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In Christian Appy's book *Patriots: The Vietnam War*, the theme I have chosen for Part Three: Escalations is as follows. I decided to choose "Lack of Knowledge" as my theme for this part. By lack of knowledge I do not mean that they are ignorant or stupid, what I am referring too is that they are in the dark. They do not know what is really happening in the war, or they don't know about the combat policies or plans of the war. This lack of knowledge about the war, seemed to affect their decision making, choices, and views of the war. I believe if people had really known what had been happening in the war, or even knew the "reasons" we were over there fighting, they would not have been so supportive.

The first example of this lack of knowledge comes from "Trials To War". It isn't a specific persons story, but rather when Appy is talking about it at the beginning of the chapter. The first thing I noticed was that when they shipped new American soldiers in, most of them where completely unaware of where in Vietnam they would be fighting, with whom, or why. This just shows how the government and our army's did not tell people what were going on. I believe they kind of just brainwashed them to do was they were told, without telling them why. The second thing I saw was when Appy talked about how the soldiers would fly to war as if they were flying to a vacation. They would fly on an air conditioned plane, sitting next to non soldiers. They would fly with no guns or anything, like they weren't even going to war. I feel this was a way to trick the public into thinking we weren't sending as many soldiers overseas as we were, as a way to be sneaky and trick us. In 1968, our amount of soldiers in Nam rose to 536,000. I think because of the sneakiness in how they sent soldiers over, that no one really knew we had that many over there, and if people had known, they would have not been ok with it.

The second example of this lack of knowledge comes from the "You Want Me To Start World War III?" section. The story I chose was that of James Thomson, because I feel it showed a clear example of how the war generals exploited this lack of knowledge and policies of the war. James Thomson signs off on the colonel's armed reconnaissance schedule before he even knows what it is. He is told that "If it looks right to you, sign it." He signs it for the colonel, then after he leaves, he asks what armed recce was, only to find out it means armed reconnaissance. He then thinks armed reconnaissance meant that it was taking pictures, and only firing

back if fired upon first. He then says it took him quite awhile to learn what it really meant, taking pictures and shooting anything that looked suspicious. "Many months later I realized I was authorizing quite a bit of killing with no knowledge of what it was all about and it staggered me"(Pg. 116). This story makes me wonder how many times this actually happened in the white house, generals exploiting this to get war plans passed. It makes me wonder, who in the white house really knew what was happening over their in Vietnam?

For my last example I wanted to find an example on the Vietnamese side that showed how lack of knowledge affected them. I found this to be kind of a difficult task, but in the end I was able to find a few things. For this last example it came from the section "Air War". The story I chose was that of Luu Huy Chao. In his story, he says that before he trained as a pilot, he had never been in an airplane. This makes me wonder how often this was the case for the Vietnamese. How often did they take someone who had no prior knowledge about the war policies, or the war combat, and toss them into some short period of training, then throw them out on the battlefield. For Chao, I would imagine most of the training would have to come from in the field experiences. He says he shot down a plane that he thought was an American plane, and when they investigated the crash site, they found eleven Vietnamese bodies. This is a good example of how they took someone who had no prior knowledge about planes, and made him a pilot. He shot down one of his own planes because he didn't know any better. I wonder how many soldiers, not only Vietnamese, but also American, lost their lives because they were poorly trained and had poor knowledge of the specific tasks they were asked to do.

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