



THE TET OFFENSIVE

AMERICAN VIEW BEFORE (1965-1967)

Positive

Press

Beleived enemy was being worn down

1968 NEW YEARS

VC fighters attacked

Over 100 cities and military targets

Saigon

VC unit took US embassy

4500 VC; more US and SV

TURNING POINT

For communists

People of SV didn't rise up to join them

Lost 10,000 experienced fighters; weakened

For Americans

Power

500,000 troops in Vietnam

Spending \$20B a year

Ethics

Used enormous amounts of artillery and air power

Many civilians killed

Ancient city of Hue destroyed

How were the VC able to take them by surprise?

Was this right?

MEDIA REACTION

CBS journalist Walter Cronkite

"What the hell is going on? I thought we were winning this war."

Don Oberdorfer The Washington Post

"the American people and most of their leaders reached the conclusion that the Vietnam War would require greater effort over a far longer period of time than it was worth"