

Cooper, a person interviewed for Patriots, had this to say of our 36th president: "He used the f-word more freely than a marine in boot camp." [Note: the infamous f-word will hereafter be referred to as the F-bomb – a term somehow more fitting to the subject at hand.] Cooper, an aide to Admiral David L McDonald who was a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff [paraphrased pg. 121], prepared a map to take in to President Johnson for a briefing regarding Vietnam. General Wheeler presented a plan which involved using U.S. strength to suppress the North Vietnamese. The North Vietnamese, it was believed, would "sue for peace" if the U.S. castigated enough.

Johnson's roaring response: "So you're going to cut them off, keep them from being reinforced, and then you're going to bomb them into the Stone Age." While this was not specifically said, it seemed Johnson did hear the unspoken words. The Army and Marine chiefs fully supported the plan. This is where the President of the United States memorably unleashed, at full volume, dropping multiple F-bombs which were supported by a cast of colorful words designed to leave ears at the receiving end yearning to sprint out the door. At the end of Johnson's harangue, he calmly stated: "Imagine that you're me.....and five incompetents come into your office and try to talk you into starting World War 3....let's see what kind of guts you have with the whole damn world to worry about." Cooper's memory recalled in sharp detail Johnson's words that day and the words of General Wheeler: "Well, Mr. President, we fully realize that what we're going to present to you today requires a very **difficult decision** on your part."

"A goddamn chopper was worth three times more than David." This is the opening to the interview between Appy and Jim Soular. David is dead and is one of Soular's "...greatest sorrows." As a 19-year-old flight engineer during Vietnam, Soular admits he loved the war and he loved the flying [Paraphrased pg. 157]. The turning point for him came when his best friend, David, was killed in front of him by another GI. Harris, a drunken, out-of-control GI, picked a fight with David and, with no provocation, shot him in the face. Twenty years after the war, Soular went to Minnesota to talk with David's mom. She said that her husband was dead and never had gotten over the death of his only child. During their conversation, David's mom referred to her son's death as an "accident in the barracks" and Soular understood that, after twenty years, she did not know the truth. I believe it must have been an incredibly **difficult decision** Soular had to make, weighing the consequences of giving knowledge to the woman who had given birth to David. Often, consequences are bittersweet. David's mother was "crushed" when she learned the truth yet "comforted" that David did not die alone.

"We amputated the limbs of men who even expressed relief. For them the war was finally over." This is the last sentence of the interview between Appy and Chi Nguyen. The interview was short and difficult for me to read. Nguyen worked in the Vietnamese military's largest hospital, located in Saigon. As an