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Part 1

The support for the war in Vietnam began to turn when Middle America had finally had enough. When Middle America finally began to hear and see the death and destruction in Vietnam and when it became personal. Many, if not all, of the young men sent to Vietnam during the first years had parents or teachers who had fought in World War 2. These young men were taught that to fight and die for your country was an honor. The movies of that era also portrayed the soldier as a hero, so for many young men there was really no choice but to join or go when they were drafted.

In 1967-68 the media was just beginning to tell the "real" story. The clergy were just beginning to talk about the death and destruction and to question the validity of the war. In the colleges there had been dissent for some time, but in the home, in the media and in the churches there had still been support for, and belief in the government's version of events. Those, who were the dissenter's were classified as Communists, Hooligans, or Bums, those kids with the "silver spoons" who were spoiled and undeserving, as ~~we~~ depicted heard in the PBS video.

Clark Dougan describes the times of his life and the changes in Cleveland, Ohio. He describes, with accuracy, the "college cloistering" of some, while others who did not have the grades, or whose parents could not or would not pay for college, were fighting and dying in Vietnam. From my own experience, I can say that the draft board "cleaned out" whole towns leaving only those young men with special deferments, college enrolled, or medically exempt behind. He describes his surprise that the Cleveland Press paper would write an editorial about the death of a soldier from their area and put it on the front page. He believes that the paper was really asking "how many more people are we willing to waste" on Vietnam. He thinks that those World War 2 Vets who had been sitting around their kitchen tables saying "you've got to fight for your country" were now starting to re think that idea. President Johnson said it well when he said, "If I lose Walter Cronkite, I have lost the American public".

Clark Dougan describes his friend, who had been killed in Vietnam, as a regular kid. He was not an Eagle Scout, Class President or All-American athlete and apparently he was not the son of an important family. He was the boy we all knew, even if we didn't know his name." He was just 19, did you know him?" could have been said of so many, in so many towns across America and that was the turning point for Middle America and maybe the beginning of the end of the war in Vietnam.

Part Two

The end of the Vietnam War came with the Watergate mentality and activities in the Nixon White House. Starting in 1970 when the bombing of Cambodia hit the news and the deliberate deceit of the American public started to become public knowledge and ending with the resignation of President Nixon.

The "Let's circle the wagons", by Egil "Bud" Krogh begins to describe the decay in the military in Vietnam when he describes his visit to the troops and the drug problems he encountered along with the lack of honest reports coming from the Military. He tells the

White House that the troops are sick and tired, bored, scared and unhappy and drugs are everywhere.

The publishing of the Pentagon Papers in the New York Times and the break in at Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office in 1971 began to show the public the extent of the decay in our Government. To actually believe that the break in was "a busted operation conducted under the president's national security authority, not a crime or a constitutional violation" showed the extent to which our own government would go to protect its lies and deceptions.

If the Pentagon Papers were correct as they were proved to be, the public had been deceived for a very long time. The Pentagon Papers were released bit by bit, so the long history of White House lies caused even the staunchest supporter of the war to start to question our involvement in Vietnam. While those who had been protesting the war now had support for what they had been saying, more ammunition and other reasons for their demonstrations.

Egil Krogh said that the 'White house Plumbers' were not the most rational group of men, and that Watergate might not have happened had anyone just said "this White House will not accept that kind of activity". It could then be said that had Nixon not been damaged by Watergate and had remained in office, Congress might not have voted to end all military activities anywhere in Vietnam, Cambodia or Laos. The War Powers Act might not have been passed and the aid to South Vietnam might not have been stopped. The war might have been prolonged for an even longer period of time and maybe the outcome of the war would have been different.

ending with a bunch of "what if's?"
is not the strongest ending to an
otherwise good paper

Much better
than Paper #1