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Why I Believe War Is Not the Answer

“War is never a solution; it is an aggravation.” – Benjamin Disraeli

According to the Oxford Dictionary, the definition of evil is “profoundly immoral, malevolent, or harmful.” When poets are asked to define evil, some may answer evil lies in the dark corners of nature. When dreamers are asked, they will most likely say it lies in their nightmares. Everyone in the world has a different opinion as to what evil is: to children it could be siblings, to college students it might be term papers, but to our veterans, evil is in fact in their nightmares from the dark corners of the world, stretching from the empty plains of Afghanistan to the dense forests of Vietnam. To veterans, war is evil. To me, war is evil.

Throughout my high school years, I have studied different wars that American soldiers have been involved in – Civil War, War of 1812, World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and the Gulf Wars. Sometimes I read the strategies that caused victory, while other times I observed the tactics that resulted in failure. One thing I have always noticed, however, is that whether or not Americans win, there is always someone who has lost. It doesn’t always just mean an Iraqi soldier who lost his life, but maybe it’s his son who lost a father. What about an innocent woman killed in crossfire or a family that accidentally crossed over a road bomb meant for someone else? Those are the questions that are never asked or answered from American or any other military.

War is not an adventure, it is a disease. War is evil, but it is inescapable. War has been humanity’s shadow since we first learned to walk. It has been waged between families, religions, and nations. Regardless of how the war is fought, with words or weapons, somebody will always die. This statement rings true in a high school student who commits suicide caused by a bully or a soldier who dies at gunpoint. Why must humanity look for trouble? Perhaps humans are so twisted within themselves that the search for knowledge or the idea of pursuing a future in which they can enjoy comfort isn’t enough. Man is too dynamic a creature to be happy with what he has. We always seek to obtain more, but sadly, it comes at a cost more than credit card debt.

And with every war came the people to advocate against it. It wasn’t until Vietnam that protesters were finally being listened to, but even one that shouted for peace were silenced at Stanford and Madison with batons and teargas, and at Kent State by gunfire. Whether it is students standing in the sun or soldiers crying in the dark, everyone is a victim. War has ravaged our world and determined its outcome: only more death by the hands of violence-seeking men and women. It doesn’t matter if they fire the gun or order the kill, they are both murderers.

People dream of a future where their children can grow up safely, but what will that future hold? An active draft? Another world war? What then of the children of the future? As wise Abraham Flexner once said, “No nation is rich enough to pay for both war and civilization. We must make a choice; we cannot have both.”

With that kind of statement and with the needs of all of the people of the Earth, past, present and future, I join my voice in the millions of cries in search of the answer to one simple question: Isn't the choice obvious?