**Extra Credit**

The Vietnam War has been a highly debated subject since the beginning. As we look into two articles, Vietnam: A Necessary War by Michael Lind and Vietnam: A Mistake of the Western Alliance by Mark Atwood Lawrence we see two contrasting viewpoints on the success and failure of the Vietnam War.

Lind starts his article “examining the Vietnam War in its Cold War context,” leading the reading to understand that it does not justify itself in such a way. Lind takes the stance that perceived power is the realest form of power, even more so than absolute power. Lind also argues that with the political tension of the Cold War and communist expansion being a major threat to the world we had but no choice but to fight where we were asked to duel. Americans, as well as others, are not only upset because of these reasons but others as well. A major portion of our society today hold ill will towards the United States government for not being as forthcoming as they should have been. The Pentagon Papers, secret government documents published in 1971, contained a conflicting internal study of the Vietnam War. These documents “disillusioned the public by revealing that officials harbored pessimism about the war even as they made rosy public pronouncements about its progress.” It is emphasized in Linds article that the war was unfairly critiqued due to these reasons alone. Lind ends his argument with “it looks less like a tragic error than like a battle that could hardly be avoided.” By contrast, Lawrence takes a harsh standpoint against the United States, among other countries and their involvement in the Vietnam War. Lawrence argues that “ideological, economic and strategic” reasons all converge on Indochina.