

Elizabeth Bruno-Hibler

History 195 – Escobar

November 24, 2013

92 / 100

Turning Point & Ending

Douglas Kinnard's story starts with "While we had the power, it turned out they had the will (pg. 321, Appy). United States troops had been in the country of Vietnam for about nine years when Kinnard sent a questionnaire to all the army generals, 173 of them, and received surprising results. Two-thirds of the generals who replied to the survey and seventy percent of the replies said they didn't really know or understand the objectives of the war. What was the overall purpose of the Vietnam War? That question was running through the minds of the U.S. Army generals after nine years of fighting. This could be seen as a turning point for the Vietnam War. If the generals do not know what the objectives are for the war, how could the U.S. possibly keep fighting? How could they have won? The morale seemed to have been at an all time low. The United States went into Vietnam with the notion that this small country could easily fall to the control of whoever storms in. The people were small and meek in the eyes of the world. Kinnard said that America was under the assumption that they could get an easy win by just "hitting the enemy hard enough... Everything was based on that assumption. But the assumption was totally wrong (pg. 322, Appy)". The will of the Vietnam people was greatly underestimated. Another part of Douglas Kinnard's story that could be seen as a turning point was the quote mentioned at the top, "While we had the power, it turned out they had the will (pg 322, Appy)". The will power of Vietnam surpassed that of the American soldiers. There was also a mention of how pressure had been mounted to

careful with the hypo?

xxx?

who? North? South?

~~Bruno-Hibler 2~~

"increase the body count (323, Appy)". Kinnard had overheard a senior general talking with a colonel, who was going to be promoted to brigade commander. The senior general told him to get the body count up or there was a chance he could be replaced. That colonel ended up being killed a day or two later trying to get kills (pg 323, Appy). The body count reference was used to show the progress of the war. If more Vietnamese were dead compared to American troops, that meant the United States was winning. But, looking at the big picture, American was not "winning". Once it was realized that the Vietnamese would never give up, American soldiers questioned why they were really there and what they were fighting for. Kinnard's story provided a turning point in the Vietnam War because he brought up the doubt, the admission of Vietnamese will power, and how the Army generals of the U.S. really felt about the never-ending war.

good support

It's appropriate to pick a story from a Vietnamese as an ending to the war. Americans lost lives in Vietnam but the South Vietnamese lost more. They lost their homes and livelihoods as well as the lives of loved ones. Truong Tran was a South Vietnamese who was drafted into the armed forces in 1964. His family was the most important thing to him so he tried to stay close to them while he was serving but that wasn't possible. Tran talked about the relationship and respect between the South Vietnamese soldiers and the people.

sp

There were strict rules set in place when it came to dealing with the local people. The commander "severely punished anyone who was arrogant or stole property because even stealing a chicken or some vegetables could create negative political repercussions... But most of the men in our unit were well behaved and we developed a good relationship with the people (pg. 505, Appy)". There were not a whole lot of stories from American

click
Bruno-Hibler 3

Veterans that had accounts like Tran's about the people. It makes sense though that the people of South Vietnam were shown more respect from their own soldiers, compared to American soldiers. If the war had been in America and the Vietnamese were sent to help, the American people would most likely trust American soldiers and receive more respect because the soldiers were fighting for their own freedom, unlike in Vietnam. They were fighting for freedom, just not their own.

The ending of Tran's account of Vietnam is more relevant as an example of an "ending" for the war. His story supplies more of a "result because of the war" ending. "Having U.S. soldiers in Vietnam not only destroyed our political cause, it also destroyed our economy and social fabric. Ninety percent of the population had relied on the land, but during the war people could not grow crops and had to move to the cities... Many had to become menial laborers or even prostitutes (pg. 506, Appy)". South Vietnam lost their freedom, the whole reason why they were fighting. "We also lost because we agreed to fight a war that we could either lose or tie, but not win. The best we could ever do is keep half the country (pg. 506, Appy)". The people of Vietnam wanted unification of the country so the North would have "won" anyway.

Work Cited

Appy, Christian G. *Patriots: The Vietnam War Remembered from All Sides*. New York: Penguin Group, 2003. Print.

much better than the
last paper
good work