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80/100

(823 words)

### Turning Points in the Vietnam War

The Vietnam War conflict during the late 1960's and the 1970's escalated in ~~rather many~~ various ways. The events that ensued had immense effect on direct military and political support of the war as the American population as well as the South Vietnamese began to lose the will to continue to support such a fruitless war. Moral<sup>to</sup> support the war was effect by factors such as racism, conflict of interest in American politics, the press coverage of extreme events such as the My Lai Massacre, an Invasion of Cambodia, as well as the Tet Offensive.

*unclear*  
*no*  
*they weren't ignored*  
The conflict of interest in the Vietnam War could be considered the most diverse war setting in history, whether it be political, geographical, cultural, and racial. The American military wasn't prepared to fight an enemy that could not be distinguished from it's very own ally. Fighting in the jungles had a very high cost on troop moral<sup>as</sup> they searched for an enemy that didn't have uniforms that could distinguish them from friend or foe like in previous US fought battle engagements <sup>or</sup> have the knowledge to understand the cultural differences and willingness of such a poor and technologically unadvanced foe. Events such as the My Lai Massacre that took place in March of 1968 were extremely hard to ignore by the media. The thought of American valor being tarnished by such acts of rape and the murdering of innocent women, children, and the elderly was inexcusable. March 16<sup>th</sup> of 1968 would be the turning point <sup>for</sup> Sergeant Michael Bernhardt. Witnessing and refusing to take part of such events that occurred in the My Lai hamlet would change his outlook on war forever.

"I went back up and when I came out there was Calley, his drawers down to his ankles, and he had a woman kneeling in front of him and he's got a .45 there in his hand that he's pointing at her head. I really, really wanted to kill that guy but there were just too many guys around. I saw him as pure evil." (Bernhardt 351) *story*

War has atrocities, it's merely a fact of life. When you're commanded by you're squad leader to attack the lives of those whom couldn't possibly have true malicious intent such as children, it's hard to make your countries war efforts more justifiable. The reaction's of the media and protest of some of the American public is understandable with the discovery of such atrocities committed by the so called "good guys." Although this can't be seen as the act of all military personal during the war, it is certainly a turning point during the war.

There were many events that brought the end of United States military presence within Vietnam. One could consider that when the very last of the US military presence has withdrawn from the country that the war would be over. The fall of Saigon on April 30<sup>th</sup> of 1975 would ultimately be the end of the south government and bring forth reunification of Vietnam. At this point of time nearly all American presence has abandoned Vietnam, but this isn't the case for all. To the prisoners of war it hasn't ended until they've been granted their freedom. It wasn't until many months later that the remaining foreign prisoners of Vietnam would be released. The life of a prisoner during the Vietnam war certainly wasn't a luxury lifestyle, but it did allow the continuation of a prisoner's life. The accounts of Jay Scarborough certainly helps define what it means to be a prisoner at the end of the war. The war was over for the Americans, but the actions against the left behind South Vietnamese would be much more unimaginable.

"They only got a bowl and a half of rice a day, which is practically a starvation diet, whereas we were given all the rice we could eat." (Scarborough 474)

It's hard to imagine the conditions people went through as POW's, as some had been treated better than others. Other questions come to mind when examining the end of the war, when there were most certainly other options to have ended it sooner. If the South Vietnamese government could of accepted the Paris Peace Accords, it most likely would of ended the war much sooner. The individuals imprisoned against their will could have been freed, as well as others never being captured in the first place.

The Vietnam War was full of acts of human indecency from each side. With great cruelty produced from start and up until the finish. This event will be a great remember as brutal piece of history, that will hopefully help deter future mistakes in conflict as people look back at these events.

Your incorporation of the series is minimal, & it seems as if you are trying to do what the instructions said NOT to do. The turning pt & end for the whole work. On that topic, your paper is much too brief.