How useful are sources A to F for explaining why there was an anti-war movement in the United States during the late 1960s and early 1970s?

In this essay I will examine sources A-F to determine how useful this evidence is to explain why there was an anti-war movement in the United States during the late 1960s and early 1970s. I will talk about each reason for the peace movement such as the uncensored media and press coverage, the fact that the USA were losing the war, the casualties that were being suffered in the war and the cost of the war. I will begin by examining the sources about uncensored media and press coverage of the war in Vietnam.

Source B is a photograph of napalm victims taken during the war in Vietnam. This source is useful because it shows how civilians were possibly treated in the war. It gives us an idea of what it was like for journalists in Vietnam at that time. It shows us the kind of images that people back in America were seeing. However source B is limited as it may not show us the whole picture and may have been altered for effect. I know from my own knowledge that napalm and other chemical weapons were used on Vietnamese villages and many images like this were seen by Americans, which may be a contributing factor in why there was an anti-war movement.

Source F is a statement made by a BBC commentator in the year 1970. The source is useful because is from the BBC who are the biggest TV corporation in the world. This source also shows use the brutality of war and brings a bloody image back to the public. The source is limited because members of the British armed forces would have been in the audience so they may have not been honest. From my own knowledge I know that many images like this one were released to the public during the Vietnam War one of them being the execution of a Viet Cong member.

I will now talk about the sources, which give information about the USA losing the war; I am going to start by talking about source A. Source A is an extract from Michael Bilton’s book “Four Hours in My Lai” and is useful because it informs us that the US troops were inexperienced because all the professional soldiers had been killed and because of “the tour of duty” which meant that soldiers were only called up for one year so “just as a soldier began to gain experience he was sent home”. Soldiers had limited training and were undereducated “recruits scored so low on the intelligence tests that they would never have been let into the normal peacetime army”. From my own knowledge I know that a lot of the US soldiers were high school dropouts who had low education levels and many over them were afro-Americans. The source is also useful because it tell us that the Viet Cong were very experienced “experienced guerrillas”. I know from my own knowledge that the Viet Cong were experienced from fighting France and Japan on their home land and had learnt many tactics such as camouflaging them self’s as civilians, attacking when the enemy retreat, ambushes and using booby traps. This source is limited because it was written after the war by a British author.

Source C is an eyewitness account from Rifleman Frank McCarthy. This source is useful because it tells us how the Viet Cong used mortar, booby traps and mines, it says that US soldiers hardly ever saw the Viet Cong “they were ghosts” and that the Viet Cong were well supplied with Chinese and Russian weapons like rocket launchers and flamethrowers. However the source is limited because it was published in 1982, which is about 10 years after the war, so Frank McCarthy may not be able to remember as much as he used to.