

Once when a convoy of U.S. Army and South Vietnamese Army units that I was traveling with on Highway 1 was ambushed by NVA regulars, we American soldiers jumped off our trucks facing the enemy and returned fire. The South Vietnamese soldiers jumped off the other side of the trucks and ate lunch. Whose war was it?

I recall numerous incidents when U.S. Army officers instructed us to count each body part from a NVA soldier as one casualty so as to swell the total body count reported. Similarly, we noted that some known U.S. casualties were listed long after the deaths in Stars and Stripes, the weekly military newspaper. These small deceptions, multiplied across the country and if practiced widely, could have contributed to an inaccurate picture of battlefield situations. And it would have been done purposefully.

What would I want future generations to know about the nation's experience in Vietnam?

First, that governments of men can and do make huge mistakes. In understanding political situations in other cultures, in intelligence gathering and interpretation, and that an overzealous military can and will cover up their miscalculations of enemy strength, exaggerate U.S. military effectiveness and minimize cost projections and outcomes. Once committed, reversals of policy are slow in our system of government and often come too late for too many in harm's way.

Second, I would urge future generations to get informed and involved in public affairs as a matter of civic duty and personal interest to guard against poor political leadership that can get the country in deep trouble because of political ideology, showmanship or the pursuit of short-term partisan advantage over the national interest. Not only is eternal vigilance the price of liberty in Jefferson's phrase, but it is also the price of intelligent foreign policy and peace in the world.

Third, I would want those who look back at what happened in Vietnam to recall that it was not victories in combat by soldiers and airmen that got us out of there. No, it was not that at all. It was the courage and aggressiveness of people of all ages here at home who protested in the streets that finally turned the political tide in this country against the war. Their courage and tenacity forced a reversal of policy in Washington as time and events revealed military failures and unacceptable losses.

Finally, I would not want my children or anyone's children to ever know the details of what war looks like up close. It is very gruesome and terrifying for the safe and the wounded and all those who survive are burdened with the awfulness for their lifetimes. As time passes, the joy and fullness of life can repair the damage and soften its impact for those whose lives lead in healthy directions. For those who returned to dysfunctional families, lack of schooling, joblessness, illness, they are the walking wounded of Vietnam who cannot ever come home.

I would want my children to know that I tried to do my duty when my country called even when I disagreed deeply with the policies and conduct of the war in which we were engaged. I would want them to know I felt no regrets or ill feelings toward those who chose not to serve; those decisions of conscience required a certain kind of courage as well as any I saw in the war. Lastly, I would want my children to work for a country that is a more thoughtful, careful and respectful force in a world of divergent cultures, one that expends its resources in war only when

our national security interests are genuinely at stake.●

MR. JACK WILCOX INDUCTED INTO PLYMOUTH HALL OF FAME

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, on April 18, 2000, the Kiwanis Club of Plymouth, Michigan, with the assistance of the Plymouth Community Chamber of Commerce, the District Library, the Plymouth Historical Society, and the City of Plymouth, will honor three men whose commitment to the community has earned them a place in the Plymouth Hall of Fame. These men are being recognized because over the years their dedication and many efforts have played a large role in making Plymouth the wonderful town that it is today. With this having been said, I rise today in honor of Mr. James Jabara, Mr. James B. McKeon, and Mr. Jack Wilcox, who are rightfully taking their place among the "Builders of Plymouth."

A graduate of Plymouth High School and the University of Michigan, Mr. Wilcox is a retired U.S. Navy captain. He has served the community of Plymouth in many, and varied, ways. A semi-professional actor, he is a charter member of the Plymouth Theater Guild. He is a past president of the Plymouth Historical Society, as well as a lifetime member of this organization. He has served as City Commissioner, and helped to organize the Plymouth Council on Aging and the Plymouth Economic Development Corporation. Mr. Wilcox is a trustee of Riverside Cemetery, a member of the Municipal Tree Board, and a member of the Block Grant Citizen's Advisory Commission. In addition, Mr. Wilcox is the host of the local cable television show "Profiles in Plymouth."

Mr. President, I applaud Mr. Wilcox for his many efforts to better the quality of life for every resident of Plymouth, Michigan. His dedication to the town over the years is truly admirable, and I am glad that the Kiwanis Club has taken this opportunity to recognize his many contributions. On behalf of the entire United States Senate, I congratulate Mr. Wilcox on his induction into the Plymouth Hall of Fame.●

MR. JAMES B. MCKEON INDUCTED INTO PLYMOUTH HALL OF FAME

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role in making Plymouth the wonderful town that it is today. With this having been said, I rise today in honor of Mr. James Jabara, Mr. James B. McKeon, and Mr. Jack Wilcox, who are rightfully taking their place among the "Builders of Plymouth."

Mr. McKeon came to Plymouth after graduating from a school that I myself am quite familiar with, Michigan State University. He has served Plymouth both as City Commissioner and as Mayor. He has been president of the Plymouth Chamber of Commerce, and was named Volunteer of the Year by that organization. Mr. McKeon is chairman of the Downtown Development Authority, and sits on the Board of Directors of Growth Works and the New Morning School. In addition, he is a member of the Schoolcraft College Development Authority Board and a benefactor of the Plymouth Community Arts Council.

Mr. President, I applaud Mr. McKeon for his many efforts to better the quality of life for every resident of Plymouth, Michigan. His dedication to the town over the years is truly admirable, and I am glad that the Kiwanis Club has taken this opportunity to recognize his many contributions. On behalf of the entire United States Senate, I congratulate Mr. McKeon on his induction into the Plymouth Hall of Fame.●

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Mr. Jabara has been an outstanding leader in the Plymouth community since arriving there after his graduation from Michigan Technological University. He has served Plymouth as City Commissioner, Mayor, and Chairman of the 35th District Court Building. He is a board member of the Plymouth Chamber of Commerce, the Fall Festival and the Ice Festival. He is Chairman of the Advisory Board, sits on the Board of Directors of the Salvation Army, and is a member of the Plymouth Library Board. He is a charter member of the Colonial Kiwanis