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Part 1:

Roger Donlon's story had an overwhelming impact on me, though I do not quite know why. Could it be because when he tells his story, no physical breaks or emotional pauses enter it? The author tries his best to indicate when an interviewee is pausing, tearing up, or laughing, yet nothing puts a break in Donlon's words. He gives an emotional retelling of the deaths that he saw, the betrayal that he witnessed, all with a supposed calmness flowing through his story. Donlon speaks of the objective reality of the Vietnam War; no one knew what was going on or why. When the Vietcong attacked his camp in the late hours of the night, when no communication could really be reached as *"it was fourth of July weekend, and everybody was celebrating."* He doesn't speak ill of how things were handled but he tells the event as it had happened. People were busy celebrating and instead of having air craft fully fueled, as it was supposed to be, they had to re-fuel causing help to be very late. Communication was very poor, as in the heat of combat you have no time to yell code names for camps or people. He gives these details without his own personal view on how things should have went.

Donlon's credibility is supported by the fact that during many raids and attacks on U.S camps, higher communication was all but cut off. They were alienated and left without hope in the middle of a jungle. It is a common thread throughout many stories. While Donlon tells of emotional deaths, he does so while walking a fine line between indifference and understanding. He tells of a fellow soldier, Pop Alamo, who died in his arms. With this simple retelling of Pop's death; Donlon presents an interesting dynamic – emotional objectivity. Conflicting terms, but interestingly seen within his story. Earlier in his story he says *"You try to keep a cool head, but emotions would get in there."* yet after Pop's death he says *"What keeps you going at times like that is the love you feel for your fellow teammates."* Donlon allows us to see how the balance between emotional subjectivity and objectivity can coexist. He allows emotion to come through and touch upon experiences that need emotion, he refrains from adding that subjectivity to circumstances that call for objectivity and understanding.

Part 2:

Sergei Khrushchev' story was disappointing for me because it reinforces my belief that nothing can change the way the American people think. We are too easily manipulated into believing what the government wants us to believe. We have had chances to change the way our collective consciences think and act during times of crisis. We have had "movements", if you would even call them that. Like with all movements there is a reward at the end of them – hopefully. Unfortunately people are content with the small scraps of a reward instead of the whole reward. We have become passive, idle, and too easily satisfied with taking small incremental changes instead of demanding the big changes we so desperately need. Khrushchev says it point blank that *"American's tend to believe what they read and [see] on television."* and he is right. When he compares the American's to the Russians, I know that he is not just doing so to make a point. It is a solid statement that is, unfortunately, known the world over.

Khrushchev' story also gives a great – albeit small, understanding of the Vietnam War. The only way the government can fully justify its reasoning for actions is by having the support of the people. By feeding into false information and propaganda, we believe it and are supporting such things that if they were told point blank we would have no part of. To blindly support any authority is a sure way to lose sight of independence. Communism and Socialism, as well as Capitalism, are all great theories. Implemented, however is an entirely different element. The Vietnamese wanted their own independence, whether they wanted Communism, Socialism, or Capitalism is entirely up to that people's nation to decide. America should realize that Capitalism is not for every country, it's not even working that well for itself.

The only hope that I see coming out of this story is the hope that more American's realize how stagnant they are. How cheering for the small incremental changes is only giving people the idea that that is all it takes to make us happy. That we are content in chasing the carrot forever, just as long as we can smell it for a second before it is dangled farther out. It is a deeply ingrained flaw that I do not think we will ever overcome. Khrushchev' story gives me the feeling that of all the countries that have fought for independence, we have yet to really fight for ours.

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