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The Few, The Proud, The Abandoned...

Every Effort, by Barbara Mullen Keenan, St. Martin's Press, 1986, 351pp, hb.

Rocky Marciano put my hometown on the map in the 1950s. It was a thrilling time for everyone who lived in Brockton, Massachusetts — but it was especially thrilling for a couple of high school boys who had wound up in a Latin class full of girls. As we watched the record of our hometown hero grow to 49 straight victories, we often talked about our own plans for careers in the Marines.

Bill Mullen and I both enlisted in the Marine Corps after graduation. I was lucky enough to be honorably discharged before our government got involved in another no-win war in Vietnam. Bill Mullen was not so lucky. He went to Vietnam and never returned.

In February 1973, less than 20 percent of approximately 3,000 missing servicemen were freed by the Communists in North Vietnam. None of the more than 550 known to be prisoners or missing in Laos was returned. To this day, not one has been accounted for. Major William F. Mullen was identified by other pilots as having been captured. *Every Effort* is his wife's story of her courageous search for her missing husband.

The title, *Every Effort*, is taken from the first telegram she received from the Marine Corps, which assured her that "every effort" was being made to locate her missing husband. We know that the government has not made every effort, but Mrs. Mullen certainly has.

You should read *Every Effort* and take Mrs. Mullen's story to heart. It begins with Barbara and Bill's marriage in the early 60s. They had produced two children by the time the Marine Corps pilot received orders for Southeast Asia. At our high school reunion, just before he left, Bill assured me that he would be back in a few months. Instead, he became a pawn in a deadly game played by chessmasters on both sides of the iron curtain.

Barbara did not belong in the same league as these masters, but she fought a valiant fight. Her perception is evident as she describes Nixon as one who was "punished for the misdemeanor, but not the felony."

The author spoke with such notables as Eugene McCarthy, Pete McCloskey, John Kerry, George McGovern and Henry Kissinger — all leftists who used the Vietnam War for their own purposes. How could Barbara Mullen know that these men supported the no-win war and the sending of large amounts of war material to our Communist enemies?

Mrs. Mullen met with anyone or any group who appeared to be concerned about the MIAs — from representatives of the Communist governments in Southeast Asia to Ross Perot. She had to endure many humiliations. At one meeting of a peace group, a Mrs. Duckles loudly described Major Mullen as a murderer.

For over 20 years Mrs. Mullen has made every effort to learn the fate of her husband. As you read



this book, try to remember that these heroes might not remain abandoned by our government if more Americans exerted every effort on their behalf.