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Writing assignment 1

Hst 195

Part 1

The most catching story was Roger Donlon "We were babes in arms in every way." This story was such an attention getter before it was read purely for the fact of the subtitle in part one, War Heroes. Once the stories had been read, Roger Donlon's story stuck out the most still. The ability to go above and beyond the call of duty in this world seems to have faded in so many people's minds; it is remarkable the world still moves forward. I was lucky to have many people instill a sense of need to work beyond my abilities, when you cannot go any further, take the next step. Roger Donlon showed so many of these characteristics and more.

There are few people today that would actually take a bullet for someone. Life is precious to humans. More importantly, a human's own life outweighs the life of another's in most cases. Roger was injured, yet he took his next step forward when all could have been lost, to save his friends lives. The ability to put another's life before your own is the mark of a true hero.

Roger seems to be a very reliable source. He tells the facts truthful. If he was going to make up the story, or lie, there would be no point in divulging information such as the comment about being able to trust the Nung mercenaries, but only hoping they could trust the Vietnamese. This comment may be seen as negative having no faith in the people under him, yet he still

says it. Both sides of the facts are given, not just one. As well, he uses a few comments in his story to bash the lack of communication between the “higher headquarters” and his camp. These facts that he discloses are vivid, not targeting the VC directly, and not just supporting his country.

Being there in the battle, in the war could easily persuade, or put thoughts into soldier’s minds to be bias. He shows none. Roger clearly states points of his story that he is unsure of. For example, he is unsure how long he was unconscious for, but he knows it was long enough for his friend to die in his arms. As well, he tells the story of George Tuan, a Vietnamese interpreter. He explains how the 57 mm shell took of his legs, and how that is something he wishes he could forget. This leads to the conclusion he still recalls the events very well.

Part 2

The most disappointing story was that of Evelyn Colbert. From the start the story was a disappointment. The main reason it is a disappointment is for the fact that facts were twisted by the government, as well as, the threat by McNamara in the note. The saying that starts with “the emperor has no clothes” seems to be very fitting. It is hard to believe in your country when you read how facts are twisted. Moving toward the note from McNamara, dislike for the events intensified. Not only were the facts shushed, or glorified to show optimism, but the shush came with almost a blackmailing. If you can promise such, we will let the incident go, but if you don’t... As a human of the world today, looking back, and forward, honestly I would rather know how horribly a war or situation is going, then have a veil of illusions pulled over my eyes. If the war in Vietnam was going horrible for anyone on our side of the war directly or indirectly because of

the United States, then how can you consciously be ok with the war? With this being said, I realize events are not always the way we want them, but if it is going bad enough that you have to hide the facts, something is wrong.

Henry Prunier's "these were not ragtag farmers" was absolutely revealing. He tells a different side of Ho Chi Minh that I had no clue about. He tells this story of Ho Chi Minh being a "man of the people." He tells how well liked "loved" by his men that he was. The biggest point to be made here is the comment of how he believes the biggest disappointment of Ho had to be that the U.S. sided with the French and then South Vietnam, and then says "this should have never happened." If his recounts of his time over there are accurate, it begs the question of if we are helping him, and he seemed to be a good leader, then why wouldn't we follow him. Ho makes the comment that he is a communist, but why can't we still be friends? With this account alone to go on, if not to back Ho, then maybe we should have just abstained from the war. It seems to be that we stuck our noses into business that was not ours. This story sticks out so much because it makes the reader think what if we wouldn't have interfered. Vietnam may not have lost so many people do to a shorter war, as well as, other's lives such as Americans. As well as, at the same time shows that Ho was not just a horrible person. He loved his troops and they loved him.

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