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History of Vietnam
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Online Class
Assignment 1

PART 1

I believe Dang Vu Heip's personal account of the war in Vietnam to be a very valuable first hand account. After studying for years in the Soviet Union, to what avenue we do not know, he came back and began his career against the Americans as a Lieutenant Colonel which is no low rank in any military force. The next step up is that of a general. Those that are capable of earning such a rank usually have a specific talent and intelligence unlike others. I know this first hand because I currently serve in a branch of the military and have seen first hand, what kind of individuals reside at specific ranks and the different levels of intellect that reside their.

This man left his family, a wife and three children, to serve in a very strategic and important part of the region for 10 years and returned home a general. The Central Highlands. This is an event that would impact any soldier greatly, but having not been affected like those at the front lines, it is easier to retain such knowledge about the who, why, where and how events were occurring or being planned. An individual in this position is not subject to the intense emotions of what happens in the face of certain doom. In his eyes he was just carrying out a standard attack against the South Vietnamese without fully realizing the capabilities of the US or even why were there. They may not have the same intelligence networks we did, but I am sure they were better than ours at the time, 1965, given that they knew the ways of their people better than the US. Americans assumed too much and didn't fully incorporate ourselves within the country's political and social dynamics until later. So I do not believe Heip fully when he says he "never understood why the US government regarded this attack as provocative." He mentions later that after conversation with McNamara that he considered his claims that the US would not have attacked as "groundless" if the North did not attack Pleiku. Heip goes on to say that they, the North, believed the US used the incident there as a "pretext for launching long-term planned bombing strikes." Given this

information I believe the North, commanders in the field or those in Hanoi, knew this would provoke the US. I believe his statements to be subjective and somewhat factual given his portion in this timeline. **But, who in any of this mess, is really going to be unbiased?** Practically no one.

PART 2

Henry Prunier's "These were not ragtag farmers" disappointed me because of the hope of relations between the US and Vietnam by Ho Chi Minh. While I don't personally agree with Communism, I do understand an individual's patriotism and love for the people that reside in their country. When Prunier talks of the brightness in his eyes even though he was so physically frail, it makes me think of the personal accounts I have had with such individuals and their refusal to give up and fight. For anything, not necessarily war. So from this angle I can relate fully to what he was talking about. A man's love for his country, but moreover, one's willingness to take action and take a stand. That is truly a remarkable task no matter what one's belief system is.

The account of Ngo Vinh Long was particularly strong for me and provided me with a strong sense of compassion for him and the works he chose to do for his country. There is an individual like this in any war torn area of the world but they are never recognized or brought to light like say Mother Teresa was. This young man learned so much wisdom from his father that he was able to carry it over into his adult life. When he realized how poorly villagers were being treated he decided to take a stand physically at that time rather than simply overlook what was occurring and move on. So many now a days would simply gloss over such scenes of suffering simply for following orders. It doesn't matter what country they are from. I have read and heard many stories of such accounts occurring in the Middle East and Africa. I know this happened years ago but it gives me great joy to know that there are individuals such as this through out the world that won't just roll over, but actually take a stand to such despicable sights and try to make something positive happen from it. I hope to develop into an individual that cares this much and is able to help my fellow humans in whatever capacity is necessary.

There is a movie called "The Boondock Saints" where in the opening of the movie a priest talks about a greater evil which is "the indifference of good men." This is a true statement and has great meaning. I only hope others can learn from such a powerful statement.

Overall good job. Some logic and/or flow problems that could be overcome with a bit more detailed explanation (part 1)

Part 2 was the stronger of the two.

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