

Being right means not having to say you're sorry

I was brought up to feel that if anything went wrong, it was probably my fault. It's taken me a lifetime to get over it. I've always blamed my mother, because she even apologizes for bad weather in Florida during our visits. It's gotten to be a family joke, and we hold her accountable for all weather patterns, good and bad.

But I've finally realized this isn't just a family problem, it's a national past time. We are the most apologetic, self-flagellating country in the world and recent events have caught us at it again. Let's take the most recent confession of former Senator Bob Kerrey.

As a 25-year-old, the man was injured terribly in the Viet Nam war and awarded a Bronze medal of honor for a military action where guns blazed from all directions in the dark jungle of that country. Apparently at the end of battle, all that were found in the village were women, children and old men - all dead. Because of this, Bob Kerrey is apologizing to this country and anyone else who will listen. Why?

It doesn't take an authority on wars to know several things: 1) in war zones civilians are always in the line of fire 2) in that war,



civilians were often armed and dangerous. 3) we should know by now that women, children and old men are as capable of shooting people as anyone else. Just listen to the news, they do it all the time. I think Senator Kerrey is defending himself because one of the men on the mission has accused him of executing the civilians after the battle. His response should not be to cry in

front of the nation like a virtual Jimmy Swaggart but to tell the truth without apology. As soon as he apologizes, people assume he has done something wrong.

As a Republican Senator and Vietnam war veteran said on a Sunday television talk show, if there are any apologies to be issued, they should come from the civilian and military men who committed us to and escalated that war in the first place.

Then we have the incident with the Chinese government, who actually expected this country to apologize for their pilot causing a mid-air collision which could have cost the lives of 24 Americans. When that Chinese pilot chose to buzz our American plane, mainly to show off, he took a serious risk, which was fatal. I really don't care how important an apology is to the Chinese, we shouldn't apologize for a wrong we didn't commit. The Chinese government has a ghastly record of squashing human rights and they apologize for nothing. The Chinese government thinks they can bully the world, and like a bully in the school or workplace, they shouldn't be allowed to do it.

Really infuriating is the Chinese government actually asking Galesburg Mayor Bob Sheehan to rescind a proclamation recognizing a small religious group in our community, which apparently stands for freedom, human rights, civility, kindness, all those things the Chinese government just hates. May we remind the Chinese government that we are a free country and will recognize whom we please, and frankly, if the Chinese government is opposed to this group, they must be doing something right. Congratulations to Mayor Bob for refusing to comply with this idiotic request and mentioning the Chinese' unacceptable record on human rights in the process.

Apologies are important if we've made a mistake or have been wrong with bad results. Otherwise, let's put a lid on public confessions and false apologies to the bullies of society and the world.

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