



Trust Not

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CreateSpace

Unknown (pp)

978-1-4528-1031-7

There are times when a memoir is so honest and straightforward in depicting a traumatic event that it very subtly becomes a heartwarming epic of astonishing survival and stoicism. *Trust Not* is that book. With amazing detail (sometimes we even learn what he had for lunch that day) and reconstruction from memory of extremely dangerous situations that are often stranger than fiction, William G. Haneke (with the help of co-author Jane C. Walker), takes the reader along the coast of the South China Sea on a military tour during the Vietnam War. Haneke took his tour in 1968 as a senior advisor of the Hoa Da District for the South Vietnamese Army.

In the midst of a diverse South Asian jungle habitat bordering dunes of white sand, the natural dangers of the compound are miniscule compared to the intricate layers of corruption and betrayal evident among the diverse social fabric: the Marxist-manifesto-spouting police chief might be your enemy; corrupt senators are taking bribes; superstitious villagers are terrified of helicopters and playing-card spades; six-foot-tall Chinese drug lords fearlessly demand safe passage; Polynesian Chams; tall Montagnards; and both North and South Vietnamese cultures coexist in the same chaotic region; Vietcong-hating Cambodian Commandos join the fight, partnering with the sparse American presence. There are CIA operatives, underground Vietcong hospitals, a common people helplessly trapped between the power struggle, and Buddhist monks chanting over the remains of the dead while searching for the missing body parts of those to be reborn.

Trust Not paints a vivid picture of Vietnamese life in 1968 and is historically important for its detailed account of the lesser-understood fringe areas of the conflict involving America, the hampering politics both within the Army and from Washington, and for the revolutionary medical procedures used to save Haneke's life. The book is also informative of the role of a military advisor and the ways in which the military might better serve their needs. As bold as Solzhenitsyn's history of the Gulag in depicting human hardship, the book provides new understanding of the extreme challenges facing soldiers during the Vietnam War.

Haneke was a West Point graduate who served in Germany for a year during the Cold War before being deployed to Vietnam where he was severely injured. Despite heavy odds, and much to the astonishment of his doctors, he survived the ordeal and became co-founder of Families of the Wounded, which helps military veterans and their families. Haneke reveals the importance of courage and faith when confronted with life-altering hardship. *Trust Not* has something for everyone.

DEREK CRAM (February 17, 2011)

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