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One particular story stood out to me as I was reading through part one of "Patriots - The Vietnam War Remembered From All Sides." It was the story of Medal of Honor winner Roger Donlon. Donlon's story interests me because he is not what you would typically envision when thinking of war heroes and war stories. He was not fighting in his own country, for his own country or even with his own countrymen. His troops were Chinese anti communists, some Americans and Vietnamese soldiers, whom he didn't know to trust. At the end of the story, when he is comforted by the sight of a US flag on a navy ship because he was not even allowed to fly one at base, shows how far he truly was from home.

I believe Dunlon to be trustworthy in his remarks. You do on the other hand take on account the emotion that went into play during his time of distress. It seems that his training took over and he went in "auto pilot." He accomplished many great things but witnessed many horrible events in this battle. I would assume that you would have to tune out much of your surroundings to do the things he was able to do, in the face of such adversity. Such comments made about his mistrust of his Vietnamese soldiers came back to mind when he talked of how a third of them "broke the neck or slit the throat" of the man next to him. I am sure that a number were traitors but a third probably was an exaggeration. I think that someone's presence at such battle can both give them more or less credibility on the actual event. I believe that if one was to panic and lose control, they would have no credibility. A panicked mind is not reasonable by nature and prone to mental mistakes. On the other hand, if one was to stay cool, such as Dunlon was able to, they would gain credibility because a calmed mind can analyze situations and make reasonable decisions. Therefore, I think that I would have to consider Roger Dunlon's story believable.

Part 2

The story of Rufus Phillips in part two stood out to me for a couple reasons. His mission had a clear goal, "Save South Vietnam, God Bless You" and "Find out what the Vietnamese people want and then help them get it." In reality was to tell the South Vietnamese what they want and make them get it. Most the things Phillips tried to establish were undercut by his superiors. The most disappointing part of the story was when they wanted to setup a democratic government with the puppet leader Ngo Dinh Diem and Phillips's superiors did not support it. They thought a system of checks and

balances were too weak and fail. They forced a shadow government with communist principles. Showing a lack of faith for the principles they were fighting for in favor for the ideology they were fighting against.

The positive thing that Phillips did accomplish was to teach the Vietnamese not to just take orders, like the French had them do. He taught those principles and how to make decisions for themselves. I believe this to be the strongest point of democracy, the idea that a population is full of individuals to be able to govern themselves.

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