

Trump's New National Security Adviser: A General with No Regard for Human Life

By [Eric Sommer](#)

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The appointment of Lt. Gen. H. R. McMaster as Trump's new national security adviser underscores the ever-growing power of the military and finance capital in the U.S. state. From wielding tremendous power from partially behind-the-scenes positions, these two sectors have emerged center stage in Trump's cabinet which is stocked with generals and billionaires.

Hailed almost universally by U.S. corporate media as a 'scholar-general', 'brilliant strategist', and the like, McMaster in reality represents the most extreme forms of militarist thinking, disregard for international law, and callous disregard for human life.

In his book '*Dereliction of Duty*', also hailed as some kind of 'masterpiece' by corporate media, McMaster criticizes the U.S. military brass of the 1960's for not insisting that the administration of President Johnson send even more men, 700,000 is his number, to engage in the Vietnam war, and for not insisting that even more bombing of that country take place.

For younger readers who may lack detailed knowledge regarding the Vietnam war, the following facts need to be considered in assessing McMaster's bizarre view that the U.S.-state warfare under Johnson was 'inadequate'.

First of all, the U.S. troop strength in Vietnam was kept at about 500,00 (not enough for McMaster) for quite a few years; Fifty-thousand young American men died in the war, and far more were injured or traumatized for life.

Secondly, the chemical poison called 'agent orange' was sprayed by U.S. forces over large swathes of the country to defoliate the rain forests, in order to better find and kill the Vietnamese defenders. This poison ultimately produced a large number - I think up to a million or more - deformed babies to be born to Vietnamese women.

Thirdly, 2 to 3 million Vietnamese were killed by the war, many of them by bombing. U.S. forces dropped more explosive power on Vietnam than the combined total of all world war II US. bombing (still not enough for McMaster).

Fourthly, the horrific consequences for young Americans who were drafted - i.e., ordered by the government to serve in the war - and for the Vietnamese people ultimately struck home for the American people. Tens of millions of American workers, young people, and others ultimately turned against the war, and the largest political demonstrations in U.S. history brought millions to demonstrate in Washington and in other U.S. cities.

This war crime, akin in its scale to the Nazi war crimes in Eastern Europe in WWII, is what McMaster views as inadequate or 'derelection of duty'. Moreover, McMaster's taste for large scale warfare has not slackened. Of late he has led a study in Eastern Europe on how best to engage in warfare against Russia, a nuclear armed power.

The reality that such an individual is now national security advisor to the president of the United States should serve as a stark warning that preparations to drag the American people into yet more wars, and to impose militaristic authoritarian controls on the country, are afoot.

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