

him to justify his thinking; that is what allows me to put into perspective his accounts. Not only was he there, but he dared to ask "why?" *excellent analysis here*

Part Two: Richard Olsen and Evelyn Colbert

In Part Two of the Appy book, I found myself most disappointed with the accounts of Richard Olsen and Evelyn Colbert. As Olsen described the differences between the North Vietnam and South Vietnam cultures, I was not only astonished, but also angered. The notion that South Vietnamese soldiers took siestas from 12-3 everyday, and didn't really seem to want to be there, upset me for the Americans who were over there to help them. Flying in to pick up a fallen soldier and to have the rest of the troop jump on the plane under the false pretense of going to the funeral, it is a very different military motivation than that of our United States Armed Forces. As one of the other stories mentioned, the philosophy of the South Vietnamese often included leaving room for the enemy to escape, where Americans want to *cliche* kick butt and take names. Colbert's accounts seemed to sum up many of the frustrations in part two for me. As in the Herring book, regarding the Franco-American Partnership, there seemed to be intentional ignorance concerning the progress in Vietnam. People chosen to go to Vietnam had little in qualifications beside being single and speaking French. It was said to get information about Vietnam you would need to speak to the French. Many had never been to Asia and could not even point out Vietnam on a map. The facts favoring the Viet Minh or Viet Cong were swept under the rug. The people in charge did not want to be told that they weren't succeeding, or that they needed to change their plan of attack. Our own government was willing to turn a blind eye, and McNamara even went so far as to threaten those who did not produce facts favoring his actions. Then he *tries* to play dumb afterwards as though our failure was a total surprise and there was no way that anybody could've seen it coming. The heavy club of Westmooreland was ineffective, but nobody was allowed to point that out. Besides being ignored, people who spoke out against the war were labeled communist sympathizers.

Although, I found some of the policies and procedures to be frustrating to say the least, I feel that we can learn from them. Olsen's comparison of the cultural differences between North Vietnam and South Vietnam are key to understanding the situation. In current and

Citations
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