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Part 1

It is hard to choose just one person's memories that caught my attention more than others. Several of the South Vietnamese mentioned that they felt the war to be not their own, that they were forced to fight. Phan Xuan Sinh said that he would have rather lived under the North's authority than to continue the war. But the one passage that sticks in my mind is that of Tran Thi Gung. She seemed almost proud of how many GI's that she killed, and the awards that she received because of them. But I felt that at the end, she had a valid point: America had invaded her home; her land and she had to protect it. She was doing her duty and she does not feel guilty for that. I think a part of me admires her for that actually. I find that I believe her account of what happened, because she is not as emotional about it as most. Ms. Gung obviously misses her comrades but she has learned to deal and move on, something that not everyone was able to do. I especially enjoyed her account of the mass funeral for the living, and I wonder how often it was performed.

Part 2

For me, the situation as a whole is disappointing. We (Americans) went in to do one thing, and ended up doing the complete opposite. But one thing bugs me more than most, and that is something that Daniel Redmond talks about toward the end of his passage, and that I have been reading about in other books about this war. And that is the use of media to further one's agenda. He talks about Tom Dooley and the book *Deliver Us from Evil*. From what I could understand, Dooley uses pictures of a Vietnam beggar to portray a victim of torture. Redmond also says that Dooley exaggerated events to suit his own wants and needs. This feels very wrong to me, as the war was a horrific event to those that live through it. There are many other aspects from that passage that bother me, but the part about Dooley is at the top. However, Redmond had a lot of good to say about Dooley as well, such as his concern for the Vietnamese and their well-being.

Although the very last passage of part 2 is extremely horrifying and sad, I found a lot of hope and even peace in Luyen Nguyen's words. He speaks of the injustice that he endures at the ways in his camp, where recruits had more money, more freedom and better food; and then he talks of his capture and torture as a POW. But the peace and hope I discovered in this event was the way he deals with it. Nguyen made peace with his situation. He refuses to go against his beliefs even though it costs him dearly physically and mentally. I also was in awe that he put his family's emotions above his own and refused to tell them he was alive so they wouldn't cry over him. It was also because his wife loved him so much that she left her second husband and waited for him to come home when she found out he was still alive. I realize that she remarried out of necessity, but I don't believe anyone would have faulted her for not leaving him later. And lastly, because after everything was over, he moved with his wife, worked hard for his masters and became a student counselor.

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