

Griswold 1

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Griswold 1 Chelsea Griswold Mr. Scott Modern World History 22 September 2010 The Vietnam War: Bellum Letale " A great war leaves the country with three armies — an army of cripples, an army of mourners, and an army of thieves. " Originally spoken by a German proverb, this mention is largely pertinent to relatively any war. After the Vietnam War, effect was spreading through the United States and Southeast Asia. Many were lost and wounded, as well as those who were afflicted by their loss. Those who witnessed firsthand and survived were even more greatly affected, and were deprived of ordinary life. This conflict was sorrowful for many and did not cease to cause affect years succeeding its " end". The Vietnam War was fought mainly between the Republic of Vietnam (with the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and South Korea) and the combined forces of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and the National Liberation Front. In 1959, after the country was divided into two parts, North, under communist rule, and South, with a democratic government, communist leader Ho Chi Minh launched a campaign to unite the country under whole communist rule. After many years, eventually US troops had been withdrawn from Vietnam, and the Paris Peace Accords were signed in 1973, ending US involvement in this war. Later, in 1975, North Vietnam invaded the South and took Griswold 2 over. The city of Saigon had fallen, and the country had reunited to form the " Socialist Republic of Vietnam". The war was officially ended and Saigon City was renamed in honor of former president of North Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh. The " army of cripples" refers to the people who have survived the tragedies of the war in Vietnam, the soldiers. In 1966, President Lyndon B. Johnson increased the number of American troops fighting with the South in Vietnam,

denouncing those who spoke out against him, saying: " The American people will stand united until every soldier is brought home safely. They will stand united until the people of South Vietnam can choose their own government." One-third of Americans in the war were drafted, while the other two-thirds were volunteers. " I had moments when I doubted whether I could make a life for myself back home. I would wake up some nights in a cold sweat, my body shaking, as my mind relived a Vietnam experience. I was always on the ready to react, to attack, to survive, " writes Thomas R. Jones, a US veteran of the war. He continues to say that eventually, his case was helped and that he can now live a normal civilian life. According to statistics, 85% of Vietnam veterans made a successful transition to civilian life, though there were veterans who had experienced Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. PTSD is " an emotional illness that usually develops as a result of a terribly frightening, life-threatening, or otherwise highly unsafe experience... [People with PTSD] are exquisitely sensitive to normal life experiences (hyperarousal)... many troops in Vietnam who had symptoms of what is now called PTSD were assessed as having ' post-Vietnam syndrome.' PTSD has also been called ' battle fatigue' and ' shell shock'" In addition, many soldiers were reported to have abused drugs. Numerous soldiers had also committed suicide after the war had ended. " A large number of returning veterans on both sides of the war developed cancer and unknown illnesses during the 1970s as a result of contact with dioxins in Vietnam. When the last herbicides were destroyed by the U. S. military in 1977, veterans were already mounting a vigorous campaign to make the government more aware of their plight; some even sued the chemical industry. In 1984 the Dow

Chemical Company and other chemical companies that had manufactured Agent Orange made a \$180 million out-of-court settlement with veterans and their families (for an average payment of \$1, 000 per veteran). The following year the federal government funded \$1 billion to conduct research on the chemical poisoning of veterans. In 1992 the Department of Defense declared that Vietnam veterans exhibiting Hodgkin's disease, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, soft-tissue sarcoma, chloracne, and birth defects could claim contamination by herbicides in Vietnam. " The " army of mourners" suggests those who have been affected by the loss of their own people in this war as well as the war itself. Of the 9 million soldiers that were drafted, nearly 60, 000 soldiers died. In Vietnam, 2. 5 million were found dead, millions of people were terrorized, and more. The bombings grounded out large portions of the land. In fact; there were more bombings in total than all of World War II. Chemical defoliation also was the result of impact. To avoid detection by air, the US used defoliants. Over a million hectares of forest was destroyed by ' Agent Orange', Griswold 4 "' Agent Blue' was sprayed on crops in an effort to deprive the North of its food supply. Between 1962 and 1969, 688, 000 acres of agricultural land was sprayed — primarily on paddy fields, " leading to starvation. Futhermore, there were 50, 000 " American Asian" children born to Vietnamese women. There were the people who believed that they had something owed to them after the war — the " army of thieves". Some veterans may believe that they are owed something for aiding South Vietnam in the war. 87% of the American people hold Vietnam Vets in high esteem. The Vietnam War was truly a propelling event in the past. Those who have served in the war know this, as well as the many who

were affected by its tragedy. The three "armies" left behind by the war itself will always exist, in any and all wars. Our involvement as the United States in this war presents a crucial advisement to the American government. "What a cruel thing is war: to separate and destroy families and friends, and mar the purest joys and happiness God has granted us in this world; to fill our hearts with hatred instead of love for our neighbors, and to devastate the fair face of this beautiful world." - Robert E. Lee. Griswold 5 Works Cited "Answers. com - What is the meaning of a great war leaves a country with three armies army of cripples army of mourners and army of thieves." WikiAnswers - The Q&A wiki. N. p., n. d. Web. 22 Sept. 2010. . "Answers. com - What were some important long term and short