# Professor Bruce Herschensohn on “An American Amnesia”

**Author :** Ellis Washington

**Date :** February 1, 2011

*MP3 audio dP20101223 Hr 3 THU.mp3 of the interview by Dennis Prager of Professor Bruce Herschensohn’s new book on the Vietnam War, “An American Amnesia”

Does being on the left mean never having to say that you are sorry?—If you are talking about the Vietnam War and who won it 35 years later, that very well may be the case.

Regarding the real truth of the Vietnam War after the fall of Saigon, Laos and Cambodia, Senator Fulbright, D-AK, who was also the chair of the Foreign Relations Committee summed up the sentiment of the 94th Congress, “I am no more distressed than if Arkansas had lost the football game to Texas.”

“That started the Southeast Asian genocide. You’re talking about one quarter of the Cambodian population, dead; about a million boat people from South Vietnam who had no other way to get out of the place. 500,000 of them are still under the South China Sea. And you don’t hear anyone who was a part of that Congress apologize, that they were wrong,” says Bruce Herschensohn.

Actor Jon Voigt and reconstructed 1960s radical David Horowitz are notable exceptions to that rule who have since renounced their anti-Vietnam War radicalism.

Bruce Herschensohn is a professor and a Senior Fellow of Public Policy at Pepperdine University. In 1992 he ran for Senate and came very close to defeating Barbara Boxer during the so-called, “Year of the Woman.” His latest book is titled, “An American Amnesia: How the U.S. Congress Forced the Surrenders of South Vietnam and Cambodia.” http://www.amazon.com/American-Amnesia-Congress-Surrenders-Cambodia/dp/0825306329

The thesis of the book combats a prevailing historical myth that America actually “lost” the Vietnam War. Herschensohn contends that America and the South Vietnamese actually won the Vietnam War. “On Jan. 23, 1973 President Nixon gave a speech that that day the U.S., S. Vietnam, North Vietnam and the Vietcong initialed the Paris Peace Accords. They would sign it four days later. What that meant is that we [America] had achieved, we had won everything that President’s Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon had pursued,” according to Herschensohn.

At that time the treaty was written as a “cease fire” but because of all the stipulations the treaty amounted to a communist surrender and defeat which the North Vietnamese [Vietcong] willingly signed with America and the South Vietnamese:

· It was a guarantee that North and South Vietnam would be reunited and have free and fair elections;

· That they would have the freedoms Americans enjoyed. In the Paris Accords what we did was plagiarized our First Amendment and added every blessed freedom that you could think of including freedom of residence, private property, private enterprise, about a dozen freedoms;

· America and the Vietcong thought (as evidence in their subsequent memoirs) that we had won the war;

· America wasn't naïve and knew that North Vietnam might try to renege on the Paris Peace Accords so they added a clause that if South Vietnam lost anything in the war America would replace it and we assumed the Soviets would do the same for North Vietnam; we would replace every bullet, tank and plane so if there was any aggression from North Vietnam, South Vietnam would remain in the same position strategically.

The Democrats in Congress saw this last treaty provision as their entry into the war; a pretext to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory and make America lose the war they had unmistakably won. Professor Herschensohn said, "It took two and a quarter years but the Congress did it. They wanted us to be defeated… The majority in Congress had an investment in our failure. They had been saying from the outset that we should never be in this thing, to get out of this thing, just leave it, nothing will happen. There isn't going to be a blood bath … just get out."

Herschensohn said, "After Nixon signed the Paris Peace Accords the American left—Democrats in Congress, anti-war protestors, university professors, and the major media all had an investment in America's failure which was to assure that America would be viewed as the loser of the Vietnam War."

Radio host Dennis Prager in his December 23rd interview with Professor Herschensohn queried, "When I'm speaking about the damage the left has done in history, in the last 150 years, this is one of the examples that nobody acknowledges. Would you say we had in effect a communist surrender in 1973?" Professor Herschensohn replied, "Yes, except that it [the Paris Peace Accords] wasn't written that way. It was written as a cease fire but with all those stipulations. They [the Vietcong] certainly regarded it as surrender and if you read some of the memoirs that they wrote; talk to some of the American POWs who had guards who confirmed to them they knew that they had lost."

Congress wasn't at all pleased that the Vietcong had lost the war. Herschensohn furthered, "The only ones in Washington, D.C. to celebrate the treaty were the Whitehouse and the Defense Department. America called Jan. 23, 1973 "VV-Day" (Victory in Vietnam Day), but Congress certainly did not and then there was a congressional election three months after President Nixon left office because of the Watergate scandal in April, 1975 where there was a landslide victory for the Democrats."

They took over; it was the 94$^{th}$ Congress and immediately they set out to do exactly this:

· No, we will not abide by the Paris Peace Accords;

· We will not resupply the South Vietnamese if they lose anything.

The result of this new Democrat appeasement policy towards the Vietcong according to Herschensohn is that America's solid defense of the South Vietnamese was tested by the Vietcong. It first started in one little town and then another little village.

Prager citing a famous quote of Kissinger said, "There is something more dangerous than being an enemy of America, its being a friend of America." Henry Kissinger, who was Nixon's Secretary of State and signed the Paris Peace Accords said, that he would have never signed that treaty had he known what Congress was going to do."

Prager then added cryptically that whether Kissinger signed the treaty or not wouldn't have stopped the Democratic Congress from making certain America posthumously lost the Vietnam War.

When Prager asked Herschensohn to explain how Kissinger's words apply to today's times, Herschensohn said, "I believe that we are going through an administration in which it is much more favorable for somebody to be an enemy of the United States than it is to be a friend of the United States. I remember too well when President Obama was asked if he believes as other presidents have that we are an exceptional country? And he said, Yes I do just as the British believe in British exceptionalism and the Greeks believe in Greek exceptionalism."

In other words the answer is, No. And very often if you are a friend of the United States you do not get the kind of support that an enemy of the United States will get.

To a caller's remark that he is ashamed of this country for allowing America to lose the Vietnam War after we won it at the signing of the Paris Peace Accords, Prager interjects, "The point is to be ashamed of the left, not America. The left controlled the media. The left controlled the narrative and because they controlled the narrative, they controlled the way people perceived what happened. He who controls media controls history … but not forever. Not where there's talk radio. Not where there's Fox News and not where there is a Wall Street Journal and not where there is a Bruce Herschensohn."

"That's the point and that's why we annoy them terribly and why they can't monopolize the narrative," Prager concluded.

Their answer when Prager brings up this issue to the left is, "What did you want to do, bomb Hanoi? We tried everything and we still didn't win… But how much more did you want to bomb? But they don't answer the question. We did win!"

Herschensohn's replied, "You know how we won the Vietnam War? By bombing Hanoi and Hai Phong, that's how we did it." Prager replied that "Ninety percent of the people on the left don't know this." Herschensohn further remarked, "That's what brought them to the table. At the time we were bombing the New York Times called the president "a madden tyrant." The

Washington Post said, “Americans questioned his sanity,” however [the bombings] brought the Vietcong to the Paris Peace Accords and they signed them with that guarantee that they would surrender.

Prager ended, “Why didn’t they question British Prime Minister Churchill’s sanity on bombing [Dresden] Germany?”

Prager and Herschensohn are both in agreement that America is the last best hope of mankind to which Herschensohn added “There is no question about it and if anything should happen to the U.S. I think that civilization as a whole would decline into centuries and centuries and centuries ago… We are the only nation in the world that has had the power and the will to spend our lives for the liberty of strangers.” Despite the fact that Churchill called America, the most generous nation in the world, “the left portrays American foreign policy as imperialism,” added Prager.

In regards to the START nuclear arms treaty President Obama plans on signing with Russia in early 2011, Herschensohn says, “I was totally opposed, because despite Obama’s contentions, the preamble to the treaty has nothing to do with any kind of defense system or anti-ballistic missiles. Of course it does, it calls for an interrelationship. But more important than that is this: We are not talking about the Soviet Union anymore. The Soviet Union is 15 different countries; Russia is the major of them. It doesn’t have jurisdiction over what we call most of Eastern Europe. Most of those countries are now NATO members,” said Herschensohn.

“What the devil are we doing signing a treaty with Russia? Meaning China can do whatever it wants. It’s not signing this thing. So can North Korea, so can Iran, so can the threats that we have now. I’m sure that China and President Hu Jintao is celebrating this treaty,” argued Herschensohn. “They would love to catch up with us and now they have a real opportunity. We are putting such a close on those numbers [of nuclear weapons] that we have and diminishing those numbers,” argued Herschensohn.

“And the immediate challenge is North Korea, Iran and any number of Islamic states who may be able to get those kinds of weapons.”

Herschensohn calls “America’s present wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are actually one war — A war against radical Islamic terrorism. There are theatres in this war just like there was the Pacific theatre and the European theatre in World War II, there are theatres in the current war. One of them would be the Asian theatre of Afghanistan and Pakistan, the other would be Iraq. It’s entirely possible that it’s going to be Yemen or it’s going to be Iran, but it is one war and it is the war against radical Islamic terrorism.”

Professor Herschensohn’s final thought was on the lame duck Congress: “I believe that there should be an amendment to the Constitution to prohibit a lame duck congress unless it is a national emergency because all that it is used for is to take the electorate’s opinion that they just expressed and go the other way as quickly and as completely as they possibly can.”

At the end of the interview Prager and Herschensohn postulated that America should follow the

British model for installing a new Prime Minister; that after the new election power should vest immediately to avoid political mischief from the outgoing party against the will of We the People.