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Throughout the stories that were told in Part 1 of the Patriots, there were numerous ones that caught my attention, but one which particularly grabbed my attention. The story of Tran Thi Gung, a Vietnamese woman who partook in the merciless slaughtering of warfare, was extraordinary. As the story unfolds, the reader begins to get a basic understanding or background check and is able to grasp why a woman of small stature would join in the fight. Losing her father under the circumstances of him being Viet Cong was probably extremely hard to take in. Providing a great deal of information, Tran gave inside imagery about how the guerillas worked. Building of tunnels, taking ammunition from wounded or dead soldiers, and not to mention the skills of a marksman, she was promising. Promising on the basic notion that she was willing to give up her life for the well being of her comrades and countrymen. Tran provided the utmost shocking information, that as an individual it is hard to take in. Her statements about how the tunnel system worked, guerilla tactics on ambushes, and strategies on killing southern attacks, just makes this story sound believable. Tran was an individual that stood for an idea that was bigger than her; I can relate. Her information on tunnel systems and guerillas way of accumulating ammunition during battles sounds realistic and believable. Here is a country that is high in poverty and deprivation of food, so stealing ammunition or weapons from a dead soldier and learning how to utilize the new weaponry sounds justifiable. By justifying the reasoning behind their tactics, I believe what Tran is saying. She was there firsthand and individuals that have experienced an experience that another has yet to endure allows for Tran to have the benefit of the doubt, in my opinion. There is the possibility that Tran is only recalling the positives of her situation and time has passes but the topic is war. As an individual who has never seen that type of situation, and with the motives of revenge there is no reason for Tran to give out information that is not factual. Tran ends her story stating that she has no remorse for the killings that she was responsible for, due to the fact that Americans went to a foreign land to kill her comrades and countrymen. In a sense she sounds justified, if an individual comes to American land to kill friends, family, etc. there is no reason to feel sorry.

High-ranking military officer Bernard Trainor had a terrible and disappointing (if one would be inclined to say) story. Disappointing in the fact that the man comes

from a different generation and time period where thinking outside of the box is foreign. Reading his life story and noticing how he was just so high on the military and how that is all his life is about is just depressing. From his youthful days in high school Trainor speaks of how all he wanted was to get into the military. It is understandable that as an American and event like World War II (WWII), that one would be enthusiastic to join the military and serve for your country. That is honorable, yet that was not the war that Trainor fought in. Trainor fought and led in a war that was “supposedly” stopping the spread of communism. The man was killing men, women, and children and he seems emotionless. The story of how he had Vietnamese paid soldiers, stake out a location, and open fire on a building based upon a hunch or his intelligence, definitely altered my mood. For a moment you think a man is respectable for serving his country, to find that he had paid natives to kill their own. He was contributing to a cycle that had no reason to continue. The attitude of just doing what a higher commander tells you to do and executing even though you may be in the wrong does not settle well. Trainor appears to not have a mind of his own when he states he had to talk to a general who was surely wearing a bug and had to give the answers the higher officer wanted to hear. It is just disappointing that his rank is more important than doing the right thing. It is a shame.

The stories of Ta Quang Thinh and George Wakins were great stories and inspiring. Ta Quang risked his life during the time of a bombing to protect another individual whom he was taking care of as a nurse. Placing someone else before you even though the risk of possibly injuring yourself is admirable and honorable. Although he was the only survivor of the bombing but he lost more than just a comrade; he was paralyzed. He lost everything, money, savings, feelings, animals etc. and has nothing to show for it. There is a definite feel of compassion for Ta Quang. While on the other hand George Watkins lost both of his legs and eyes yet he still is okay with life. George appears to have accepted the fact that he is in this condition for the rest of his life. I mean that is truly all he can do, but he saved the life of another individual. Telling another to walk away from him saved that gentlemen’s life at the expense of his legs and eyes. George says he has no bitterness but that he wishes none of it happened. I enjoy seeing that a man is not holding any grudges in his life and just moving on with what he has because in the end that is all you can do. It is a life lesson in general, accept the situation you have or change in order to get change. By Watkins giving his story out like so, he is teaching myself and other individuals life lessons of persevearance and acceptance which will teach others and therefore causing a chain reaction to make the world a better place.

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