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Obama in Vietnam... US War Machine Returns Response

This article discusses the various interpretations behind Obama's visit to Vietnam. From an individual perspective, it appears that Obama is visiting many countries such as Vietnam, Japan, and Cuba in order to collect "putative historic achievements" that not only will put his name down in history, but also potentially provide a future role as international political speaker once he is out of office. From the perspective of the government, Obama's visit marks the lifting of the US arms embargo on Vietnam, both creating a new market for American weaponry and strengthening its military presence in Asia, which in turn is another way to interfere with China's growing power.

However, both of these interpretations are solely focused on the future without proper regard toward America's bloody past in Vietnam. The US was responsible for hundreds of thousands of deaths during the Vietnam war, both directly and through the use of chemical weapons, but there was never an official apology or compensation for the war. The author of this article also calls this lack of action "narcissistic" because of the fact the US is only concerned about the American suffering. The author goes on to say that being "narcissistic" also shows how America is absolving itself and its crimes without official remorse, which is rather chilling to think about.

I think a part of America's refusal to fully acknowledge everything with the Vietnam war is due to the fact that it was an epic loss for the US, therefore damaging the US's pride as a war-winning nation. Personally, I can see why losing a war you started yourself is pretty pathetic (especially when taking into account ethically questionable actions), but ignoring the outcome is just being a sore loser. While I am sure that officially acknowledging war crimes has repercussions that America does not (or cannot) deal with at the moment, I think the more important issue is the idea that by not being held accountable is equivalent to having "license to repeat such wanton crimes and destruction." I am not sure whether or not this is true, but I think that America's heavy losses in recent wars such as Vietnam is evidence against the author's last line, which claims that America believes it is "unstoppable."