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82

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History 195
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Assignment 2

Awakening Towards the End of US Involvement in Vietnam

During the 1960's, American citizens began to question the legitimacy of US military efforts in Vietnam, and simultaneously the country was in a state of turmoil dealing with various social movements such as the Civil Rights Movement. The wide array of non-violent protest and activism was building in numbers, and the American middle class was starting to fully comprehend the reality of losing their sons in the Vietnam War. In Clark Dougan's letter, "Memorial Day 1968," he writes about how an editorial in the Cleveland Press provided him with an awakening sense of reality when he wrote, "It just hit me like a hammer. I remembered that conversation in homeroom and it suddenly had this profound significance. I had gone off to this cloistered college while he was going off to die in Vietnam. (Appy 305) It appears as though Dougan was not alone in his realization that he could be died in Vietnam just as easily as anyone else. Furthermore Dougan claims that everyone knows someone, some ordinary everyday person, who ends up going off to fight the war in Vietnam, and he states, "I think that was the moment when "Middle America" really turned against the war. (Appy 306)

Middle class American households becoming more familiar with the tragic loss of life from their own communities and families in the Vietnam War marks a major turning point in the war. Shadowing, or even guided by the prolific leaders for the Civil Rights Movement, American antiwar activists began to flourish all over the countryside, and nonviolent antiwar protests began to take place more frequently. Along with the increase in antiwar protests, the two differences between pro-war and anti-war civilians began to grow, and it began to appear as though the US itself would be one of the dominos to perish from what is known as the domino theory regarding the Vietnam War and Communist rule in the region. Therefore, Lyndon B. Johnson and his staff had to try and manage the conflict in Vietnam with more concern for the American people's growing distaste with continued American involvement in the war. The American middle class awakening to the real impact of the Vietnam War on their families and communities thus marks one of many shifting points regarding the Vietnam War, especially regarding US involvement in the war.

The war in Vietnam would eventually end in a similar type of awakening that Vietnam Veterans and soldiers alike began to be aware of; Veterans and active duty soldiers began to actively protest the war in Vietnam. In the letter written by Steve Sherlock the increasing numbers of Veterans and active duty military men being fed up with the war in Vietnam could not be more apparent. In particular Sherlock writes about one protest at Camp Eagle where a petition was put up with the words "Fuck war" written on it that he himself signed. (Appy 425)

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gm Sherlock was met by with a man from intelligence who had been outraged by an officer who had, "betrayed his duty by signing an antiwar petition." (Appy 425) Sherlock was eventually relieved of his duties at Camp Eagle, and he returned to America eventually finding his way back to Purdue in 1970. While in Purdue he met with an ex-marine, and the talks and considerations of starting a local chapter of Vietnam Veterans Against the War. (Appy 429) Different chapters of VVAW began to pop up throughout the country, and with more veterans joining these chapters; it is likely that the government became even more concerned and worried with the unity and safety of its own countryside than ever before. ? Furthermore, the increase of active duty military men on the ground in Vietnam protesting the war efforts and disobeying orders would make the war much more difficult to win, so the active duty GI's in Vietnam laid some of the groundwork helping to lead the US to withdrawal all of her troops from Vietnam. And in March of 1973, the US withdrew the last ground troops from Vietnam, thus providing an end to the Vietnam War in the eyes of the American public.

Paper needed proofing.
Readability suffered & hurt analysis.

Part 1 better than Part 2

More space/time/words needed to
make a better connection between
VVAW at home & soldier's IN Vietnam.

(Quick jump from 1970 + 1973)