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What About the Chinese Red Army? A Reply to H. Bruce Franklin

I don't really know what to make of historian H. Bruce Franklin's recent essay published in CounterPunch in early August, except to say that he's rightly worked up about Trump and where he feels the USA is headed now. But to say, as Bruce says that "the fascists won World War II" is mind boggling. Yes, the U.S. saw to it that German corporations that thrived under the Nazis continued to thrive after 1945. This isn't news. Books like *The New Germany and the Old Nazis* by Tet Harens Tetens made the point nearly 60 years ago, and my dear friend Cedric Belfrage, who co-founded *The National Guardian* in 1948, described precisely the alliance of American capitalism and German fascism after the end of WWII in *Seeds of Destruction: the Truth about the U.S. Occupation of Germany* (1954).

Bruce, who I consider a pal and a comrade, has read all the books I've read about history and politics over the past 75 years, and has been a part of many of the same conversations about where we have come from and where we're headed. So I don't really know how he could reach the conclusion he has reached. I would like to remind him and readers of CounterPunch that it might be fair to say that the Communists and Communism won World War II. They won it in Eastern Europe and also in western Europe where membership in Communist parties blossomed after 1945. In Asia and Africa, nations long held captive under colonial rule broke the chains that bound them to London, Paris, Lisbon. India became an independent nation after being raped and pillaged by the British for centuries. Lest I forget, let me say here that Communists won big time in China. Bruce knows this as well as I do. I can only assume that he leaves out the triumph of the Chinese

Red Army because he has an axe to grind against Trump and his henchmen. But using the present as a stick to beat the past has severe limitations.

I would also like to say that the notion that somebody or some country wins a war is bogus. The U.S. hasn't won a war in 75 years. The British haven't won any wars recently, either, unless you count Margaret Thatcher's escapade in the Farallons. The Russian lost in Afghanistan and the U.S. has also lost there, as it lost in Korea and Vietnam. Nobody wins a war anymore. Nations lose, people lose, the earth loses, the oceans lose. The concept that the members of any single political party can win a war now is absurd. They can inflict great casualties and cause immense damage, but the leaders of any country who believe they can win a war are insane. They are doomed to repeat the past that is strewn with corpses.

Bruce, I understand, or think I do, that you don't like the way our country has behaved ever since it was born of a revolution and then overnight turned into an empire based on slavery, greed, exploitation, genocide, patriarchy, white privilege and more. But please don't allow your passions to distort your views of the past. Don't forget the Chinese Red Army, the Long March and the social, economic and political advances made by the Chinese people over the past seventy years. And perhaps let's remember that when Zhou Enlai was asked what he thought about the French Revolution he apparently said, "Too early to say." Can we please take the long view and not jump to hasty conclusions?

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