

Name: _____

Date: _____

Pol Pot came to power in April 1975. He overthrew Lon Nol in a coup d'état and attempted to create a utopian society. — Source: "Genocide in the 20th Century: Pol Pot in Cambodia 1975-1979," *The History Place*

...He [Pol Pot] began by declaring, "This is Year Zero," and that society was about to be "purified." Capitalism, Western culture, city life, religion, and all foreign influences were to be extinguished in favor of an extreme form of peasant Communism.

All foreigners were thus expelled, embassies closed, and any foreign economic or medical assistance was refused. The use of foreign languages was banned. Newspapers and television stations were shut down, radios and bicycles confiscated, and mail and telephone usage curtailed. Money was forbidden. All businesses were shuttered, religion banned, education halted, health care eliminated, and parental authority revoked. Thus, Cambodia was sealed off from the outside world.

All of Cambodia's cities were then forcibly evacuated. At Phnom Penh, two million inhabitants were evacuated on foot into the countryside at gunpoint. As many as 20,000 died along the way....

Coup d'etat –

Utopia –

Revoked –

Confiscated -

1. What did Pol Pot mean that society needed to be "purified?"

2. Identify 6 steps taken by Pol Pot to "purify" Camodia:

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1) | 4) |
| 2) | 5) |
| 3) | 6) |

3. Based on what you know about de-colonization in Africa and India, why do you think Pol Pot took this approach?

Approximate Death Tolls in Democratic Kampuchea [Cambodia], 1975–1979			
	<u>1975</u> <u>Population</u>	<u>Number who</u> <u>perished</u>	<u>Percent who</u> <u>perished</u>
Total Cambodia	7,890,000	1,671,000	21

Ho Chi Minh's Declaration of Vietnam Independence (Excerpts) (September 2, 1945)

1. "We hold truths that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." This immortal statement is extracted from the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America in 1776. Understood in the broader sense, this means: "All peoples on the earth are born equal; every person has the right to live to be happy and free."

The Declaration of Human and civic Rights proclaimed by the French Revolution in 1791 likewise propounds: "Every man is born equal and enjoys free and equal rights." These are undeniable truths. Yet, during and throughout the last eighty years, the French imperialists, abusing the principles of "Freedom, equality and fraternity," have violated the integrity of our ancestral land and oppressed our countrymen....

2. They have enforced upon us inhuman laws. They have set up three different political regimes in Northern, Central and Southern Viet Nam (Tonkin, Annam, and Cochin-china) in an attempt to disrupt our national, historical and ethnical unity.

3. They have built more prisons than schools. [They] have forced upon us alcohol and opium in order to weaken our race....

4. [They] have shamelessly exploited our people, driven them into the worst misery and mercilessly plundered our country. They have ruthlessly appropriated our rice fields, mines, forests and raw materials. [They have] monopolized all our external commerce. They have imposed hundreds of unjustifiable taxes, and reduced our countrymen, especially the peasants and petty tradesmen, to extreme poverty. They ... have exploited our workers in the most barbarous manner.

5. In the autumn of 1940, when the Japanese fascists, in order to fight the Allies, invaded Indochina and set up new bases of war, the French imperialist surrendered ... and handed over our country to the invaders. Subsequently under the joint French and Japanese yoke,... two million of our countrymen died from starvation.... the Japanese disarmed the French troops. Again the French either fled or surrendered Thus, in no way have they proved capable of "protecting" us; on the contrary, within five years they have twice sold our country to the Japanese.

6. Despite all that, ... the Viet Minh League helped many French to cross the borders, rescued others from Japanese prisons and, in general, protected the lives and properties of all the French in their [the Vietnamese] territory.

7. In ... the autumn of 1940, our country ceased to be a French colony and became a Japanese possession. After the Japanese surrender, our people, as a whole, rose up and proclaimed their sovereignty and founded the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam...

8. For these reasons, we, the members of the Provisional Government representing the entire people of Viet Nam, declare that we shall from now on have no more connections with _____ France...

9. We are convinced that the Allies who have recognized the principles of equality of peoples at the Conferences of Tehran and San Francisco cannot but recognize the Independence of Việt Nam. A people who, during these last years, so doggedly ... fought on the Allied side against Fascism, such a people has the right to be free, such a people must be independent.

10. For these reasons, we, the members of the Provisional Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, solemnly declare to the world: "Viet Nam has the right to be free and independent and, in fact, has become free and independent...."

1. According to the document, how do the US and French Declarations relate to Vietnam?

2. Who is being referenced as "They?"

3. Why did "they" set up 3 different political regimes?

4. What crimes against their civilization do the Vietnamese connect to the French imperialists? Give 3 specific examples.

5. Why was Vietnam significant to WWII?

6. How do the end of WWII treaties support Vietnamese independence?