

Q16.b.

Significance of T.E.T.

The 1968 T.E.T. campaign by North vietnams and Vietcong military forces proved to be a turning point in the vietnam war of 1965-73.

After several years of conflict in vietnam, the U.S. government was trying to downplay the significance of the continuing war and was telling the American public that the war was winding down and that victory was in sight.

When the T.E.T. offensive was launched by Nth Vietnamsese and vietcong forces at almost every major town or city in Sth Vietnam in 1968, the American public were 'taken back' by the sudden escalation of the fighting as live footage of the war was broadcast to American viewers, with images of the continued fighting, the live-to-air execution of a suspect by Sth Vietnams police chief in Saigon alerted many Americans to the nature of the conflict and pressed more determinably for an end to the war. For North Vietnam the 1968 T.E.T. Campaign was

an overwhelming success, although the N.V.A. and Vietcong were defeated at practically every area they attacked, losing massive numbers of soldiers, the political and social outcomes (ramifications) were far reaching. It showed the American public that their government had been lying to them about a near victory and that the conflict was only escalating, this perhaps is what General Giap and his Nth Vietnamese strategists had in mind all along, as the attacks by their forces were dispersed and weak in strength, but by bringing the conflict to every major town in Sth Vietnam and so to the living rooms of America, American public interest, their disillusionment at the continuing war, their dismay at seeing napalm & other victims on t.v. often children, their concern at the growing casualty lists all helped turn US. public opinion against the war.

Nth Vietnam achieved its aim during the T.E.T. offensive as after the T.E.T. offensive of 1968 America began to 'wind down' and started a

policy of troop withdrawal & the "vietnamisation" of Sth Vietnam's military forces.