Echos of the Vietnam War Today

Description

In the fall of 1987, we had a lecture in the big auditorium at the Naval War College.

I sure wish I had more than mental notes about it, but hereâ€™s what I recall:

There was a three day conference on the media and one of the resentations was by someone who had researched on the theory that there had been little support for the Vietnam war. He had pulled together the opinion polls from a substantial period of the conflict and showed some interesting things:

1) Most people did support the war. The numbers for those supporting the war remained above 50% until the Tet Offensive (early 1968), then declined slightly after that for the general population.

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2) The â€œbeliefâ€• that older people and college educated people didnâ€™t support the war was debunked, showing that both of these categories supported the war, for the most part, at higher percentages than the rest of the population, but it was the college educated group that had consistently shown the highest support for the war.

3) The one group that had the lowest support for the war, and it dramatically fell after the Tet Offensive, was Congress.

So, here we are and this has become a â€œquagmire.â€• Not in the rice paddies of the Mekong River delta, or in the triple canopy jungle of the highlands, it was at the end of the Mall in Washington, DC, fueled by special interest groups.

Once more, we are faced with our politicians, led by John Murtha and John Kerry, who are about to hand a victory to the enemy, the ones who do not want us out, they just want us subjugated (at the least), or dead, at the best.

I found this interesting commentary at Veterans Today, about that war from almost 40 years gone by, which shows we had victory almost within our reach, and the anti war crowd (led by Congress) allowed it to be unreachable. Nothing like quotes from the enemy to let you know how close you were, or how right you were..

> â€œHowever, he read U.S. newspaper reports and editorials which claimed TET was a communist victory rather than an American one. General Giap read in these same U.S. newspapers about our campus protests and anti-war activities. He came to realize that the American military did not have the support of the citizens. He changed his strategy from aggression to attrition. He believed he did not have to defeat America to win. He saw that America would defeat itself. He simply needed to hang on. Consequently, General Giap did not surrender. He simply hung on.

> In 1971 and 1972, the United States military launched a relentless bombing campaign against North Viet Nam. Most major factories were destroyed. The morale of the people and the NVA was broken. As he stated in this same interview, General Giap was about to surrender a second time. Again he read the news accounts of public protests, university campuses in shambles and marches in the streets in opposition to the war. The unrest in America gave him the resolve to stick to his strategyâ€¦just hold on. America will defeat herself. Again, he did not surrender, but simply hung on.
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> Although he made several profound statements, General Giap shared how important the American media was to his cause. He called our newspapers and university campuses his â€œFifth Columnâ€• and said they accomplished more than his own army. In fact, as early as 1966 the (North) Viet Namese News Agency wrote â€œWe praise the American peace champions. The movement of the American people to protest against the war of aggression has really become the second front against U.S. imperialists.â€•

The bottom line: Congress lost their nerve and lots of people in SW Asia died as a result. And donâ€™t forget, that was a war begun with Eisenhower at a low level with money and material for the French, but it took Kennedy and Johnson to really dig us in deep. Nixon got us out, and then was blamed for most of the things that went wrong. If the Democrats hadnâ€™t engaged us so deeply, Nixon wouldnâ€™t have had to pull us out. So, that said, who really is to blame?

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More importantly, how will we do it this time?

Another issue: By the nature of the â€œemployment,â€• service members on active duty donâ€™t really have a voice, nor will they go very far when commenting on such issues as we are now faced with.

I wonder why the voices of combat soldiers and Marines, who are presently in theater, or have recentlt served are not being considered. They arenâ€™t, because it might disprove the lies (a partial truth is a lie, which â€œpartial truthsâ€• are those things meant to mislead).

One post in particular that would say we are winning is this one, titled Id al-Fitr.

That link is to but one of many that are reports from the front line of what goes on daily in Iraq and Afghanistan. We are winning with muddy boot diplomacy, backed by thousands and thousands of people world-wide, who provide things for the troops to use to build good will and equip a reforming nation.

Iâ€™ll also throw this story in, as a memory from November, 1963: I was living on Okinawa, in base housing at Kishaba Terrace on Ft Buckner. My neighbors were Green Berets, and next door to me was then Major David Watts (he made it to MG, I found out about 8 years ago). I played with his two sons, and he built us a tree house, and gave me a Green Beret from the 5th Special Forces Group. I know when President Kenedy was assasinated, those soldiers from the Special Forces were devastated, having lost not only their benefactor, but a combat veteran worthy of putting their lives on the line for to pay any price and bear any burden.

I ask, in light of this display of affection and respect for John F. Kennedy: Where are the Democrats who are worthy of having their stories written into a book titled something like â€œProfiles in

Courage?â€• We need them right now.

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Category

1. Geo-Political
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