factual supportive points. I agree the Tet Offence opened the eyes of the Americans to the situation in Vietnam. The repercussions of the offence were one of many lives lost. Demonstrators demonstrated their disapproval of the war. Though the Tet Offence was tragic, I believe it was important for the Americans to realize the reality of the war. When the Americans realized the situation in Vietnam, they began demanding answers. This was important because it forced political officials to be held accountable for their actions. It is unfortunate a mass loss had to happen before light was shed on the war.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate... 



Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum

by [Robert Nicholls](#) - Wednesday, 18 November 2009, 05:30 PM

On the morning of January 30, 1968, one of the biggest chapters of the Vietnam war took place. An attack so severe and well planned, it caught the entire country off guard. The Tet Offensive was an organized attack on the Southern Vietnam cities by the Communist North. They simultaneously attacked a great number of cities on what was supposed to be a national day of cease-fire. Tet is the lunar new year for Vietnamese and celebrated greatly. The North took advantage of this day and made it one to remember.

The American politics were rocked after the Tet Offensive. Many people feared that Tet was the start of a greater attack, causing American politics to be questioned and interigated on what to do next in the war. Johnson assigned the secretary of defense, Clark Clifford, to work out a political stand point and opinion on what to do next. He came up with the idea of deploying another mere 22,000 troops. Was this a good idea to send that number of troops over and let the South Vietnamese start assuming the greater responsibility of the war? I feel it was a great place to start Vietnamizing the war, but it might have been too much responsibility, and too soon.

The society was also greatly effected by the Tet Offensive. They viewed the reactions of Tet as similar to the previous reactions in the war, and considered this intolerable. The fact that Westmoreland did as he was told and held the troops to a steady position and started holding land instead of advancing, greatly concerned the American people. They thought if no advancements were being made in the war, then it was a bad move. Many groups started forming for anti-war activists, and the polls of people opposed to the war was now greater then the number of people in support of the war. Do you think Johnsons decision of standing still and not making great advancements after Tet was a good one? Although the North suffered great casualties during Tet, i believe Johnson should have sent a lot more force after Tet to prove that America was the strongest.

Now the military was greatly effected by the Tet Offensive. The military decisions that had been pushed aside for so long now had a greater urgency in Washington. Officials were thrown off by the attacks on Tet, and needed to act drastically. Westmoreland was actually demoted due to the fact that he did not predict the attacks of the Tet Offensive. Johnson however, valued Westmoreland greatly and kept him very involved in the war. During the attacks, the military did what they were trained to do and held off many attacks. Although the North suffered much greater casualties then us, do you still think they succeeded in there objective? They did devastate many Southern Vietnam cities and caused great havoc. I think the military did everything they could have, and should not be blamed for anything bad that happened during Tet.

The war was now viewed with a very different idea in mind. A few months after Tet, the president made a speech telling the people how the rest of the war was planned out. He stated, "America can no longer do the job we set out to do in the time we have left and we must begin to take steps to disengage." America started taking the stand of "fighting while negotiating." This meant they would continue to help and support the South Vietnam government and try to make them successful in the fight against communism, but do everything they could to back out of the war. Tet caused America to really realize they needed to get out, and South Vietnam was a lost cause. Do you think Tet really caused America to feel this way, or was that inevitable? I feel Tet was the last straw for America, and it just took a few more bodies to realize we could no longer fight in Vietnam, regardless of the Communists taking over.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate... 



Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum

by [Michael Bellamy](#) - Wednesday, 18 November 2009, 06:05 PM

The Tet Offensive was a wave of attacks executed by the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese army that occurred during the first day of the lunar calendar year in 1968, which was considered to be a two day period of cease-fire in relation to it being the most important Vietnamese holiday. These invasions, which consisted of more than 80,000 communist troops attacking more than 100 cities, towns, and villages, had a great impact not only on the Southern Vietnamese culture, but on the United States as well. This event affected American politics, the military and diplomatic course of the war, and the American society in general.

Politically, America was completely thrown off guard by the Tet Offensive, and there was much debate and hesitation as to how they should respond to the attacks. The U.S. government was beginning to lose its support from the American people when they started questioning Lyndon B. Johnson's views on the war and realizing that winning the war in Vietnam was more difficult than it had previously seemed. The Johnson administration was losing its credibility and this created problems within the government, especially when President Johnson delivered a shocking speech which addressed the fact that he would not run for a second term as president.

From a military standpoint, the military suffered the hardest effects, particularly due to the massive numbers of casualties at a time. In the city of Hue alone, "the United States and South Vietnamese lost an estimated 500 killed." (Herring, p231) On top of that, to put it into a greater perspective, "in the first two weeks of the Tet campaigns, the United States lost 1,100 killed in action." (232). The number of killed soldiers wasn't the only thing causing military and diplomatic problems, there were many issues regarding proposals for escalation. General Westmoreland proposed that the number of soldiers deployed should have increased to 206,000, but that suggestion caused many dilemmas because American officials were well aware of the fact that North Vietnamese forces could match any increase of American troops, which was something they had been continuously demonstrating.

As mentioned before, the American society was decreasing its level of support for the war, as people began to understand the reality of the situation. There was a high increase in anti-war protests, predominantly on college campuses, and a change in portrayal within the media. The media, which had initially been reporting the war in the positive way that the government had been claiming, now focused more on the negative reality by saying things like, "The war in Vietnam is unwinnable." (241). This caused the public to become more and more skeptical of the reasons for continuing to fight in Vietnam.

The Tet Offensive was neither a victory for North Vietnam nor South Vietnam and was an event that only caused negative effects for both sides, especially for the United States. After a crisis such as this, the American government should have been more focused on cutting their losses and withdrawing troops instead of looking for ways to escalate the situation.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate... 

**Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum**by [Tiffany Adrian](#) - Saturday, 21 November 2009, 10:42 AM

The Tet offensive not only brought about LBJ's demise it also created other problems for our military. Up until about 1969, the U.S. military had fought superbly (Herring pg 30.) Up until the Tet Offensive we saw our military follow guidelines and ranks, fighting for their honor and country. So what happened? After Nixon implemented his new policy for Americans to serve only one year in Vietnam, I believe with this caused a loss in leaders and ranks. Soldiers that had almost a year experience fighting in Vietnam, were soldered together with recruits that were green with no experience in war. If soldiers only had to fight for a year and get sent home, there will never really be a real leadership. Leadership lies with experience and courage and you can't have true leadership if your tour was up in a year. I know in World War II, that the young men fighting for our country were fighting for a lot longer than just a year. My grandfather was a veteran of World War II and spent almost Four years over in the South Pacific. If soldiers only have a year to fight, I think their minds were more on getting through the year instead of not knowing and fighting until they were shipped home. Did this cause soldiers not to care and therefore not fight to their true potential? How could we fight against people that had been fighting for decades and think that we would be glorious? Because of the lack of leaders and Nixon's new policy, soldiers lost morale and discipline broke down in some units (Herring pg 301.) Soldiers started turning to drugs to cope with the pressures and since there was already a lack of discipline 65,00 soldiers were doing drugs and of those 65,000 40,000 soldiers were addicted to heroin. It saddens me to think that this could have been avoided if different policies had been set in place, to provide adequate leadership amongst the new soldiers going over to fight. If the Nixon administration had set up different policies, would the morale of the soldiers stay intact, and would the outcome of lives lost be different?

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate...

**Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum**by [Tish Bottensek](#) - Saturday, 21 November 2009, 05:26 PM

Michael,

I found your post to be very well written. I especially appreciated your introductive outline regarding the Tet Offence. Your post introduction is accurate and informative. In your post, you made some very good throughout your post, such as when you stated the Tet Offence had many repercussions. Obviously some of the repercussions were the many casualties, LBJ's decision to not rerun for presidency. I believe the Tet Offence, opened the eyes of the Americans shedding light on the war. You also stated that you felt neither North Vietnam nor South Vietnam were victorious. I have to agree with you. Both sides suffered a great loss, this was an unfortunate event, but it is also an important event in history one to be learned from.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate...

**Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum**by [Tish Bottensek](#) - Wednesday, 18 November 2009, 07:29 PM

I believe the Tet Offence left a bitter taste in the mouth of many Americans. Though it was supposed to be a day of seize fire, and a day of retreat; however, this was the farthest from the truth. The Tet Offence brought the harsh reality of war into the homes of many American's. This act shed light on the tragic consequences of war. Many Americans were outraged causing more questions to be asked regarding the actions of the political leaders. Americans were not the only ones who where outraged, anti-war protesters rose up to express their disapproval of the war.

Johnson was beginning to lose popularity, later to force him to not re-elect for presidency. The growing lack of support for the war was made aware with escalating numbers of anti-war protesters becoming more aggressive with each protest.

Though the Tet Offense was an unfortunate part of the war, I believe in some aspects it was an important event shedding light on the war. Had the Tet Offence gone unnoticed would the monumental attention be shed on the

war? Though it was tragic and lives were lost, the result caused many to take a stand against the war, ask questions causing many officials to answer to their actions. War is unfortunate, and sometimes unavoidable; however, in this case at least the outcome caused action.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate... 



Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum

by [Glenn Dalglish](#) - Thursday, 19 November 2009, 04:46 PM

Had things happened as they were planned, there might have been a different outcome for LBJ and the public's feeling toward the war. There was supposed to be a cease fire that was agreed upon by both sides. Trying to create a general uprising among the population, which would then overturn the Saigon government and then consequently end the war, the Viet Cong decided that this was the best time to make an attack. Had they waited till after the cease fire, we may have seen it coming a lot sooner and things may have been different.

Because the Tet Offensive transpired, Americans saw what was really going on in Vietnam and realized that we were not winning, like we had been told. They took action, like you said Tish, and started asking questions.

I agree with you that it was unfortunate that many lives were lost during this time, but if it had never happened, people in America would have never had any opinion about the war and would have kept going on with life without taking any action. I wonder if LBJ decided to not run for another term before or after the Tet Offensive, or if he was thinking about resigning and then this happened so it was kind of an easy way out? I bet he was so disappointed with himself after not only losing public support, but also losing his dignity as president. He did not want to lose the war in his own eyes and for himself and even though we wouldn't lose the war for years, he probably thought it was already lost.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate... 



Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum

by [Robert Nicholls](#) - Thursday, 19 November 2009, 06:18 PM

I asked myself that same question regarding LBJ's decision to run again. Was the Tet Offensive the last straw for him? I can't imagine LBJ thinking about not running for the presidency again before the Tet Offensive. He was greatly favored by the public before Tet. Was this the deciding factor for him to call it quits? LBJ was a very honorable man, and the fact that I feel that Tet caused him to call it quits shows me the magnitude of Tet and how much damage it really did cause to the entire US.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate... 



Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum

by [Jeffrey Harmon](#) - Friday, 20 November 2009, 11:34 AM

I agree 100% with you. He was going to run again, but the Tet offensive ruined it for him. He was a very honorable man, and yes the magnitude of Tet was huge for the political life of LBJ. Even today when I read about it, I can't see how it was that big though, just a breaking point for the American people at home I guess.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate... 

**Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum**by [Patrick Brady](#) - Friday, 20 November 2009, 12:40 PM

I agree that the Tet Offensive allowed many people to form an opinion and act on, mainly because many of the secrets that were held were finally revealed. Before the offensive Westmoreland had told people that the war was going well and that there was an end in sight. The war was also a humbling experience for the U.S. Who knows where we would be right now if these things wouldn't have happened?

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate...

**Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum**by [Kelly Culhane](#) - Friday, 20 November 2009, 03:02 PM

I believe that this was a breaking point for LBJ and his presidency. Public support is may not be what drives politicians, but you can not become a politician without it. N or will you remain one if it is lost. I am sure that a team of advisors was probably trying to find a way to spin everything to help LBJ if he did run for a second term. I, myself, find it very honorable to think that a man would put his country before his own personal ambitions. I am sure he did not want to have anything else tarnish whatever good he had already done. I know that I would never even want the responsibility of knowing that millions of people depend on me and my decisions. It is easy to be a "Monday quarterback" but who ultimately wants that kind of responsibility and accountability? Especially in the era of the internet and satellite TV where everything and anything has footage covered?

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate...

**Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum**by [Michael Bellamy](#) - Saturday, 21 November 2009, 05:52 PM

This is a good point. I also agree that the Tet Offensive was a big factor as to why LBJ declined to run for a second term as president. I do not think the event alone was too much for him to handle, I view it more as the straw that broke the camel's back. The war had progressively been getting worse, causing the decision making to become more difficult. On top of the problems overseas in Vietnam, at home in the United States he had to deal with civil rights and a loss of support in his Great Society programs. There was also increasing criticism from the press, who sensed a "credibility gap" between what Johnson was saying about the war and what was actually happening in Vietnam. When the Tet Offensive occurred and shook our country in multiple ways, Johnson was forced to bear even more pressure with making the right assessments in response to the crisis.

I think that Johnson was too concerned about consistently losing public support and would not have been personally able to handle a loss in the following election. He had too much pride for himself and didn't want anything to damage his reputation even more; therefore declining to run in the '68 election saved him from additional criticism to what he was already taking.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate...

**Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum**by [Nicholas Holden](#) - Friday, 20 November 2009, 12:15 AM

The Tet offensive was the seminal event of America's involvement in the ten thousand day war. Looking back, it seems that the years before 1968 set the stage for the war's climax and the years later were dominated by the Nixon administration's attempts to find an exit strategy that kept most of the proverbial egg off America's face.

Tet was Gen. Giap's attempt at crushing, knock out blow to end the war in one fell swoop. Although the former NVA Chief may, with hindsight, say that it was always the plan to primarily target the American home front with

the largest communist military effort of the American war, I believe that the good general may be whitewashing his mindset at the time a bit in an attempt at a little C.Y.A. for the history books. Giap tried to pull off another Dien Bien Phu, this time against the Marine garrison at Khe Shan; he failed. He tried to seize and hold Saigon as well all of the provincial capitols of South Vietnam; he also failed. Lastly, he tried to foment a popular uprising in the South against the Thieu regime; once again he failed.

Simply put, the Tet offensive cost the North dearly. The Viet Cong and NVA forces were virtually annihilated when they attempted to move from the second phase of people's war (guerrilla actions against US and ARVN forces) to the third phase (direct operations against the foe). This mistake cost Hanoi dearly and brought about the realization that, unlike France, America could not be subdued militarily. The unstoppable force of the communist's desire for conquest had come up short when it collided with the immovable object of American military power.

Tet's real, if unintended, effect was on the American political front. While failing to dislodge the foreign troops in the South, Hanoi did succeed in toppling the Johnson administration and, consequently ushering Nixon into the White House. Perversely, it may be said that by attempting to strike a knock-out blow against its opponents Hanoi may only have succeeded in prolonging America's involvement by helping one of the USA's most ardent anti-communist to grab the reigns of power; Richard Nixon.

As to the increased level of anti-war protests after '68; with Nixon's election in 1968 any influence that the student movement may have had on national policy was severely curtailed. Scream and obstruct as they might, the protesters were unable to end America's involvement in Indochina for even one minute before Richard Nixon was good and ready to sign the peace agreement on his own accord.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate... 



Re: Episode 6 and 7 Forum

by [Glenn Dagleish](#) - Saturday, 21 November 2009, 06:02 PM

It always seems that America can impose it's power on others, in order to make us feels safe, here at home. It's not a surprise that we cannot feel content any of the time and we always have to be intrusive on other countries, either with our military, news propaganda, or negotiations.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Split](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Rate... 

[Send in my latest ratings](#)

 [Moodle Docs for this page](#)

You are logged in as [Joe Escobar](#) ([Logout](#))

HST 195 F09 (Escobar 21820)