

TWO AMERICAN WAR FILMS - by MICHAEL MORIARTY 4 Jun 2010 - ON BIG HOLLYWOOD

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by MICHAEL MORIARTY, 4 Jun 2010 BIG HOLLYWOOD

The Best Years of Our Lives

Even when the *Good Guys and Bad Guys* all seemed incontestably defined, World War II still created a certain amount of what we now call “post-traumatic stress” ... and, of course, the world, even then, could not or would not ... or simply refused to understand.

Then there was the film’s 1940’s, unsavory version of a war protestor who so provoked the veterans that the character Dana Andrews portrayed punched the Axis sympathizer into and virtually through a display case and, of course, our hero lost his job.

Then the double amputee and his fear of marriage ... well, I cried through the whole film, particularly the wedding ceremony we thought would never happen.

During it, of course, hope springs eternal and Dana Andrews renews his commitment to new beginnings, goes over and kisses Theresa Wright ... right there!

In front of everybody!!

It's Memorial Day Weekend ... and all of life, at least from gazing at the television, looks like something that can only happen between or very precariously during wars.

However, one thing is for sure, life, at least for Americans, is about the pursuit of happiness. Before, during and after wars.

Tragically for some of the so-called best and brightest of us, however, happiness appears to be a “fundamental transformation of the United States” from a free market democracy to a Marxist, cradle to grave insurance policy that just necessitates a certain amount of tyranny.

These “bright idea” guys like Hitler, Stalin and Mao ... and their Pygmalion's, those King, Queen and *Fuhrer*-makers... and possibly, in the case of President Barack Obama, Empire builders.

New World Order Dynasties!

Some of us here in America believe quite firmly that a *Socialist Welfare State* will be the opposite of happiness.

That is, it will be hell.

We have plenty of evidence from the history of Communism to support that.

And what is socialism but watered-down Communism?

Judging from the European Union's socialist architecture and the yearly drop in its native population ... well ... we must remember that the “pursuit of happiness” was never a defining objective for Europeans.

From the exploding Islamic population in Europe, happiness might well become a decidedly rare, European commodity.

Happiness requires courage ... and courage these days increasingly comes only with a herd mentality.

The days of American individualism or European individualism and its obligatorily individual courage appear to be numbered.

However, films like *Forgotten Heroes*, if given a nudge and a push, will help bring America back.

The film is ostensibly about Vietnam ... but I take it on its own terms.

Forgotten Heroes is about America's ultimately Biblical victory over each and every evil on earth, from universal fear and prejudice to the ultimate monstrosity of world communism and any form of terrorism you'd like to try on her.

The center of gravity in the film is William Smith's mesmerizing performance as the defecting Soviet General.

With a face off of Mt. Rushmore, we listen to this Old Testament prophet the way we should have listened to Abraham Lincoln while he lived.

His examination of not only the plight he is in, but the one which the world is in is delivered in his wonderfully worn and beaten voice.

There are other Grade A performances: those of *The Cowboy* and *The Venice Beach God of Surfing* come to *my* mind.

Such classic American categories are throughout this clandestine adventure into the NVA and Viet Cong hideouts of Cambodia..

Yes, Jack Marino's version of a *Platoon* is the entire American Rainbow Family.

It is a guerilla tribute to the greatness of American guerillas.

You won't forget it, I assure you ...and, after the most disturbing moment begins to sift through your consciousness, you will begin to see the film as a measure of not only American courage but her divine irresistibility.

You won't regret having taken the time.

Forgotten Heroes is actually unforgettable.