

Bing's White Christmas

Written by Westside ID637

Saturday, 01 January 2005 04:50 -

Although not a rap or hip-hop track; Bing Crosby's 'White Christmas' is heard a lot this time of year.

To some it brings memories of how Christmas should be. Or maybe they can have fond memories of Christmas's past, but to some who have ties to the Vietnam war era 'White Christmas' is a song that only proves how this country will use you and then leave you.

April 29 — As communist forces close in on Saigon, U.S. helicopters begin evacuating Americans and South Vietnamese from the rooftop of the U.S. Embassy. In 18 hours, more than 1,000 American civilians and nearly 7,000 South Vietnamese refugees are flown out of Saigon

April 30 — 4:03 a.m. — Two U.S. Marines are killed in a rocket attack at Saigon's Tan Son Nhut airport. They are the last Americans to die in the war.

April 30 — 7:52 a.m. — The last helicopter lifts off from the roof of the U.S. Embassy, ending a mass evacuation of Americans and South Vietnamese.

Bing's "White Christmas" had the distinction of marking the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. As the North Vietnamese surrounded Saigon an evacuation plan was set into motion to bring the remaining Americans and some South Vietnamese to safety. The cue to evacuate would be a radio announcement that the temperature in Saigon was "105 degrees and rising," which would be followed by Bing's "White Christmas." When the moment of truth arrived Bing's voice triggered a mad scramble for the U.S. embassy, where helicopters were waiting. Ironically, the first rock'n'roll war ended on a pre-rock note. And Bing, who had quietly opposed American involvement in Vietnam, contributed to the American exit.

As the US 'pulled out' of Vietnam many many people that had helped us in that war were abandoned by us. Many American-Asian children left behind. Children who were American citizens now destined to a life of condemnation and strife.

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US servicemen who fathered these children died in battle or were severely injured at some point during the remainder of their tour of duty, and were never heard from again by the mothers. A few servicemen left for home and later returned to find their children and the mothers, to help them immigrate to the US. Others completely abandoned their children along with the mothers and never looked back. There are many different stories.

Eventually, years after the war, the existence of these children was acknowledged by the US government, yet, despite government programs designed to allow these American Asian children quick entry into the United States, many are still living throughout Vietnam. Their lives have been difficult in the wake of the absence of their fathers, and the hard lives of their mothers. Because of their lack of basic family structure (mother, father and extended family relationships), in most cases, they do not have the same benefits of social and community support, common to the lives of the average Vietnamese citizen. They are often denied entry into the education system, and therefore, many of them are illiterate. A large number are homeless, living on the streets, making a living as beggars, or working in the lowest level of Vietnam's labor pool. They are for all practical purposes, indentured slaves, working for basic food, clothing, and shelter. In Vietnam these children can be found on the streets of any city, on farms, wandering the roads, or in small villages. Though some have been able to make connections within Vietnamese society, and many have benefited from the general kindness of Vietnamese people, and have found a survivable life in Vietnam, most of these American Asian's live in very poor conditions. The true measure of their numbers is unknown.

The [AAHOPE Foundation](#) helps these children deal with their many problems. Please visit their web site to learn more about these children; their life and their future.

So next time you hear Bing Crosby's 'White Christmas', remember not only Christmas feelings of good cheer, but also remember and pray that the US will treat those that are 'helping us' now in the conflicts in Iraq and Pakistan are treated on an equal playing field and that we do not 're-pay' them for their help with abandonment as we did to this children and the others that helped us in Vietnam.

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I can remember my cousin being returned home after his death in the 'conflict' or 'police action' in Vietnam. 'Parts' are all that made it home. His uniform; Marine dress blues with white gloves; was 'stuffed' to make it look like a whole body had made it home, when in reality most of him was still in Vietnam. His face so peaceful; showed no signs of his violent death.

War is an ugly experience for all involved. There are really no winners. The song 'White Christmas' to me only reflects the short comings of the US and the way they treat those that help them.

Please check out AAHOPE.org and learn about these forgotten citizens.