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While reading Part One of the book *Patriots*, the story that stood out to me most was that of Tran Thi Gung. I thought it was very honorable of her to join the guerrillas to continue her father's cause after his death. I also thought it was amazing of her to be the only woman in her unit, let alone being just seventeen years old and able to gain so much respect from her fellow comrades. I found her story to be quite truthful and believable. The way she so openly spoke of all of the killings she was a part of, and blatantly discusses all the tactics she used while telling this all to an American makes me see real credibility in her retelling of those events. She also does a great job in contrasting her story and not having too much bias to her own side. This really showed when she spoke of having sympathy for the soldier she had captured and purposely not blindfolding him. I also really appreciated her honesty in the end of the interview when she stated that she "never felt guilty" about the killing she did, and when she said "if I went to America and killed people there, I would feel very sorry and guilty. Since the Americans came to my country, I do not feel guilty."

Reading Part Two, the story that most disappointed me was that of Paul Kattenburg. He had lived in Vietnam up until the 1950's, he was very knowledgeable of the Vietnamese culture, and he had been a supporter of Ngo Dinh Diem. Less than ten years later he returned to Vietnam to find that everything had changed, and that they were "dealing with an absolutely sinking ship" in response to the country and it's leader, Diem. What frustrated me most was the appalling ignorance of most people at the thought of Vietnam. "They did not know what they were talking about. It was robot thinking about Communism and no distinctions were being made. It was a technocratic talk. They were talking in a vacuum on the basis of experience gained largely in other crisis situations." Kattenburg spoke of how Walt Rostow stated "What's good for Peru is good for Vietnam." It disappoints me that they made no cultural distinctions between places with completely different backgrounds, landscapes, languages, etc. It's frustrating because Paul knew the area much better than any of those men due to his work and time spent there in the fifties. The United States just seemed completely ignorant to any of this and just assumed that we knew all the answers. After the council's decision to prolong American intervention by planning a coup to overthrow Diem, Paul Kattenburg suggested the alternative to withdrawal from Vietnam altogether. He suggested it would be better to "get out while the getting is good" and that we should leave with honor. I was very disappointed and frustrated with Johnson's response: "We haven't gone this far with this whole thing to give it up now." To me, this seems like such an ignorant way of thinking. If United

States would have done much more detailed research in to the Vietnamese people and their country, and not just gone with the “we can't bail after coming this far” approach, maybe the war would not have gone on so long and we could have prevented many casualties. One last quote from Kattenburg that really sums up his frustrating situation best in my mind was: “In order to do dissent significantly and change policy around, you have to be a large group of people in many agencies.” Unfortunately in many situations, this is the frightening truth.

I definitely took a few positive lessons from John Singlaub and his compassion for the people of Vietnam and the potential for good that came from some of his actions. The first thing that stood out to me was his participation of bringing people of the North to “Paradise Island.” They would take care of any health problems, feed them, clean them, and make them healthy. They were trying to relate the concept of freedom to these people by explaining concepts to them that had been repressed by Communism. John and his men sent the Vietnamese back North with gift packages and set up radio stations with news and entertainment, while also dropping small radios in North Vietnam for them to use. Even though this system did not work for long, I believe it was started with good intentions, and that this system of propaganda was a good alternative to fighting. Secondly, I really appreciated that Singlaub thought of himself as somewhat of a missionary. I like that he and his comrades established a very good connection with the ethnic minority of mountain people called the Montagnards. They were teaching proper sanitation and had medics rotate through villages, and this was the work that made him feel like a missionary. It's refreshing to see that it wasn't all brutal combat, there were people out there working on genuine humanitarian efforts while serving time in the military.

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