Question 3 (30%): The Political, Military, and Diplomatic History of the War in Vietnam

Evaluating the social and political history of the civil rights 'revolution'

Using your readings over the course of the semester, with a focus on My Lai, argue for the three most significant causes and three most important effects of U.S. involvement in Vietnam from the 1950s to the Vietnam War, which historians often mark from the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution in 1964 to the fall of South Vietnam in 1975. Devote a paragraph to each (three paragraphs on causes, three on effects) by pointing to specific examples from the readings. As you develop your response, you must consider the ways in which the massacre at My Lai impacted the Vietnam War and shaped both foreign and domestic responses to the Vietnam War. In your final paragraph, explain how the United States justified the war in Vietnam during the Johnson and Nixon administrations, and evaluate whether you think the Vietnam War was justifiable from the vantage point of the early 21st century.  
  
  
  
Remember that when I ask for specific examples or specific information, you are expected to explain at the very least the following: a person’s name or a reference to a specific person if the person is unknown, a date or dates, a geographic location, the name of any other relevant information (names of ideas, books, films, or documents), and most importantly, where you are getting the specific example with a page or location number to your readings or supplementary lecture materials.