

Rather than write additional comments- I have included a message that was posted on my unit talklist with which I agree

Paul Kasper,

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I watched 1 and 2...then I deleted the rest...JUST for that reason. Not political, just my opinion. Garbage.

Jerry A-91-7

-----Original Message-----

From: "Don Blankenship" <rivervet@cox.net>

Sent: Monday, October 2, 2017 11:07am

To: "Mobile Riverine Force Association Email List" <mrfa@ussbenewah.com>

Subject: [Mrfa] Vietnam, The Series by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick

Member Melvin Pender tried to post the following to the Newsletter List, which I thought may not be the right venue. I reluctantly am posting this to this list. Please try to keep any discussion of this topic civil and not political. It is however, our history that they are tampering with and I must say the whole series infuriated me in its misrepresentations both overtly and by omission. It portrayed our 9th Infantry brothers as killers of civilians just to have high body counts. It failed to mention the 9th and MRF's contributions to saving the south during TET 1968. It used the same retread photos of the guy getting shot in the head and the girl running naked after the napalm supposedly burned the clothes from her body without explaining the whys and wherefores surrounding the sensationalist photos.

I held back pretty much until I watched the entire series, but in my opinion, it was only a way for the pacifists, war protestors, and those who chose to move to Canada some justification for their actions in their mis-guided youth. It is shameful the way the series portrays Vietnam veterans and it distorts the facts of history on many fronts. It pains me to know that this will be the history that many will rely on after our generation is dead and gone. I am ashamed this pitiful series exists and I'm not the only one.

Again, please keep this discussion civil.

Thanks,

Don

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To my dear Brothers-in-Arms, Vietnamese & American Veterans of the VN War, Ladies & Gentlemen, In mid-September 2017, I was extremely excited turning my TV on to watch the new Viet Nam War documentary directed by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick that my son informed me the previous week. Sadly, after watching only the first episode, I already had real bad impression with this new documentary film and wanted to quit. But I realized it would be unfair if I rate the entire 10 episodes through only the first one. So I tried hard to overcome my disappointment and to stay patient to watch

the remaining 9 episodes in order to have a full understanding of this VN War film before expressing my feeling/opinion of its contents. After having watched all 10 episodes, I feel comfortable now to make some honest comments on this film.

I'll be happy and ready to discuss with anyone, Vietnamese or American, who wants to refute the facts cited in my comments below including Ken Burns or Lynn Novick.

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Comments on the new VN War series by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick through the eyes of a veteran of the Armed Forces of the Republic of (South) Viet Nam. Hoi B. Tran ? Oct 1, 2017

It is no secret that the Viet Nam War was the most controversial and misunderstood war that the U.S was involved in. It was a war that deeply and bitterly divided the America. It was also a war that U.S veterans were denigrated and mistreated when returning home from Viet Nam after their tour of duty. I remember that the late U.S Pres. Richard M. Nixon said in his book No More Vietnams published in 1985 as follows, and I quote: No event in American history is more misunderstood than the Viet Nam War. It was misreported then, and it is misremembered now. Rarely have so many people been so wrong about so much. Never have the consequences of their misunderstanding been so tragic. End of quote.

As a soldier, I fought in both Viet Nam wars. From the Dien Bien Phu battle in the North to the long war in the South in various capacities. Now as a living witness, I feel compelled to refute the shameless lie by this Viet Nam War series when they praised and glorified Ho Chi Minh as a dedicated nationalist patriot. Additionally, I also want to erase the unjust stains smeared upon the U.S military annals by the bold-faced Vietnamese communist propaganda machine in North Viet Nam stupidly backed by the ignorant, left leaning news media and film makers in the U.S.

1 -- Was Ho Chi Minh a true Vietnamese nationalist patriot who fought and ousted the French & restored independence for VN? On March 9th, 1945 Japanese Imperial forces in North Viet Nam staged a coup d'etat and ousted the French Colonists, not Ho Chi Minh. The following day a Japanese envoy met Emperor Bao Dai and granted Viet Nam her independence within Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Following this joyful event, Emperor Bao Dai appointed Prof. Tran Trong Kim to form a legitimate government. While the Vietnamese were enjoying their independence, the US dropped two atom bombs on Hiroshima & Nagasaki in early August 1945 forcing Japan to surrender to the Allied forces unconditionally on August 14, 1945. The capitulation of Japan created a political chaos in North Viet Nam. Ho Chi Minh promptly exploited the chaotic situation and used his armed propaganda units embedded in Ha Noi to seize power. On Aug 28, 1945, he formally declared the country to be the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam (DRV), an independent nation & proclaimed himself President and Minister of Foreign Affairs concurrently. The following week, he had his cadres convened a meeting at the Ba Dinh Square to introduce his government and cited the Declaration of Independence. During this time I was a naive 10 year-old Vanguard Youth Troop in Ha Noi, North Viet Nam. Along with my group I was very happy singing patriotic songs as indoctrinated by communist cadres to praise Ho Chi Minh in many events.

After becoming President of the DRV, Ho showed his true colors as a vicious communist and a boldfaced traitor. Ho overzealously followed Maoist's doctrine and launched the inhumane Land Reform Campaign that slaughtered at least from 60,000 to 150,000 landowners that they labeled as wicked landlords and about 50,000 to 100,000 were imprisoned. And with his death squads, Ho liquidated all political opponents if these people were nationalists or non-communist patriots.

The above facts shows that Ho Chi Minh and his ragtag militia forces, the Viet Minh, and his so-called armed propaganda units in North Viet Nam contributed absolutely nothing in expelling of the French forces from Viet Nam and to end French colonial rule in 1945.

2 -- Ho Chi Minh was a traitor, a treacherous egomaniac, not a patriot!

A few months after extorting power from Tran Trong Kim government Ho showed his traitorous, egoistic character. On March 6, 1946, Ho compromised and signed an agreement allowing French forces to return to Viet Nam for five years and, in return France would recognize his DRV government.

Through this wily move, nationalist Vietnamese people considered Ho a traitor to the cause of revolution. If Ho Chi Minh did not sign that agreement, of course, French forces were not allowed to return to North Viet Nam. If French forces were not in Viet Nam, there would have been no Dien Bien Phu battle in 1954 and Viet Nam was not divided at the 17th parallel after Ho's forces, the Viet Minh, defeated French forces at Dien Bien Phu garrison. The fall of Dien Bien Phu garrison was because Gen. Henri Navarre, Commander in Chief of the French Expeditionary Forces in the Indochinese Theater, was not aware that the ragtag Viet Minh forces received two hundred heavy artillery pieces and the deadly Soviet built rocket launchers "Stalin Organs", military advisors, technicians, gunners and troops from the PRC.

The reason Ho Chi Minh received substantial military supplies and manpower from the PRC was because Ho kowtowed to Mao Zedong since Mao won the war and established the PRC in mainland China in October of

1949. Ho Chi Minh wasted no time and immediately sent his representatives to China asking for support and assistance. By January

1950, the PRC and Russia recognized Ho's government and the PRC began to help Ho with military advisors, weapons and troops to ensure their satellite in Viet Nam would survive..

The bottom line is: If Ho Chi Minh had been a true nationalist patriot, he should have contented with the independence that Viet Nam inherited bloodlessly at the departure of the Japanese after they were defeated by the US. Ho must have known that he was very lucky to be at the right place at the right time to, all of a sudden, become president of the DRV. Under the circumstances, he should live peacefully in North Viet Nam and committed all resources into rebuilding the war ravaged country as well as the dying economy in North Viet Nam at the time. He must have known that if he did not allow French forces to return to North Viet Nam, there was no Dien Bien Phu battle. Without the Dien Bien Phu battle, Viet Nam was not divided at the 17th parallel. Even after Viet Nam was divided, if he had a decent conscience, he should have recognized the RVN in the South as a

separate, independent country like East and West Germany or North and South Korea. He should not be too egoistic, too greedy wanting to gobble up the South to satisfy his hegemonic dream. But as a devout communist and a power-hungry man, Ho Chi Minh fervently wanted to take over the South and place it under his control to satisfy his big patrons, the PRC and Russia.

3 -- Sullied the United States and the Republic of Viet Nam (RVN).

During the war to conquer the RVN, Ho Chi Minh and the apparatchiks in North Viet Nam employed this motto incessantly on their propaganda machine to push people to go to war: "Fighting the Americans to save our country" and "Liberate our people in the South from the neo-colonial rule of the American Imperialist". They smeared the RVN government and its Armed Forces as puppets or servants of the "American Imperialists." They always portrayed the RVN government as a despotic and corrupt regime and the U.S as imperialist. In summary, the North Vietnamese communist leadership had endlessly tried their utmost best to vituperate, sully the U.S, the RVN and people in the South.

Fortunately, history has eyes and time has certain way to bring truth to the surface. Although the long overdue truth could not heal the profound psychological and physical wound the RVN and her ally, the U.S had to suffer. But the truth did prove that the RVN and the U.S were not as bad as propagated by the communist and distorted by the liberal U.S. news media and film makers.

Only a few years in the post-war era, the world had a better understanding and a clearer judgment about the ability to govern, the morality and virtue of the North Vietnamese communists after they dropped their mask and exposed their true evil color. After the end of the war they could not survive with their communist doctrine and their dying economy and they shamelessly begged the "American Imperialists" for help. At the present time in shopping malls, travel agencies, restaurants and hotels in Viet Nam most advertising signs are written in English, not in Chinese or Russian. In Viet Nam, girls and boys everywhere, from the metropolitan area to the rural countryside, are mixing in their day to day conversation with the words OK and Bye-Bye to be in vogue. They also celebrate Valentine Day and sing Happy Birthday in English to be fashionable.

The communist propaganda machine and the left leaning U.S news media always accused the former RVN as a corrupt regime. To be fair and honest, no one could deny that every country on this planet earth does have certain form of corruption. But if we compare the corruption between the former RVN and the communist party members and their cronies in the post-war years, the RVN appears amateurish. The communist party members are much more skillful in bringing corruption up multifold through foreign aid and investments, kickbacks from newly authorized businesses and land expropriation! They are much better than the RVN in that they invented the super human trafficking networks. Under the skillful management of the communist regime, Viet Nam is now known as the largest source of providing girls and women to neighboring countries as sex slaves. They sneered at the culture, all form of literary arts, books and music in the South as depraved and were aggressively scouring everywhere to confiscate these materials to discard and destroy them. Sadly, after they took over the South, morality, good old Vietnamese traditions and virtues went into

extinction! Prostitution, pornographic materials, venereal diseases, HIV and drugs went rampant in this amoral, depraved society! Communist members are no longer poor communists. They have all become Red Capitalist! These Red Capitalists and their children are living an ultra-luxurious life over their miserable and poor people in Viet Nam. Never in the former RVN did I see politicians and high-ranking generals have multi-million dollar mansion or vacation houses like today's Red Capitalists. Never did I see children of high-ranking officials of the RVN driving cars that even in the U.S. only some affluent people could afford like Rolls Royces, Ferraris and Maseratis! Just out of curiosity, I was wondering where are those journalists of the 1960 era? Why don't they come out to criticize the current cruel communist dictators, the corrupt and immoral Red capitalists like they did during the Ngo Dinh Diem or Nguyen Van Thieu government? Where have these hypocrites been hiding?

Now, as a veteran of the former RVN who partook in the war, I want to say it clear to all my Vietnamese and American brothers-in-arms that the U.S were never defeated militarily by the ragtag army of the North Vietnamese Communist. Through political negotiation in Paris our politicians settled with major world powers and the parties involved to end the war in Viet Nam politically. Following orders, you must withdraw from Viet Nam. The last U.S. military unit left Viet Nam in March 1973. The final collapse of the RVN occurred on April 30, 1975. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that the U.S. did not lose the war in Vietnam militarily. You have fulfilled the call of duty admirably and you have fought gallantly. We salute you. We thank you for your service and for helping us in Viet Nam. Ironically, politics dictated the outcome. Don't be bothered; only ignorant or misled individuals would buy into the notion that America lost the war in Viet Nam militarily. I clearly remember President Richard M. Nixon had said in his November 3, 1969 speech about the Vietnamization of the war: "Let us be united for peace. Let us also be united against defeat. Because let us understand: North Vietnam cannot defeat or humiliate the United States. Only Americans can do that." I cannot agree more with the late President.

It is outrageous to see some unconscionable people who reaped benefits and opportunities America afforded them to become rich and famous, yet for one reason or another they turned anti American. To these sick people, everything America does is wrong and the enemy is always right. The last advice I wish to convey to my younger generation is: "Never trust the Vietnamese Communists"!!! They have been proven to be evils of the worst kind all through the last half of the 20th Century until the present! They have changed their name from the Vietnamese Communist Party to the Vietnamese Workers Party and from the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam to the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. They have transformed from poor peasants before 1975 to multi-millionaires and billionaires through plundering and stealing after April 30, 1975. In the bottom of their soul, they have not changed. They are still the inhumane, immoral, deceptive, dangerous, cruel and unpredictable communists. Don't ever trust or believe them regardless of how sweet or conciliatory they try to convince you.

Hoi B. Tran