this movement as they saw it as the only possible alternative to stop the spread of communism to the discontented people of the South.

The Vietnam War is still known to the people of Vietnam as the American war, as most Vietnam people at the time viewed the Americans as another form of colonial power in the long line of colonialists. The Viet Minh had little military power because they lacked the weapons during their first years of the war. However this soon changed when China was taken over by the communists led by Mao Zedong. The People’s Republic of China quickly gave assistance to their communist allies in North Vietnam against the South. (Cheng Jian, CJ, 2001, pg. 62) At this stage the Americans were convinced that the communist spread was directed by Moscow therefore it was no longer a civil war but a cold war proxy war on Vietnam soil.

What even further brings the war away from being understood as a civil war is the creation of the Viet Cong by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam). The Viet Cong was an organisation of communist guerrillas who constantly entered into South Vietnam and fought in guerrilla wars against the government of South Vietnam. These Guerrillas were supplied through the Ho Chi Ming trail from China. (Hubbel, John G. November 1968 pg. 61-67)

On the 24th of August 1964 a USS Destroyer Maddox was allegedly fired on by Russian built P-4 torpedo boats. The Destroyer was on an intelligence mission on the coast of North Vietnam. After the Gulf of Tonkin incident the United States decided to launch an air strike on North Vietnam. On the 7th of August the Congress passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. This Resolution was precipitated by the Soviet Intervention in North Vietnam. The Tonkin resolution gave the President of the United States of America the authority to conduct large scale military operations in South East Asia. According to (Micheal Howard 1967) there was no proof that the North Vietnamese had fired on US destroyers. Therefore the US had made these claims just to increase its military presence in Indo China. The same year the United states increased its military support for South Vietnam. The number of troops at this period had increased from to more than half a million.

The war in Vietnam between 1960 and 1975 can be best understood as a proxy war because the United States wanted to be seen as a reliable ally. This they hoped will prevent some of its allies from losing faith in the United States and therefore aligning itself with the communists. In simple terms the credibility of the United States was at stake. JF Kennedy once said “There are those who wonder why we have a responsibility there. Well, we have it there for the same reason that we have a responsibility for the defence of Europe. World War II was fought in both Europe and Asia, and when it ended we found ourselves with continued responsibility for the defence of freedom.”

Popular unrest and anti-war protest started growing in the United States and in 1972 President Nixon won the election using the “Vietnamisation” policy which meant that the United States will remove all of its troops from the war in Vietnam and therefore they will live the fighting to the people of South Vietnam to continue the war. This policy was different from President