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Last edited: Saturday, 20 November 2010, 08:54 PM (908 words) 

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Part 1

I think an important turning point in the war was a result of My Lai. From the actual to the cover up, it fuelled the anti-war movement and the mistrust in the United States government. Larry Colburn's "They were butchering people" describes the event that happened that day while serving on an assault helicopter. The events were very gruesome in initially covered up. It wasn't until pictures began being published, that an investigation begun. After the truth came the press seemed to distrust the military more. In Charles Cooper's account "All this area was Indian Country" a New York Times calls his event his "mini My Lai" and it wasn't until the press got to know him, that he was able to win their trust. However, it seemed he was the only one they trusted because as he was leaving Vietnam, they said he was the "one of the good

things in this crummy war."

It seems like the grizzly account of that day in the village of My Lai was the final nail in the public's trust in the in the government which was a major turning point in the war. 

Part 2

There are a lot of accounts of the end of the war. There is an ending for a person, a country and the actual end of the whole war. The account of an "ending" which struck me was the ending of George Evens' war. Charles Cooper explains in "All this area was Indian country" that project 100,000 flooded the war with "morons and imbeciles." Cooper explained that these people would become frustrated and become aggressive. These people were well below the admissions standards at the beginning of the war. This seemed to erode the professional nature of the military. 

George Evens' "I didn't know there was a bad war" (page 449) was an account of a person going to war with an open mind. By his own account he was a professional soldier, doing his job well. However when confronted with the wrongness of the war, he decided it wasn't for him. This may have been inevitable outcome in a drawn out war.

The event which changed him was when he was ordered to "go clean up the gook." The "gook" turned out to be two Vietnamese boys who were dead. While doing his job he was confronted by the grieving mother. Later he found out that the American military truck drivers had a game called "gook hockey" in which they would bet on who could hit a kid. This event and the uncaring people around him led him to feel betrayed and eventually deciding to "fuck it." Even though he remained in the military, to him, his war had ended.

(I hope this is what you were asking for in part 2. I really wanted to expand on what's below, however it didn't seem like what you were asking for) 

The account that is the "best" example of an "ending" of the war is Frank Snapp's "There was classified confetti all over the trees." (page 496). Truong Tran's title of his account says it best "We could either lose or tie, but not win." Tran makes a very good point that since Southern Vietnam couldn't invade the North and the North was set on uniting the country, the only ending to the war could be a victory for the north or a tie. Snapp's story recounts the flight of the President of South Vietnam, Nguyen Van Thieu, and the evacuation before the fall of Saigon. 

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