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Part I

The story that had the greatest impact on me was the account of Bernard Trainor who was in command of a Special Forces unit in Vietnam. I found his account to be incredibly fascinating and while he talked about his experiences in the war, he was able to look at the war from an outside perspective. He openly discusses his problems with the way the United States was fighting the war. Vietnam wasn't a war in which Americans were fighting for America, we were fighting against communism. Trainor respects the enemy he is fighting and understands the faults in the strategy being used by the US army. His story has seemed to stay fresh in his mind and still carries weight in the overall conflict that was the Vietnam War.

Part II

The account of Daniel Redmond was the most disappointing story because he seemed to be stuck on the idea that the US needed to be there to fight against the rise of communism. Instead of being an invader he viewed US involvement as necessary to fight the growth of communism in the Far East. After reading accounts from the Vietnamese (both north and south) it is plain to see that communism was not the reason for the war. They wanted to be a sovereign nation and while the US attempted to create a free and sovereign nation in the South with President Diem the fact of the matter is Diem was a horribly correct official. His policies were that of oppression and intimidation and were catalysts to many South Vietnamese joining the North to fight for independence.

I found the story of Ngo Vinh Long to be an incredible account in the conflict. He was a Vietnamese citizen who grew up in Vietnam but then went to Harvard. He was able to see the War in two different universes. I found hope in his father's words about how they shouldn't hate the French people, only French colonial policy. It is so easy to blame the people for what a government decides is correct, after all they are only the few compared to the many. Going to Harvard he did not give up on the cause of his home country and continued his 'fight' against the war in Vietnam through protest. It was not just about stopping the killing, it was also about the fact that the US was stepping in on a matter of independence that we had no business being part of.

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