

When I first began reading Christian G. Appy's book, "Patriots; The Vietnam War Remembered from All Sides", I didn't know what to expect. Within the first story I knew that I would love this book for the personal and honest truths of what it was like for these men and women that served their countries so diligently. However, when I came to Roger Donlon's story, I was completely engulfed by what he had to say and the emotions that I could not help but feel. His words cut through any would be distractions and the way that he had explained so clearly and vividly transported me to the moments that were passing as I read on. I believe that Roger was a reliable and trustworthy source and his rank, job, and specific details of the events preceding the catastrophic events in the chaotic and confusing fire fight that led him to be awarded the Medal of Honor. The fact that he was a Green Beret, let alone awarded the Medal of Honor is testimony to his merit and reliability. I do not think that the time past has done anything to cause him to leave out any key information. The vividness of his memory was crisp when he spoke of the Vietnamese interpreter, George Tuan, when "a 57-millimeter round caught him right in the knees and took his legs off. He just kept running on stumps. Within about thirty seconds he was dead." I could never think he had a hard time remembering anything that happened when he was assigned to serve in Vietnam.

When I came across Vo Nguyen Giap's story in part two I was disappointed in it. For a man that was so important I found myself turning the last page of his story back and forth searching for the rest of it. He was a key player and had great memories that helped to draw in an audience but it was as if what he said was the prolog to a story but there was no story. He was great at holding attention of the reader and his connections with men like his Uncle Ho who had much to offer the understanding of the war and how they won as well as he did, I was expecting more details or an account of what his Uncle Ho had said "Don't worry, if we have the people, we have the weapons." Giap himself even said "we won the war because we would rather die than live in slavery." So where was a personal count of this? Other than they won. He briefly touches the subject of accounts of this happening few times but with such small detail it was as if a passing thought instead of a supporting detail.

It's easy to get lost in the horrific scenes that play out as I make my way

through the book but when I came to Daniel Renmonds accounts I felt my heart lighten. He assisted in the evacuation of almost a million people from North Vietnam to South Vietnam. At times he said that he felt like a war criminal because of the treatment the refugees at the hands of the French legionnaires. However he believes he was right to take the people down to South Vietnam. He even could religiously relate himself with them which you don't hear often. You hear of people liking the Vietnamese but rarely that they could relate with them. He was kind when kindness was a rare thing when it came to the treatment of the Vietnamese. I wish his story was longer. The impact he made was monumental and I doubt that it will be forgotten by those he help.