

Vietnam Regurgitated

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During my first years as a young CIA officer in Vietnam from 1965-67, I went to school (so to speak) and received the real education of my life. I learned about my government, its politicians, and military leaders. I learned about the lies, the high explosive and chemical bombings, our superior fire power, villages bombed and burned, the payoffs we made to our ranking Vietnamese allies and the reasons for our losing the war. The enemy fought to unite their country and expel foreign domination. The U.S. fought because of corrupt leadership and our losses were a mere fraction being fought on the enemy's turf with our superior fire power, money and material support.

They fought for a cause. We fought for no justifiable reason. They won. We did not.

Remember the body bags displayed on the tarmacs of our returning dead from Vietnam? Not like the lack of media coverage today given the damage we inflict. Remember the disapproving reception of our returning soldiers? Now we celebrate them as heroes and wounded patriots.

Here, at home, we have not experienced wars employing mass-destruction weapons. Maybe one day will we receive an education about the consequences of wars as a nation. Surely, we learned nothing from Vietnam as it never happened here.

Our commitment to the two-decade, multi-country invasions in the Middle East have shown our cowardliness to the world if not to ourselves. Our hypocrisy is stunning. No draft, no engagement (almost no KIA's each year). Far more troop suicides than battle deaths while displacing, killing and maiming thousands of innocent civilian lives year after year. For whom and what? And, yes, a media in full march step with these disgraceful invasions and occupations.

Remember the uproar about Vietnam? Burned draft cards, asylum in Canada, draft dodgers, street demonstrations and sit-ins galore. And why not these now? The unending, shameful action by our government is making sure the public is not paying a price in people. No draft, very limited engagement with the enemy and an approving media. What more can our government and Pentagon ask for? We will keep dropping bombs and feeding others money and weapons to assist with the killing and displacing of innocent populations for us.

But are these wars really for us? Certainly not. Remember George W. Bush, and his failing presidency, who was made a hero the morning after 9/11 with his WMD declaration that fooled no one but Americans? Not a sound from the citizenry. Would we try the pitiful WMD routine on China or Russia? They

have the ability to hit back.

The national celebration that greeted George H.W. Bush in death is a far cry from his presidency. It was not until after 9/11 that George W. Bush obeyed the lobbies' demands to destroy Iraq that his father was resurrected and the son was hailed as our glorious leader. Remember his welcoming carrier landing which turned out to be a dud?

These wars that we persist with are not only cowardly, they demonstrate our lack of respect for other nations, their people and our national conscience. Notably, they demonstrate our being a failed nation not capable of controlling or directing its own interests. We will go down in history as that most powerful, but most surrogate nation ever. Stunningly shameful with the blood of others staining our once proud national emblem.

While we busy ourselves with "enemies" that we and "friendly" others have invented, we have become oblivious to the enemy within. The one taking us down.

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