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The Way It Wasn't

If you want to waste your money on utter depravity, then by all means see *Platoon*. Having served from 1966 to 1970 in all areas of the Southeast Asia War, mostly in unconventional warfare, I found this movie — allegedly depicting the “reality” of Vietnam — a sickening experience. If *Platoon* accurately represents the war in Vietnam, we not only do not have a military to be proud of, but we have a bunch of drug-addicted animals running around free in the streets of America.

Picture yourself out on a “recon” patrol with the aim of interdicting the enemy and destroying their potential to wage brutal attacks against innocent village residents. One of your platoon has a ponytail extending from his steel helmet. Others wear satanic crosses. Still others, brightly colored bandannas. This is the most slovenly bunch of animals you have ever seen in your life. You come into a village, slaughter the innocents in cold blood, grab a young child and put a pistol to her head, then burn the village to the ground. To set an example, you slaughter an old man in the presence of his wife. Then, you retreat to a base camp and reward yourself for a job “well done” with a little “hootch,” absorbing all the hard liquor and dope you can get into your system.

There is a message to this movie. The message is a familiar one: that the best way to break down a society and put it on the road to revolution is to set race against race, class against class, etc. This is exactly what *Platoon* does. This movie is the most obscene degradation of the military I have ever seen.

I have discussed this film with a retired Major General who participated in glider landings behind the lines in France during World War II. What he said made sense: When the Anti-Americans want to deliver a message, they take every isolated instance of evil, put it all together in one ball of wax, and feed it to the general public as gospel truth. This is exactly what *Platoon* does.

It is no wonder that Oliver Stone called the marine advisor to the film “John Wayne,” and that he in turn called Stone “the Bolshevik.” *Time* magazine spent eight pages glorifying this piece of trash and criticizing John Wayne’s *TheGreen Berets*. That gets me just a little hot under the collar. Those with a bit of heart will remember the ending of Wayne’s film, when the little Vietnamese boy found out that his adopted big brother, a Special Forces Sergeant, had been killed on the last “recon.” John Wayne tried to make sense of the war for the little boy. He told him that he (the boy) was what that war was all about.

If you think that the Oliver Stone message is more realistic than the John Wayne message, then go out in your community and look around. When you go into a restaurant or hotel, there you will see what it was all about. Vietnamese are waiters and waitresses. Some of them, like the Afghans and Ethiopians, have two or three jobs, breaking their backs in a free country that gives them the opportunity to raise their bare existence to any level they want. Ask yourself the question: Would these people want to come to a country whose soldiers had slaughtered their family members and



burned their villages to the ground?

Now maybe, just maybe, Oliver Stone personally performed some of the animalistic feats in his film *Platoon*. In fact, according to *Time* magazine, he was on drugs until just a few years ago. On his return from Vietnam, he was arrested for trying to smuggle drugs across the border from Mexico. He wanted to join the Black Panthers. He wanted to kill. But is he typical of the veteran of Vietnam? I not only think not: *I know not*.

Oliver Stone made a film (a gory one, of course) about El Salvador that also sported a pinkish tint, and the message that America was doing everything wrong down there. With *Platoon*, he seeks to portray American soldiers as a sorry bunch of animals absorbed in killing each other and slaughtering innocent Vietnamese. That's the whole message, pure and simple. If you want to be further degraded, then by all means take your girlfriend, your mother, and everybody else you ever loved to see this propaganda film.

A Personal Reminiscence

It was in Hong Kong, sometime in 1969. My presence there was a reward for my service from 1966 to 1969. All my friends from Special Forces made sure to look me up during my monthly assignment. Two Green Berets arrived from a Special Forces camp in the Delta region of Vietnam that was under water for six months of the year and overrun by rats. Still, they had to go out on patrol to interdict the Viet Cong to prevent them from slaughtering innocent villagers. We were sitting in the Gunn Bar in the Hong Kong Hotel, the piano man playing songs from home — “Gentle On My Mind,” “The Sound Of Silence,” “I Left My Heart In San Francisco.”

In came some Pan American stewardesses. Many of these young ladies — God bless them — regularly saw to it that frozen steak dinners left over from Rest and Recreation flights made their way, clandestinely, to Special Forces Camps. The girls looked over and saw my two buddies with tears in their eyes. Had they said something to offend them? “No,” replied one of the Green Berets, “but smelling your perfume and hearing you talk reminds me that all the small sacrifices we go through are well worth it if we can go back to the feminine loveliness you represent in the United States.” The girls shed a few tears when they heard that.

Thank God, many of my friends came back. They didn't slaughter innocent villagers, get high on dope, or degrade America. Yes, they were denied victory by traitorous politicians, but they never lost heart, and they came back with their heads high, still proud to live in the “land of the free and the home of the brave.”