Is the Legacy of the Vietnam War Still Relevant for the Obama Administration?

https://www.e-ir.info/2013/08/11/is-the-legacy-of-the-vietnam-war-still-relevant-for-the-obama-administration/

ELEANOR KATE FLANAGAN, AUG 11 2013

In a 2010 interview, Bruce Reidel, former CIA analyst and counter-terrorism expert, proclaimed: “Vietnam walked the halls of the White House”. Though nearly four decades have passed since the fall of Saigon on 30 April 1975, the harsh lessons of the Vietnam War have resonated with every U.S. president since Gerald Ford. The trauma endured when the U.S. lost a lengthy war to what Lyndon B. Johnson termed a “fourth-rate raggedy ass little country” (Tuchman 1984, p. 321) has yet to disappear from foreign policy and will continue to prove relevant for the Obama administration in years to come. This thesis will first explore the “legacy” of Vietnam, considering why it has endured thus far. It will seek to analyse some of its lingering lessons, namely cautioning against the use of force and particularly putting “boots on the ground” when national interests are not directly threatened, favouring clear objectives and incisive brute force within a definitive time frame when a threat does exist, and advising a well-defined and flexible exit strategy and post-mission agenda. Other facets of its legacy including domestic resistance to foreign policy and the vital support of the international community are equally relevant but will excluded in this thesis for the purposes of scope. In assessing the relevance of Vietnam, it will study three principle targets of President Obama’s foreign policy agenda: the weighty inheritance of the Bush war in Afghanistan, the unprecedented challenges presented by ongoing political turmoil in the Middle East, and the nuclear issue in North Korea. It will conclude with a normative discussion of whether the infamous war ought continue to infiltrate U.S. policy or whether in certain instances it is perhaps time to abandon retrospective thinking and accept that the rules of warfare have fundamentally changed since Johnson’s “bitch of a war” (Mead 2009, p. 1).

Though the official start date of the Vietnam War is contested due to the absence of any formal declaration of war by the U.S. on Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia, many fix it in the mid-1950s. Ending on 30 April 1975, it was a bloody war that cost millions of lives, including 58,267 Americans and anywhere between an estimated 800,000 and 3.1 million Vietnamese (Gallichio 2005). The ‘legacy’ of Vietnam is often spoken of in the fields of politics and international relations, but why does it exist and, furthermore, what does it entail? Firstly, it is important to stress the enormity of America’s loss in Vietnam. Despite the signing by all parties of the Paris Peace Accords in January 1973, violence continued. Congress passed the Case-Church Amendment that same year, instigating the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam. The North Vietnamese seized Saigon in 1975, leading to reunification of North and South Vietnam in 1976 (Ehrhart 1995). The U.S. had lost ignominiously to Communist forces in what had appeared throughout to be an asymmetric war in favour of the Western superpower in terms of resources and military capacity. The devastating blow was compounded by the political bipolarity that characterised the world at the time. The U.S. was embroiled in the Cold War with the Soviet Union and fears of the ‘domino effect’ became rampant after the fall of Saigon (Slater 1993). Isaacs (1997) highlights how the “bad war” (p. 7) in Vietnam was all the more distressing given the defeat was the exact opposite of the U.S.’s victory in World War II prior. America had committed immeasurable resources and time to Vietnam and thought itself invincible. The realisation of fallibility that resulted from American acquiescence was the first of its kind (Sturken 1997), rendering its defeat to an “underdeveloped agrarian nation” (Reed 2006, p. 1) a moment in U.S. history.

The lingering legacy of the Vietnam War is multifaceted. According to Richard Nixon, “No event in American history is more misunderstood than the Vietnam War. It was misreported then, and it is misremembered now” (Van Ness 1986, p. 231). The oft-contested nature of its lessons is hardly surprising given the cataclysmic war remains a

polemic topic. Its legacy differs across the spectrum of domestic policy, foreign policy, the military and warfare, the balance of power in the U.S. political system, and American society and culture. This thesis is concerned with the relevance of Vietnam to contemporary foreign policy, though it may vary even in this context. Its counsel changes depending on one's viewpoint of the war itself; a liberal realist might take a pragmatic stance, denouncing poor planning and persistence in unwinnable wars, whilst a left-wing revisionist might caution the dangers of American imperialism and the inherent moral hazard of its foreign policy, for example. Debates notwithstanding, however, Kalb (2013) offers a pervasive conception of the Vietnam legacy in terms of foreign policy:

The belief, born of brutal experience during the Vietnam war, that never again will the U.S. gradually tiptoe into questionable wars without a clear-cut strategy, overwhelming military force, an endgame strategy and, most importantly, the support of Congress and the American people (p. 1).

The prerequisite conditions for war noted above represent the core tenets of the Weinberger-Powell Doctrine, which formalised the legacy of Vietnam just prior to the 1991 Gulf War (Campbell 1998). Record (2007) notes that despite frequent rebuke, the doctrine enjoys pre-eminence in the realm of foreign policy today primarily due to its prudential nature following the near disintegration of the American military in Vietnam. The war has incited in almost every president since a predilection for non-military intervention and a wariness of cocksure self-deception in foreign affairs. The damning evidence of Vietnam revealed, above all else, the limits of hitherto unchallenged American power. Miles (2011) states that regardless of one's perspective of the conflict, it is undeniable that "the lessons learnt from the Vietnam conflict have shaped the way U.S. forces operate today" (p. 1).

Barack Obama was inaugurated as 44 President of the United States on 20 January 2008. His administration faced a number of foreign policy issues that demanded immediate attention, most notably the U.S. occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. Domestic support for his predecessor's wars had fallen dramatically and the incumbent faced instantaneous pressure to rectify the War on Terror, increasingly being touted "another Vietnam" (Maloney 2005, p. 21). In early 2009, Obama announced an accelerated withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq, formally ending the war in December 2011. However, the U.S. remains in Afghanistan and arguably not since Vietnam has foreign policy been so persistently conceived through the unforgiving prism of the U.S.'s inglorious war. When Obama took office, many believed one or both occupations were rash mistakes that had not evolved out of clear strategic thinking. Iraq was condemned as an unwinnable war and Afghanistan recriminated for its protraction, draining resources and wasting lives simply to prove that the U.S. was anything but a "paper tiger" (Powell 1965, p. 55) in the fight against terrorism (Zunes and Laird 2010).

The devastating loss in Vietnam revealed the limits to U.S. global power, a lesson which should continue to shape foreign policy today. Let us first examine the relevance of this in the case of Afghanistan. Vietnam counsels that any obstinate commitment to lengthy wars in the absence of a tangible and quantifiable threat to national interests is dangerous and misguided. It can lead the country into prolonged conflicts from which escape is difficult. The perceived threat to the U.S. at the time of the Vietnam War was broad and immeasurable: the global spread of Communism. The U.S. launched a war with the aim of territorially confining a political ideology antithetical to its own. However noble and legitimate the cause for engagement may have been, the threat was intangible and its manifestation informal and opaque, rendering the reality of warfare a quagmire (Miles 2011).

This is relevant to the case of Afghanistan. In justification of one of his administration's rare hawkish moves – the initial surge of 30,000 troops in Afghanistan in 2009, President Obama emphasised his administration's view of the difference between Vietnam and the present war, citing discernible national interests: "Unlike Vietnam, the American people were viciously attacked from Afghanistan, and remain a target for those same extremists who are plotting along its border" (Obama 2009, p. 3). The surge, however, was designed to achieve a specific aim in a short time – to seize power from a resurgent Taliban and to improve ground conditions (Tardelli 2012). Indeed, the additional troops were withdrawn in 2011 and the administration has since embarked upon a strategy of definitive disengagement. The threat of terrorism is no longer so direct that it warrants continued action, though the lingering presence of Al-Qaïda in Afghanistan and Pakistan must being addressed appropriately to ensure a "smooth transition to Afghan lead" (Tardelli 2012, p. 19). The legacy of Vietnam cautions that as the threat evolves, so too must foreign policy. In conjunction with this, Vietnam has instilled a reticence within the executive to put "boots on the

ground" (McGrath 2006, p. 1). The Obama administration has exhibited a prejudicial deployment of troops advised by the Weinberger-Powell creed, embarking on two withdrawal campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan and a strategy of air and drone warfare in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The latter remains a controversial tactic, however. The modern age of war is characterised by threats of numerous factionalised insurgency movements, a stark contrast to the dichotomous interstate conflict between the U.S. and Vietnam. The proliferation of threats occur through informal and obfuscated networks and the use of drone warfare, whilst reducing military personnel on the ground, limits U.S. capacity to interact with civilians and defectors in order to garner better intelligence and increases anti-Western sentiment amongst civilians of occupied countries (Rohde 2012, Tardelli 2012, Lewis 2013).

Debates surrounding the merit of reduced military personnel on the ground notwithstanding, the caution of Vietnam against the flippant use of force bears relevance today. Miles (2011) highlights how President Obama's appointment of two senior advisors possessing on-the-ground experience of Vietnam, Secretary of State John Kerry and Secretary of Defence Chuck Hagel, indicates his dovish instincts in this regard despite early campaign rhetoric describing him as a president free from the recriminations of a lost war (Landler 2013). Both Kerry and Hagel have denounced Vietnam as a mistake committed to achieve unclear and ambiguous political and military ends (Kalb 2013) and have explicitly attributed their aversion to sashaying into foreign conflicts in the absence of a direct threat to their combat experiences. For example, during his seminal visit to Kabul in March 2013, Hagel reiterated, "We're in a warzone. I have been to war" (Baldor and Dozier 2013, p. 1), stating that he understood first-hand "the ugly reality of combat and the heat of battle" (Shanker 2013, p. 2). In January 2013 Obama alluded to the restraint of his team to put "boots on the ground": "[Chuck Hagel] understands that sending young Americans to fight and bleed in the dirt and mud, that's something we only do when it's absolutely necessary" (p. 2). The presence at the helm of foreign policy formulation of two figures acutely linked to Vietnam arguably indicates recognition on the part of President Obama of the continued relevance of its legacy today (Ajami 2013).
Vietnam's admonition of bellicose foreign policy without just cause has also impacted upon U.S. strategy in response to the political upheaval in the Middle East. Since the onslaught of the Arab Spring in 2011, the current administration has been required to redirect focus towards the growing instability in the region. The U.S. retains important politico-economic links with countries in the Middle East, notably Israel and Saudi Arabia. Regional instability is thus cause for concern for the Obama administration and features prominently on its foreign policy agenda. As global champion of liberal capitalist democracy (Deudney and Meiser 2008), the U.S. has come under pressure to support the plight of revolutionaries in countries such as Egypt, Libya, Tunisia and Syria, amongst others. The uprisings have introduced an unprecedented foreign policy dilemma that is perhaps, not relatable to the Vietnam War: remain loyal to allied governments in benighted countries that prove beneficial to the U.S. (particularly economically), or support rebels fighting for the principles of freedom and democratic representation upon which the U.S. political and societal system is predicated.

Though the administration has mainly chosen the latter, reneging on stalwart allies such as President Mubarak in Egypt, its approach has been selective and largely rhetorical. The U.S. has struggled to identify a clear threat to its national security interests and the corollary has been reticence to intervene militarily, preferring to "lead from behind" (Chesterman 2011, p. 279). Etzioni (2012) highlights how the spectre of Vietnam along with the fresh wounds of the disastrous 2003 Iraq War has led the administration to rely predominantly on discursive renouncement of autocratic regimes and recalcitrant rulers. The only instance of intervention occurred in Libya in March 2011, when the U.S. faced increased pressure from allies. Prior to intercession as part of a multistate coalition, the U.S. strongly encouraged European countries to take the lead in the mission and insisted that its goal was not to remove Colonel Gaddafi but "to specifically protect civilians in Libya" (Ratnesar 2011, p. 1). Then-Secretary for Defense Robert Gates circumvented the absence of any direct threat to national interests by citing the possibility of spill-over: "You had a potentially significantly destabilizing event in Libya that put at risk potentially the revolutions in both Tunisia and Egypt" (Horsley 2011, p. 4). Post-mission, however, the Obama administration has maintained a "hands-off approach" (Fly 2012, p. 2), reverting to verbal and other non-military forms of support for the pro-democratic movements. Its restraint to the Middle East is characteristic of the Weinberger-Powell Doctrine (Johnson 1970). Certainly the 2003 Iraq war compounded the President's circumspect stance on the Arab Spring, but a reluctance to enter foreign conflicts without discernable political or material cause is rooted in the U.S.'s watershed defeat in Vietnam (Bullington 2008).

Let us examine the legitimacy of Vietnam's lessons in the cases of Libya and Syria. The refusal to intervene in Syria does not necessarily vindicate all facets of the Weinberger-Powell doctrine, but similarly the argument for intervention into Libya does not deliver its coup de grâce either. Apologists of a Syrian intervention accuse the U.S., in its dogmatic refusal to enter Arab Spring conflicts, of evading its capacity for humanitarian action. The Syrian crisis has claimed 70,000 lives according to a UN estimate (Nichols 2013) and indeed the theoretical argument holds that as a global hegemon, the U.S. can make a real difference at a relatively minimal cost, such as the case in Libya in 2011. However, the political reality of prospects for intervention into Syria lends credibility to the Weinberger-Powell Doctrine born of Vietnam. Clarke (2013) highlights how the U.S. has just exited Iraq with the cost of war totalling $1 trillion and continues to prepare for withdrawal from Afghanistan. The author emphasises that a comparison between Libya and Syria in the case for intervention is fundamentally flawed: Syria is much less manageable militarily and is triple the size demographically. Furthermore, even the brute strength of the U.S. may struggle to unify a factionalised insurgency movement that counts at least two principal organisations – the Syrian National Council made up of theDamascus Declaration, the Muslim Brotherhood and the Kurdish Future Movement Party Kurds, and the Free Syrian Army, comprising high-level defectors and civilians (Chatham House 2012). Even more importantly, in the absence of a NATO or UNSC mandate authorising action, intervention on the part of the U.S. would demonstrate the epithet of unilateralism that the administration is trying hard to shake. The political reality of liberal interventionism would render the U.S. a target, for militarily supporting the rebels makes it a de factoparticipant in the conflict. It would aggravate already precarious relations with supporters of the Al-Assad regime, most notably Iran (Bandow 2013). The legacy of Vietnam is entirely relevant to the U.S.'s foreign policy towards uprisings in the Middle East: the absence of a direct threat should generally rule out military intervention and result in foreign policy that favours coercive diplomacy and non-military tactics such as trade embargoes or targeted sanctions and sending food and medical supplies to insurgents. Nevertheless, the relative success of the Libyan intervention strongly supports an argument for case-by-base analysis.

How, then, is the Vietnam War relevant to foreign policy when force is deemed necessary? The protracted and piecemeal nature of the war placed a lasting emphasis on clear strategic objectives and targeted brute strength within a definitive time frame (Kalb 2013). Its legacy condemns broad, undefined objectives, for theory of Containment during the war proved powerful in a rhetorical sense, but messy and opaque strategically. According to Gallichio (2005), the noble fight against communism was an easy sell to the populace, as was the destruction of Al-Qaida prior to the launch of the Afghanistan war in 2001. The ubiquity of the threat of communism was as terrifying as it was difficult to control and a parallel can be drawn between it and the equally hard to quantify threat of terrorism. By attempting to fight on the ground in Vietnam a political ideology that proliferated through informal networks, the U.S. failed to define and revise strategic objectives, which, in addition to inadequate knowledge of the country, poor and inconsistent political leadership and foundering domestic support, lost it the war (Kattenburg 1984). The lesson has proven relevant in the case of Afghanistan. Simply defining terrorism as an existential threat is insufficient and entirely useless strategically. Fortunately, the Obama administration has taken heed, drafting and continuously revising specific and narrow goals, including "ejecting the Taliban from Afghan strongholds" (Cronk 2013, p. 2), destroying Al-Qaida networks through disposal of senior figures of the organisation's leadership such as Osama bin Laden and Ilyas Kashmiri (Schweitzer and London 2010), and "training, advising and assisting Afghan forces" (Iqbal 2013, p. 3) in a limited capacity following withdrawal in 2014.

Furthermore, when military action is considered necessary, the experience of Vietnam counsels a short-term display of overwhelming strength. Though Vietnam undoubtedly instils circumspection within the executive as regards troop deployment, it also serves as a caveat against fragmented, uncoordinated action when force is deemed essential. Henry Kissinger stated in a 1971 memorandum that, "we must be wary of the zealous ideologues who would overcommit us and of those who would withdraw us from meeting our legitimate responsibilities and interests" (Ryan and Dumbrell 2007, p. 1). The U.S. reacted to the loss in Vietnam by rebuilding military capability to unprecedented levels. It has ingrained in presidents a predisposition to react with robust force in response to threats. Gradual escalation in Vietnam ultimately resulted in a prolonged war and a continuous and obvious lack of clear-sighted strategy (Kattenburg 1984). This in turn leant legitimacy to the Vietnamese strategy of attrition of America's will to fight. It led to a perception amongst the Vietnamese that the superpower was foundering, thus remarkably boosting their morale and determination (Willbanks 2009). The lesson learnt was manifest in Obama's 2009 military surge in Afghanistan and will remain relevant in future military interventions. The 2009 surge and, incidentally, Obama's use

of firepower in Libya, intended short-term displays of robust strength in the pursuit of clear strategic goals – to significantly seize power from the Taliban and improve ground security in the former and civilian protection in the latter (Tardelli 2012). Though consequences of overwhelming military action may be dramatic, it also shortens the time frame of the intervention itself and avoids the perception of weakness upon which insurgent enemies can often build their capacity to proliferate (Bullington 2008).

Vietnam counsels a strong yet flexible 'exit strategy' and an agenda for post-war aid and assistance, which is surely relevant to Obama's foreign policy today as it approaches withdrawal from Afghanistan. Miller (2010) notes how the requirement of an exit strategy was born of the fear first aroused during the morass in Vietnam that the U.S. had not strategically prepared for immediate exit should it become necessary – justifiable in an age characterised by nuclear bipolarity. The stark absence of an exit strategy, which involves "defining in advance the circumstances and criteria for ending a military intervention, [though] not setting a specific date for withdrawal" (Neeson 2008, p. 1), is one of the strongest recriminations of Vietnam (Thompson 1970, Dumbrell and Ryan 2007). Indeed, the Clausewitzian ideology that "no one should consider a war without first considering its end" (Beyerchen 1992, p. 63) has proven relevant for Obama's endeavours in both Libya and Afghanistan. Both Chuck Hagel and John Kerry are acutely aware of the dangers of a war without an exit strategy. In 2011, Hagel told the Lincoln Journal-Star, "We have lost our purpose, our objective. We are in a universe of unpredictables and uncontrollables" (Specter 2013, p. 1) and signaled that it was time to plan the U.S.'s exit from Afghanistan in order to avoid protraction. John Kerry voiced similar sentiments, controversially stating that, "everyone knows there is not a military solution" (Specter 2013, p. 1) to the war. The misguidedness of entering a foreign conflict without a clear and definitive contingency plan for exit remains acutely pertinent to foreign policy: the ongoing process of disengagement in Afghanistan must be continuously revised and updated to reflect potential obstacles to U.S. departure. Moreover, any further intervention into the Middle East similar to that of Libya must be precluded by a similar consideration of exit opportunities, particularly given the contagion nature of the Arab uprisings and thus the risk of further implication.

The spectre of Vietnam also cautions against mandating civilian administrators or low-ranking commanders to lead post-conflict missions. Bullington (2008) compares such individuals to "fish out of water" (p. 37) in the often lawless post-war environments following the end of war. According to the author, the radical termination of aid to Vietnam resulted in its evitable reunification as a Communist nation, an outcome which could have perhaps been avoided had the U.S. "gotten a security force on its feet through training and support, not only combat effective but capable of self-sustaining without our logistical and air support" (p. 47). Suhrke (2007) argues that in order to avoid comparison between Obama's "war of necessity" (Tardelli 2012, p. 18) in Afghanistan and Bush's catastrophic 2003 endeavours in Iraq, the current administration must prepare a detailed and contingency-based post-conflict plan which accounts for "the seeds of radical social change" (Suhrke 2007, p. 1291), the potentiality of resurgent terrorist movements, and the prognosticated economic requirement of nation rebuilding. The failure to prepare for post-Vietnam was a corollary of the executive's weariness towards the end of the war, and though President Nixon had embarked on a process of Vietnamisation designed to train and assist South Vietnamese forces, his administration fell entirely short of preparing a post-mission agenda, to devastating results (Melanson 2000).

Finally, the legacy of Vietnam incites presidents to formulate foreign policy that favours coercive diplomacy over unilateral military action in a nuclear era. This should resonate with Obama in his endeavours with North Korea, an autocratic state claiming significant nuclear arsenal with which the U.S. has less than ideal relations. The Vietnam War was conducted in the context of nuclear dichotomy between the U.S. and the former Soviet Union. Though the Cold War world order no longer exists, this does not mean its lessons are anachronistic. The caveat of Vietnam prohibiting the use of force unless a direct threat to national security interests exists must be adhered to in the case of North Korea. Nuclear capability is far more advanced than it was during Vietnam and so foreign policy favouring coercive diplomacy and deterrence is imperative (Art and Cronin 2007, Ivonov 2013). To buy into the ongoing rhetoric of North Korea may impede the U.S. from making rational policy decisions just as it did when faced with the discursively powerful threat of communism during Vietnam. According to East Asia expert James Schoff (2013), a strategy of deterrence is the right move and Washington must prioritise its diplomatic and economic leverage with North Korea's main benefactor – China – in order to achieve its short-term and long-term goals, i.e. diffusing the Kim regime's virulent rhetoric and arriving at full denuclearisation of North Korea, respectively (Oswald 2013).

Bruce Reidel was correct in his sentiment that the legacy of Vietnam lives on in White House today. Its relevance has not faded as the world is arguably a safer place when the U.S. executive favours caution over unilateralism, selective intervention over careless displays of militarism, and well-defined, incisive action within a short time frame over uncoordinated and directionless rebuke to threats. The Obama administration has demonstrably taken heed of its precepts thus far and should continue to do so during the crucial stages of withdrawal from Afghanistan, in light of the ongoing tumult in the Middle East, and in dealing with belligerent states such as North Korea. Nevertheless, it would be misguided to assume that the legacy of Vietnam should be observed dogmatically and unquestionably. The rules of warfare have changed since the 1970s and so too must foreign policy. The use of drone warfare over deployment of military personnel during a counterinsurgency war, in which detailed intelligence is garnered at ground level, can often prove counterproductive, for example. The Arab Spring also presents unprecedented humanitarian challenges and it is perhaps necessary to overlook the vital necessity of a threat to national interests in favour of case-by-case analysis, allowing the U.S. to intervene when it can make a considerable difference at relatively minimal cost. Nuanced instances such as these notwithstanding, however, the legacy of the U.S.'s most inglorious war must remain with the executive for years to come, for it diffuses a dangerous proclivity within the White House to think itself invincible and thus embark on disastrous foreign policy.

Bibliography

Ajami, F., (2013), 'How the Vietnam War will shape Obama's second term', U.S.: Pittsburgh Post-Gazette 27th January 2013

Allard, K., (1995), 'Somalia Operations: Lessons Learned' U.S.: Defense Technical Information Center. Available at: http://oai.dtic.mil/oai/oai?verb=getRecord&metadataPrefix=html&identifier=ADA311037 Accessed 7th March 2013

Art, R.J. and Cronin, P.M., (2007) 'Coercive Diplomacy' in *Leashing the Dogs of War: Conflict Management in a Divided World* (Crocker, C.A., Osler Hampson, F., Aall, P., (2007)). U.S.: United States Institute of Peace Press.

Baldor, L.C. and Dozier, K., (2013), 'Chuck Hagel in Afghanistan: Secretary of Defense Optimistic for Commando Agreement.' U.S.: The Huffington Post, 9th March 2013, p. 1. Available at: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/03/09/chuck-hagel-in-afghanistan-commando-agreement_n_2844142.html Accessed 18th March 2013

Bandow, D., (2013), 'Stay out of Other Nations' Wars'. U.S.: Cato Research Institute. Available at: http://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/stay-out-other-nation Accessed 4th April 2013

Beyerchen, A., (1992), 'Clausewitz, Nonlinearity, and the Unpredictability of War', p. 63. U.S.: The MIT Press

Bullington, R.P., (2008), 'Why Vietnam Matters: An Eyewitness Account of Lessons not Learned' p. 47. U.S.: Naval Institute Press,

Campbell, K.J., (1998), 'Once burned, twice cautions: explaining the Weinberger-Powell Doctrine' in *Armed Forces and Society*. U.S.: SAGE Journals. Available at: http://afs.sagepub.com/content/24/3/357.short Accessed 22nd March 2013

Chatham House, (2012), 'Syria: Prospects for Intervention'. UK: Chatham House Publications. Available at: http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/Middle%20East/0812syria_summary.pdf Accessed 12th January 2013

Chesterman, S. (2011), 'Leading from Behind: The Responsibility to Protect, the Obama Doctrine, and Humanitarian Intervention after Libya' in *Ethics and International Affairs,* p. 279. U.S.: Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, Vol. 25, Issue 03. Available at: http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=8381054 Accessed 18th March 2013

Cronk, T.M., (2013), 'Obama: Mission objective in Afghanistan 'Within Reach' as published in American Foreign Press Service. U.S.: Department of Defense, p. 2. Available at: http://www.defense.gov/News/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=118990 Accessed 7th April 2013

Davies, A., (2009), 'An Iraq-style surge – or another Vietnam?' UK: The National Times, 3rd December 2009. Available at: http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/politics/an-iraqstyle-surge–or-another-vietnam-20091202-k671.html Accessed 9th April 2013

Davis, L., (2013), 'Kerry, Hagel, Sharing Vietnam's lessons and legacies', published in *The Huffington Post Politics* 17th January 2013. U.S.: The Huffington Post. Available at: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/lanny-davis/kerry-hagel-vietnam_b_2489736.html Accessed 19th March 2013

Deudney, D., and Meiser, J., (2008), 'American Exceptionalism' in Cox, M., and Stokes, D., (2008),*US Foreign Policy*. UK: Cambridge University Press

Drezner, D. W., (2011) 'Does Obama Have a Grand Strategy?' in *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 90, p. 57 – 68. U.S.: Council on Foreign Relations

Dumbrell, J., (2013), 'The Anti-War Movement' in *Issues in American Politics: An Introduction*, UK: Routledge.

Ehrhart, W.D., (1995), 'Passing Time: Memoir of a Vietnam Veteran Against the War' U.S.: University of Massachusetts Press, 2nd ed.

Fry, J.M., (2012), 'Obama is Unwilling to lead the U.S. response to the Arab Spring' *U.S. Foreign Policy Initiative*. Published in U.S. News, p. 2. Available at:http://www.usnews.com/debate-club/has-obama-properly-handled-the-arab-spring/obama-is-unwilling-to-lead-the-us-response-to-the-arab-spring Accessed 18th March 2013

Gallichio, M., (2005), 'What were we fighting for? Myth, Memory and the Vietnam War in American Politics' in *Nanzan Review of American Studies*, Vol. 27, p. 15 – 25. U.S.: Nanzan. Available at: https://www.ic.nanzan-u.ac.jp/AMERICA/kanko/documents/02Gallicchio.pdf Accessed 3rd April 2013

Gearan, A., (2012), 'Support for War in Afghanistan falls to new low, Poll Shows.' U.S.: Huffington Post 5th September 2012. Available at: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/05/09/support-for-war-in-afghanistan-poll_n_1502205.html Accessed 18th March 2013

Hess, G., (2009), 'Vietnam: Explaining America's Lost War'. UK: Blackwell.

Horsley, S., (2011), 'U.S. Intervention in Libya: A Noble Use of Force?' featured on *National Public Radio*, p. 4. U.S.: npr.org. Available at: http://www.npr.org/2011/03/28/134927059/u-s-intervention-in-libya-a- Accessed 19th March 2013

Iqbal, A., (2013), 'US close to meeting objective of afghan war, says Obama'. U.S.: Dawn News, p. 3. Available at: http://dawn.com/2013/01/13/us-close-to-meeting-objective-of-afghan-war-says-obama/ Accessed 7th April 2013

Isaacs, A.R., (1997), 'Vietnam Shadows: The War, its Ghosts, and its Legacy', p. 7. U.S.: John Hopkins University Press

Johnson, J.A., (1970), 'The New Generation of Isolationists' in Foreign Affairs. U.S.: The Council on Foreign Relations. Available at: http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/24212/james-a-johnson/the-new-generation-of-isolationists Accessed 19th March 2013

Kalb, M. and Kalb, D., (2011), 'Haunting Legacy: Vietnam and the American Presidency from Ford to Obama'. U.S.: The Brookings Institute.

Kalb, M., (2013) 'It's called the Vietnam Syndrome, and it's back'. U.S.: The Brookings Institute, p. 1. Available at: http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/up-front/posts/2013/01/22-obama-foreign-policy-kalb Accessed 16th March 2013

Kattenburg, P.M., (1984), 'Reflections on Vietnam: On Revisionism and Lessons yet to be Learned'. U.S.: Journal of U.S. Army War College. Available at http://www.carlisle.army.mil/uSaWc/Parameters/Articles/1984/1984%20kattenburg.pdf Accessed 16th April 2013

Landler, M., (2013), 'In fending off critics, Obama points to Hagel as Vietnam War Hero' in *New York Times Politics* January 17th 2013. U.S.: New York Times. Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/08/us/politics/obama-nominates-hagel-for-defense-post.html Accessed 2nd April 2013

LaFeber, W., (1989), 'The American Age: United States Foreign Policy at Home and Abroad since 1750'. UK: Norton.

Legvold, R., (2012), 'Meeting the Russian Challenge in the Obama Era' in *Responding to a Resurgent Russia: Russian Policy and Responses from European Union and the United States*. U.S.: Springer

Lewis, M.W., (2013), 'Drones and Transnational Armed Conflicts'. U.S.: Ohio Northern University, Pettit College of Law. Available at: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2195332 Accessed 6th March 2013

Lieven, A., (2008) 'The Future of US Foreign Policy', in *US Foreign Policy* (Cox, M. and Stokes, D., (2008)), UK: Oxford University Press, 433-450.

Maloney, S., (2005), 'Afghanistan Four Years On: An Assessment'. U.S.: Parameters, p. 21. Available at:http://www.carlisle.army.mil/USAWC/PARAMETERS/Articles/05autumn/maloney.htm Accessed 19th March 2013

McGrath, J.J., (2006), 'Boots on the Ground: Troop Density in Contingency Operations', p. 1. U.S.: Combat Studies Institute Press. Available at: http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/cgsc/carl/download/csipubs/mcgrath_boots.pdf Accessed 18th February 2013

Mead, W.R., (2009), 'Fighting this bitch of a war', p. 1. U.S.: The American Interest. Available at: http://blogs.the-american-interest.com/wrm/2009/12/02/fighting-this-bitch-of-a-war/ Accessed 18th March 2013

Melanson, R.A., (2000), 'American Foreign Policy since the Vietnam War: Searching for Consensus from Nixon to Clinton' in *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*. U.S.: M.E. Sharpe. http://books.google.co.uk/books?hl=en&lr=&id=XPwR0D5m6vEC&oi=fnd&pg=PR7&dq=no+post-war+agenda+for+vietnam&ots=Shse6mW9Xj&sig=nHwJ_EwRAcvED6sLZNxRmPXz9xU#v=onepage&q=no%20post-war%20agenda%20for%20vietnam&f=false Accessed 3rd April 2013

Miles, D., (2011), 'Vietnam Legacy Shapes Today's Military Leaders' published in *American Foreign Press Service*. U.S.: Department of Defense, p. 1. Available at: http://www.defense.gov/News/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=63744 Accessed 18th March 2013

Miller, C.A., (2010), 'Endgame for the West in Afghanistan? Explaining the decline in support for the war in the United States, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, France and Germany.' U.S.: Strategic Studies Institute. Available at : http://books.google.co.uk/books?hl=en&lr=&id=YZCpm7n4JoIC&oi=fnd&pg=PT9&dq=the+need+for+an+endgame+in+war&ots=yVBHZtT5T7&sig=BMYHenEoU0fQ7YZJVA_MaMwxB1A Accessed 23rd March 2013

Neeson, K., (2008), 'Did JFK have an exit strategy for Vietnam?', p. 1. U.S.: E-International Relations Journal. Available at: http://www.e-ir.info/2008/11/03/did-jfk-have-an-exit-strategy-for-vietnam/ Accessed 18th February 2013

Nichols, M., (2013), 'Syria death toll likely near 70,000, says U.N. rights chief'. U.S.: Reuters. Available at: http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/02/12/us-syria-crisis-un-idUSBRE91B19C20130212 Accessed 17th March

2013

Nixon, R., (1985), 'No More Vietnams'. U.S.: Arbor House

Obama, B., (2009), 'Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on the Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan.', p. 3. U.S.: The White House, Office of the Press Secretary. Available at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-pre Accessed 18th March 2013

Obama, B., (2013), 'Remarks by the President in Nomination of the Secretary of Defense and CIA Director', p. 2. U.S.: The White House Press Secretary. Available at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/01/07/remarks-president-nomination-secretary-defense-and-cia-director Accessed 22nd February 2013

Oswald, R. (2013), 'North Korea Situation said to require Careful Diplomacy' in Global Security Newswire published 2nd April 2013. U.S.: Government Executive. Available at: http://www.govexec.com/management/2013/04/north-korea-situation-said-require-careful-diplomacy/62242/ Accessed 12th April 2013

Powell, R.L., (1965), 'Great Powers and Atomic Bombs are Paper Tigers'. U.S.: Cambridge University Press, The China Quarterly, p. 55. Available at: http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=3541640 Accessed 18th March 2013

Radin, C.J., (2013), 'How many troops with remain in Afghanistan after 2014?' U.S.: The Long War Journal. Available at: http://www.longwarjournal.org/threat-matrix/archives/2013/01/how_many_us_troops_will_remain.php Accessed 22nd March 2013

Ratnesar, R., (2011), 'Libya and Obama's Doctrine: Leading from the Back in Time, 21st March 2011, p. 1. Available at: http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,2060494,00.html Accessed 18th March 2013

Record, J., (2008), 'Back to the Weinberger-Powell Doctrine'. U.S.: DTIC. Available at: http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf&AD=ADA509121 Accessed 7h March 2013

Reed, D., (2006), 'Why Strategy Matters in the War on Terror' in *Homeland Security Affairs.* U.S. The Journal of Naval Postgraduate School Center for Homeland Defense and Security, p. 1. Available at: http://www.hsaj.org/?fullarticle=2.3.10 Accessed 4th March 2013

Rodhe, D., (2012), 'The Obama Doctrine: How the President's Drone War is Backfiring' in *Foreign Policy* Vol. 192. Available at: http://www.comw.org/wordpress/dsr/the-obama-doctrine-how-the-presidents-drone-war-is-backfiring Accessed 9th March 2013

Rose, G., (1998), 'The Exit Strategy Delusion' in *Foreign Affairs*. U.S.: Council on Foreign Relations, p. 57. Available at: http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/20048362?uid=3738232&uid=2&uid=4&sid=21102143596717 Accessed 4th April 2013

Ryan, D. and Dumbrell, J., (2007), 'Vietnam in Iraq: Tactics, Legacies, Lessons and Ghosts'. UK: Routledge, p. 1

Tardelli, L., (2012), 'Obama's interventions: Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya.' UK: London School of Economics and Political Science Publications, p. 18, 19. Available at: http://www2.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/SR009/tardelli.pdf Accessed 2nd April 2013

Thompson, R., (1970), 'Revolutionary War in World Strategy'. U.S.: Taplinger Publishing Company.

Tuchman, B., (1984), 'The March of Folly: From Troy to Vietnam'. UK: Random House Publishing, p. 321

Schweitzer, Y. and London, S. (2010), 'Obama's Afghanistan-Pakistan Policy: Challenges and Objectives'. U.S.:

INSS Terrorism and Low Intensity Conflict Program. Available at: http://cdn.www.inss.org.il.reblazecdn.net/upload/(FILE)1267610000.pdf Accessed 9th April 2013

Schulzinger, R.D., (2006), 'A Time for Peace: The Legacy of the Vietnam War.' U.S.: Oxford University Press.

Sturken, M., (1997), 'Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, and AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering'. U.S.: University of California Press

Shanker, T., (2013), 'New Defense Chief Visits 'Reality of Combat' in Afghanistan'. U.S.: New York Times, Asia Pacific, p. 2. Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/09/world/asia/defense Accessed 18th March 2013

Slater, J., (1993), 'The Domino Theory and International Politics: The Case of Vietnam' published in *Security Studies*, Vol. 3, Issue 2. U.S.: Taylor and Francis. Available at: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/09636419309347547 Accessed 23rd March 2013

Specter, F., (2013), ' Obama's Afghan Exit Strategy: Born in Vietnam' in *Channel 4 Politics News*, p. 1. U.K.: Channel 4. Available at: http://www.channel4.com/news/obamas-afghan-exit-strategy-bo Accessed 3rd February 2013

Suhrke, A., (2007), 'Reconstruction as Modernisation: the 'post-conflict' project in Afghanistan', p. 1291. U.S.: Francis and Taylor. Available at: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01436590701547053 Accessed 18th February 2013

Usborne, D., (2012), 'Afghans face terror threat after Nato exit, Obama admits.' UK: The Independent, 22nd May 2012. Available at: http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/afghans-face-terror-threat-after-nato-exit-obama-admits-7771340.html Accessed 22nd March 2013

Van Ness, P., (1986), 'Richard Nixon, the Vietnam War, and the American Accommodation with China: A Review Article', p. 231. U.S.: Contemporary Southeast Asia, p. 231

Willbanks, J.H., (2009), 'Vietnam War Almanac', U.S.: Facts on File Inc.

Zoroya, G., (2009), 'Commander's Letters Tackles Troops' Morale in Afghanistan', in USA Today, ABC News, 16th October 2009. Available at: http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/low-troop-morale-afghanistan/story?id=8845147#.UXE3glH3DZs Accessed 18th March 2013

Zunes, S. and Laird, J., (2010), 'The US Anti-Vietnam War Movement (1964 – 1973)'. U.S.: International Center on Nonviolent Conflict. Available at: http://nonviolent-conflict.org/index.php/movements-and-campaigns/movements-and-cam Accessed 20th March 2013

—

Written by: Eleanor Kate Flanagan
Written at: Durham University/University College
Written for: Dr Vincent Keating
Date written: April 2013