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The Day Veterans Felt Shame

By Jay Janson

The Day Veterans Felt Shame For What We Did To Someone Else's Country - Not Pride

Veterans Day always brings a hell of an array of emotions different than those expressed in speeches of praise and gratitude for veterans of all America's overseas wars, without regard to the justness of any of these wars.

How 'bout the veteran who killed an Iraqi, maybe a child, in what Obama has long called a "**dumb war**", a "**rash war**", and an unnecessary war? How does this veteran feel on *Veterans Day*? - how does he feel on any and every day he thinks back on the pain he brought to someone in that persons own home, so far away from his own.

- a veteran who has seen dead Afghani civilians after an air-strike and knows that all the 9/11 suicide terrorists were from Saudi Arabia and not Afghanistan?

- a veteran pilot who followed orders and let loose missiles over Libya, Somalia, or Pakistan and afterward read the Associated Press article that reported the high number of civilians killed and maimed?

- a veteran who remembers watching napalm being dropped on poor villages, and later learned that his military dropped more than twice the tonnage of bombs during all of the Second World War on the little agricultural French colony of Vietnam.

-a veteran draftee who said he had to kill a Vietnamese patriot defending his country, "It was him or me." He pointed out that Muhammad Ali refused to be drafted, insisting that he had no quarrel with the Viet Cong, but he was famous and had lawyers, "I would have had to go to jail." How does he feel on *Veterans Day*? "Like a chump," he said.

- a veteran who returned to the States and read about the Vietnam War having been a 'mistake', went to a library and looked up the war in the Encyclopedia Britannica, and found Truman went against Roosevelt's promise and brought the French Army

back into U.S. ships to re-conquer its colony, which fascist Vichy France had turned over to the occupying Japanese army; read how Truman used billions of U.S. taxpayer funds to back the French for eight years until the French were defeated by Ho Chi Minh's nationalist forces; read how Eisenhower admitted Ho Chi Minh would have easily won an all Vietnam election that Ike blocked. Does he feel like anything but a dummy?

Does *Veterans Day* remind *New School U.* President Bob Kerrey how he sometimes feels when he looks into the eyes of his children and remembers the nineteen Vietnamese girls and one infant who never grew up but instead were gunned down by the *Navy Seal* unit Kerrey commanded?

Veteran airmen who once mercilessly carpet bombed the plains of Laos and other compatriots who decades later did the same over the jungles and rice paddies of Cambodia - don't all have the same queasiness about what they did regardless of Veterans Day orations proclaiming them honors?

Veterans who participated in the bloody blitz of Panama, - or in the slaughtering intervention on the side of the army of the Dominican Republic fighting against those who successfully rebelled and were about to re-install their overthrown elected president - or in the conquering of the tiny island of Grenada - many surely have conflicting thoughts about the fairness of these life-taking beligerencies.

How did 'prisoner of war hero' John McCain feel on Veterans Day as he reflected back on the men, women and children casualties far below his aircraft during his twenty-three bombing runs over Hanoi? Is he really at peace with his God?

Those who are veterans of the horrific loss of life that was the Korean 'police action' against communism can in their maturity look at the reality of now non-communist Russia and two dozen other former communist nations; at Communist China and Communist Vietnam which are economically allied and interwoven within the fabric of the consumer culture of the U.S. - do they not wonder at the sacrifice of millions of lives in Korea for a truce, and three times that Vietnam for a defeat? - some millions of people that could be alive today.

Seems that when capitalism succeeded to block the humanistic reforms of socialism, it begat communist revolution and when capitalism restructured colonial slavery to neocolonialism it begat terrorism - all of which, capitalism included, will not exist eternally in their present forms. Veterans, who have seen the human face of the 'enemy' know best about the phony pretensions of war.

Many veterans of 'The War on Terror' are well aware from the Internet that it was President Jimmy Carter, upon the advice of advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, who first supported Islamic fundamentalist hill tribe terror against the women educating socialist government in Kabul in 1979 in order to frighten the Soviet Union into entering its armed forces into Afghanistan. How did veterans of U.S. terror and torture techniques feel on Veterans Day?

Many back from Iraq and Afghanistan might feel heroic, but many others feel like they were had. Had by the conglomerate media cartel, which masked the lies of their President and his gang and justified the wars by slanting the news and mongering fear.

My older veteran friends, who fought against the Nazi Third Reich and the Japanese Empire that attacked and declared war on the United States, feel themselves solid in that understanding that they were fighting in defense of their country. And quite a few of those, who are well read, are well aware that international capitalism flourished in the arming of the Axis powers right up to, and even into, the beginning of the Axis wars of expansion; well known names like Joseph Kennedy and Prescott Bush come to mind as examples of businessmen who made fortunes building up the enemy that our boys would later have to die fighting.

How many million veterans are like yours truly, who was drafted during the 'Korean conflict' as it was called, and was politically uneducated beyond what the war promoting New York Times 'taught' him? We were so caught up in our families and young careers, loves and amusements, that we never once imagined that we would ever come to actually use the weapons we practiced with during basic training - with real intention to kill another human being.

Sorry, don't see the need for a *Veterans Day*.

Memorial Day is what comes to mind on Veterans Day.

Those fallen veteran buddies, like six bunkmates buried in North Korea, who never made it to parade or watch on either of these great holidays for armed forces recruitment.

Neither their Memorial Day nor any Veterans Day did those, who died on a battlefield or in an 'urban warfare' engagement, ever live to see.

Veterans who are educated to the ways of the world see an official Victims of War Day or War Victims Day coming in a future peaceful and intelligent world. Such a day would of course be have to include the warriors of all sides as well as their victims.

Even Albert Einstein would agree that the warriors, through their ignorance, are victims of war. Einstein wrote:

"He who joyfully marches to music in rank and file has already earned my contempt. He has been given a large brain by mistake, since for him the spinal cord would fully suffice. This disgrace to civilization should be done away with at once".

"Heroism at command, senseless brutality, deplorable love-of-country stance, how violently I hate all this, how despicable and ignoble war is; I would rather be torn to shreds than be a part of so base an action! It is my conviction that killing under the cloak of war is nothing but an act of murder."

In any case, it is always especially galling to see creators of war like Bush and Cheney pontificating on *Veterans Days* and *Memorial Days*. Pitiful, ignorant, desperately greedy and immoral members of the nations elite, who curiously never had to put themselves 'in harms way', yet speak to us so eloquently on Veterans Days.

Replace *Veterans Day* with a **War Victims Day!**
One veteran speaking for many.