Due date: Saturday, 30 October 2010, 09:05 PM
Last edited: Saturday, 30 October 2010, 08:58 PM (461 words)

Mistaken

The reason I chose the theme mistaken was that I feel after what I have read that we had mistaken the Vietnamese for who they truly were. We did a lot of stereotyping and grouping between “communists” or “villagers”. I also feel that we mistook them for a gullible people that we could manipulate, not necessarily to our advantage-we might have been just trying to help them. None the less, we thought that we could establish a system similar to our own in their country, and it’s obvious we didn’t even fully understand what they wanted for their country. As the name of the theme implies, many agree that American involvement was a mistake.

Through all the efforts made to arrange for American involvement in the war, the war brought no agreeable solutions. By efforts I try to consider all the strenuous exertion from all involved, as well as the wasted tax-payer’s dollars, and loss of American and Vietnamese lives. The section of Appy’s Book called “Trails to War” puts this theme into perspective. For example, it describes how the soldiers must have felt sitting on a flight going half way around the world and not even knowing where in Vietnam they would be fighting. Also considering efforts such as building six seaports, and dozens of other military zones such as airfields, which all cost money and lots of it. Although my theme is an obvious one, trying to consider in total the efforts that it takes to go to war half way around the world opens it up to be self explanatory.

Another account for the regret felt about the war comes from the story told by Jim Soular titled “Free-Fire Zone”. At the end of the story he admits, that there has never been a day that he didn’t think about Vietnam and feel sorry that it occurred. Not just did he lose one of his best friends to a drunken murderer, but he had regret and sorrow for what the citizens of Vietnam went through as well. This is another story that fills me with regretful emotions when I read it.

When reading through the section in the book “Air War” I get the same general feelings about whether or not the war in Vietnam was a good call or not. Imagining all the defoliants being ejected over the hills and valleys of South Vietnam, killing all the natural and cultivated vegetation doesn’t give me a good picture. Additionally, imagining all the tons of bombs that were dropped on South Vietnam is unbelievable. Trying to conceive all the combined efforts, losses, and aftershock of this war, the overall feeling I get is that it was all a mistake.

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