



Why the Senate Slept: The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution and the Beginning of America's Vietnam War

Ezra Y. Siff

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Siff provides the first accurate account of how the political processes in the U.S. Senate allowed the executive branch to launch a major war, with basically no accountability to Congress. He reveals the heretofore untold personal and public roles of key Senators as well as those of lesser stature whose actions and failures to act resulted in a bloody and costly conflict that divided a nation and scarred its politics and armed forces.

The ambition and significant weaknesses of key figures—LBJ, Robert McNamara, Senators Russell of Georgia, Fulbright of Arkansas, Nelson of Wisconsin, McGovern of South Dakota, Gruening of Alaska, and Church of Idaho—who, from the onset, fought to prevent or limit the Americanization of the Vietnam War are examined and judged. This is an important work for students of American politics, the war making powers of the president, and the Vietnam War.

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