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**Collection:** Blackwell, Morton: Files  
**Folder Title:** Veterans Administration:  
Administrator (1 of 3)  
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**PENDING REVIEW IN ACCORDANCE WITH E.O. 13233**  
**Ronald Reagan Library**

**Collection:** Blackwell, Morton C.: Files  
**OA/Box:** ~~0077~~ OA 9088  
**File Folder:** Veterans Administration: Administrator (1)

**Archivist:** kdb  
**FOIA ID:** F00-084/2, Fish  
**Date:** 3/15/07

*pt 5/2/08*

DOCUMENT NO. & TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
A. memo	Nick Longworth to Shannon Fairbanks re Acting VA Administrator, 1p	<del>5/27/81</del>	<i>open 5/21/08 dlb</i>

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

FYI copy to

Mary Ann Upton

also on FYI

copy to EHD

sent 10/12

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 8, 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR MORTON C. BLACKWELL

FROM: CAROLYN B. SUNDSETH

SUBJECT: Calls from Veterans Re Administrator

Our phones lit up like a Christmas tree this morning as numerous individuals called in, mostly connected with V. A. medicine (Like the Director of V. A. Medical Services), concerning Mr. Nimmo's resignation. They called in an obviously orchestrated effort to accomplish two things:

1. Have Nimmo leave immediately - no lame duck period and make it possible to have a new administrator before budget time next year.
2. Recommend Chuck Hagel for the job.

Also some veterans organizations, such as Military Order of Purple Heart, who did not want to specify whom should be appointed called to urge the early departure of the resigned Nimmo and a replacement before budget planning time.

As an example of the volume of calls, I received 15 in a 20 minute period. Most did not want to leave their names but wanted to go on record as making the recommendation.

*FRs from N. Conklin  
Cherylene Wingo  
etc.*

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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*From N. Conlin  
Cherylene Wingo  
etc.*

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

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For Immediate Release

November 3, 1981

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I am today signing H.R. 3499, the "Veterans' Health Care, Training, and Small Business Loan Act of 1981."

This bill extends a number of programs for Vietnam-era veterans, including eligibility of educationally disadvantaged veterans for special noncompetitive appointments to the Federal civil service and for vocational training and secondary school education. It also extends the Vietnam-era veterans' readjustment counseling program, with provision for shifting this program into regular Veterans' Administration medical facilities at the end of fiscal year 1984.

In addition, H.R. 3499 extends certain health care activities in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, other U.S. territories, and the Republic of the Philippines, and permits the Veterans' Administration to recover costs of providing certain non-service-connected health care.

This bill contains other major provisions on which I wish to comment.

The bill would grant eligibility for Veterans' Administration medical care to veterans who may have been exposed to Agent Orange and certain other toxic substances in Vietnam and also to veterans exposed to ionizing radiation from nuclear weapons testing or the U.S. occupation of Nagasaki and Hiroshima following World War II. Eligibility would be provided, without regard to financial need and on a priority basis.

Extension of medical services for exposure to Agent Orange and other substances in Vietnam must not prejudice the results of Federal studies we now have under way on this question.

I note, however, that the Congress has put a time limit of approximately three years on the new medical care eligibility, so that it can be reexamined after the initial results of the Agent Orange study are available. Moreover, I expect this provision to be implemented in a manner that will not add to budgetary costs of Veterans' Administration medical care and treatment.

Another section of H.R. 3499 would establish the number of hospital and nursing home beds in Veterans' Administration medical facilities at not more than 125,000 and not less than 100,000, and require the Veterans' Administration to operate and maintain not less than 90,000 such beds. Such a limitation must not restrict the ability of the Veterans' Administration to use an appropriate mix of health care services including ambulatory care to treat the maximum number of veterans.

This provision would also require that the President include in the budget transmitted to Congress for each fiscal year amounts for medical care and construction to enable the Veterans' Administration to operate and maintain the required

more

(OVER)

minimum number of hospital and nursing home beds. I interpret this language to mean what it says. This language does not, and in my view could not, require the President to request of Congress any specific amounts, for it is the President's constitutional duty to make recommendations to Congress of such measures as he judges necessary and expedient.

Finally, H.R. 3499 authorizes a new small business loan program in the Veterans' Administration for disabled and Vietnam-era veterans. Because this program might duplicate a similar program in the Small Business Administration and would involve the Veterans' Administration in an area in which it has no expertise, I intend to weigh carefully any efforts to fund this program.

Many of the provisions of H.R. 3499 are desirable and have been supported by the Administration. A number of them will be particularly helpful to Vietnam-era veterans. In view of my strong commitment to the welfare of America's veterans, particularly Vietnam-era veterans, I am approving this measure despite some of the concerns I have noted.

# # #

✓  
**JACK ANDERSON**

## VA Chief Target Of U.S. Probes Over Spending

The man who is tightening the screws on the nation's veterans evidently feels that budget cuts don't apply to him. Veterans Administration boss Robert Nimmo has been squandering the taxpayers' money on personal perquisites and creature comforts.

"We have to cut the fat where the fat is," Nimmo has told reporters. But evidence gathered by my associate Jack Mitchell suggests that a lot of the VA fat is located in the administrator's office.

The word has already leaked out that Nimmo is tight with veterans but generous to himself. In fact, both the General Accounting Office and the VA's inspector general are looking into allegations of impropriety—and possible illegality—in Nimmo's operation.

The investigators are checking, for example, on broadcast reports that Nimmo spent \$46,000 to redecorate his private office suite, apparently in defiance of President Reagan's direct order to all federal agencies against such refurbishing.

The economy-preaching Nimmo allegedly has spent official funds re-

modeling an elevator for the exclusive use of himself and his top aides. And GAO sleuths are looking into reports that Nimmo used a government car and chauffeur to travel to and from his suburban home, which not only flouted regulations but cost the taxpayers an estimated \$8,000 in overtime for the chauffeur.

Nimmo's luxurious tastes reportedly troubled his legal adviser, who warned Nimmo in a written directive that the perks he has arrogated to himself violate federal statutes.

Nimmo's travel habits should also be scrutinized. He has made frequent trips to his home state of California, often flying first class. On one occasion, he allegedly commandeered a military plane for his return trip to Washington.

His congressional liaison chief, Fielding Cochran, flew off with other Reagan officials to Rome in the middle of a bitter battle on Capitol Hill over the VA's \$24 billion budget request.

Nimmo might be forgiven some of his lordly ways if he were in fact bringing tight, no-nonsense management to the agency he heads. Unfortunately, this doesn't seem to be the case.

Of five top officials named to key administrative posts just months ago, two have quit and a third has been relieved of his original duties. Nimmo's first No. 2 man, Alan Clark, quickly departed because of friction with the boss, and White

House sources have confided that the current deputy, Chuck Hagel, has submitted a tentative resignation and wants to leave within 60 days.

A big part of the problem, according to insiders, is that Nimmo stubbornly refuses to let decisions be made at the staff level. Yet the VA boss, a wealthy former California legislator, seems more enthusiastic about his suntan and his golf game than about his official duties. He reportedly was playing golf on the afternoon in March when the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was dedicated a few blocks from his Washington office. Meanwhile, he rejected suggestions that VA employes be allowed to attend the ceremony on the grounds that it was conducted during business hours.

The resulting administrative chaos at the VA has caused Nimmo, a World War II veteran, to be denounced by virtually every veterans group, whose Washington representatives usually try to play down their differences with a VA chief.

Footnote: Nimmo declined to be interviewed. In fairness, it should be noted that the administration's cost-cutting efforts would inevitably generate hostility toward the agency head who must enforce them. But Nimmo's lackadaisical attitude toward his job was illustrated by his admission to Congress that he has never had a conversation with the president devoted exclusively to veterans' affairs.

PRESERVATION COPY

file V.A.



## Point of View

# The Muckrakers

By Gabriel Brinsky

What brings a man, financially independent, out of retirement to serve his government? A search for power...perhaps. A sense of dedication...possibly. Or maybe the sense of duty to respond to a call from his President.

Robert P. Nimmo, Administrator of Veterans Affairs, did not seek the position he holds. It sought him. Just as he did several times before as a soldier, he answered his country's call.

Whether Robert Nimmo would answer the call if it came today is questionable. In spite of being a capable and effective Administrator, he has come under severe barrages. Some criticism is warranted, much is not. His biggest problem has been his inexperience in knowing how the game is played in the nation's Capitol. A person in public life in Washington, DC does not honestly and frankly express himself. He speaks generally to express nothing, for to voice a truism could result in the vultures descending in droves.

And there is no denying that the Administrator has committed several *faux pas* which have antagonized the various service organizations. For this, his wrists have been slapped and they probably will be again in the future. Undoubtedly by now, the Administrator understands and accepts this.

But muckraking is something else. It has no place in our society. None should be exposed to it. And certainly a public servant of Mr. Nimmo's caliber should not be subjected to its abuse. Criticism of his public utterances is one thing. Reflecting on his integrity by slanting or concealing the facts is another.

Which brings us to the allegations concerning his remodeling of the executive offices and his use of a government vehicle.

During a past month or so, the Administrator was attacked on consecutive days on television for

his extravagances in refurbishing his executive offices and his use of a chauffeured car. This was followed by press attention at appropriate, calculated intervals, with articles expounding the theme of his extravagant abuses at the expense of the veterans.

*The opinions expressed are the sole views of the author who is also a columnist for the Stars and Stripes and the National Service and Legislative Director of AMVETS.*

What the original fuss was all about was that Nimmo's offices were remodeled at a cost of \$54 thousand. The figure is correct but the description is lacking. The inference is that it applied only to the Administrator's immediate office. In fact, the cost covered the entire executive area of the southwest wing of the tenth floor involving all of the staff offices. The expenditures for the Administrator's office alone was approximately \$18 thousand.

Even to the most naive, this cost to renovate the Administrator's office, the head of the second largest agency in personnel and the third largest in appropriations, was not only reasonable but extremely modest.

But there is more. The \$18 thousand would not have been spent if certain changes were not required because of the former occupant who was confined to a wheelchair. There were no carpets in certain offices and surrounding areas to facilitate the locomotion of the former Administrator. And because of his handicap, he had a special chair which he took with him.

There is no reason why the Administrator of Veterans Affairs should go without a desk or carpets on his floor. Nor is there any reason why he should be required to live with a VA motif wall covering which was damaged, faded,

and dirty. Or to accept wallpaper incompatible with the furniture.

Come on! We're talking about a prominent official in our government charged with running an agency with a budget of more than \$24 billions of dollars. Even a middle level functionary is entitled to some perks such as a carpeted floor and a desk. Oh yes, and even a desk chair.

As for the shower that was installed, some funds were expended in providing different accesses to the two half baths in the executive suite. The shower and stall was standard prefabricated, a non-luxurious, unit. Surely, it is not unreasonable for the Administrator, when he needs to leave directly from his office to attend an official function to refresh himself and to avoid smelling like yesterday's clothes. If he is expected to work and to directly repair from his place of work, the least we can do is place a shower at this disposal.

Of course, a big deal was made over the former Administrator's furniture which Nimmo sent to his daughter in the Department of Commerce. Nothing was mentioned of the fact that the former Administrator's furniture was transferred to the Department of Commerce in exchange for executive furniture which they in turn would provide to the Veterans Administration. Since the GSA furnishes all furniture, who got what is really immaterial. It all belongs to the government and no costs were involved.

As for the allegations relating to the Administrator's use of a government vehicle for transportation from home to office, the Veterans Administration's Appropriation Acts do prohibit, since 1978, such use of transportation. Why the Administrator of Veterans Affairs should be singled out and denied such transportation is not clear.

We may wonder how an Ad-

file - V.A.

Administrator with an erratic schedule imposed by uncertain demands can be denied the flexibility of repairing to his residence and reacting to the demands of his responsibilities. Admittedly, remedial legislation is needed.

But apart from all this, it is questionable whether the stories released criticizing the Administrator would have achieved the same adverse impact had certain relevant information been disclosed.

Consider, for example, the fact that it was the Administrator who requested the Inspector General to look into any improprieties. It was the Administrator who requested that his office be furnished, not with new furniture available within the Agency.

It was the Administrator who voluntarily gave up an airy, cheerful reception room in order that the space could be utilized for needed office space. The Deputy Administrator and his secretary are now occupying that space.

Consider, too, that the only items of furniture bought for the Administrator were the high back chair and a coffee table. Or con-

sider that the renovation which occurred by the construction of walls was for the purpose of creating two offices where one existed before. This resulted in the addition of five valuable space-saver offices. Maximum utilization of space has never been a valid subject for criticism.

And, of course, the stories made no mention of the cost involved by prior Administrators which would make the \$54 thousand expenditure a new low in the poverty level. Nothing was said that the Inspector General concluded his report with the finding that "the renovated space is compatible with the office appointment which has historically and customarily been provided to Agency officials and other top Federal executives."

I believe that Robert P. Nimmo is an effective Administrator and many are grateful for the services which he is rendering to veterans. Sure, he has made mistakes and he is a natural object for criticism. But if it is necessary to condemn him by reason of his acts, let us be fair. There should be some superficial, shallow standards of ethics even among the muckrakers. ★

RESUME

Robert P. Nimmo  
7375 Bella Vista  
Atascadero, CA 93422

805 466-1878 (Residence)  
805 466-0203 (Business)

EXPERIENCE:

- 1976 - 1980 Member of California State Senate. Served on Senate Rules, Finance, Agriculture, and Revenue and Taxation Committees.
- 1973 - 1976 Member of California State Assembly for two terms prior to election to State Assembly.
- 1970 - 1973 Appointed by Governor Reagan to serve as United States Property and Fiscal Officer for the State of California. Duties (as a Colonel on active duty) involved receiving and accounting for all federal property and federal funds furnished the State of California for support of the Army and Air National Guard.
- 1955 - 1970 Employed by California State Military Department in various military assignments.
- 1952 - 1955 Engaged in livestock raising and grain farming in Terrebonne, Oregon.
- 1950 - 1952 Served as Company Commander, 161st Ordnance Company. First National Guard unit called to federal active duty in Korean Conflict. Served as Division Ordnance Supply Officer, 7th Infantry Division, Korea, winter of 1951 - 1952.
- 1947 - 1950 Employed by California Military Department in various military assignments.
- 1943 - 1946 Pilot, United States Army Air Corps. Served with 8th United States Air Force in England as B-24 bomber pilot in action against Germany prior to, during, and after the Invasion of Europe June 6, 1944.

EDUCATION:

Graduated from Newport Harbor High School, Newport Beach, California, 1940.

Attended California Polytechnic College, San Luis Obispo, California, 1941 - 1943, Animal Husbandry major. Entered Army Air Corps prior to graduation.

Graduate of United States Army Command and General Staff College, 1964.

Graduate of Army Supply Management School, Fort Lee, Virginia, 1962.

Designated "Logistician" by United States Army Logistics Management Center, Fort Lee, Virginia, 1970.

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES:

Member and Treasurer of San Luis Obispo County Republican Central Committee, 1968 - 1972.

Member of State Republican Central Committee, 1972 - 1980.

Honorary Chairman of Reagan for President Committee, San Luis Obispo County, 1980.

Reagan delegate to Republican National Convention, 1980.

PERSONAL NOTES:

Born - Balboa, California, February 5, 1922.

Married - Patricia Stone on August 6, 1950. Three daughters, Mary, Kathleen, Augusta.

Religion - Catholic

# SENATOR ROBERT P. NIMMO

## 17th Senate District



### BIOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

A native Californian whose grandparents came to California by covered wagon, Bob Nimmo is a reflection of the pioneer spirit that built the West.

Having grown up during the Great Depression of the '30's, Bob Nimmo rose from poverty to success by determination, hard work and by his account, luck. A rancher and businessman for much of his life, Bob has also been a long-time citizen-soldier. He served three tours of duty with the United States Army including combat duty during World War II and Korea. His last tour of duty was as United States Property and Fiscal Officer for California from which he retired in 1972 as a Colonel.

In 1949, while competing in a rodeo in Guadalupe, California, Bob met, and later married, Pat Stone, a fourth generation Californian and native of Salinas. Besides being the mother of their three grown daughters, Pat is also president and manager of her own real estate brokerage and investment corporation in their home community of Atascadero.

Continuing to heed the call to public service Bob was elected to the State Assembly in 1972 and overwhelmingly re-elected in 1974.

In 1976 with the retirement of Senator Don Grunsky, Bob was encouraged by friends and colleagues to seek election to the State Senate. In a hard fought campaign, Bob overcame a significant registration disadvantage and won a seat in the upper house. By 1979, Bob was appointed to the powerful Senate Rules Committee as well as serving on the Senate Finance Committee. Agriculture, water, land use, coastal issues and rural county needs continue to dominate Senator Bob Nimmo's legislative work.

Bob Nimmo's political philosophy is characterized by the following observation made in his 1976 senatorial campaign . . . "There is no virtue in criticizing politicians from the sidelines. Those of us who perceive that government is embarked upon the wrong course are obligated to put it aright by the contribution of such time, talent and energy as we may possess. For my children's sake, as well as for my own, I cannot stand idly by while an expanding government bureaucracy attacks the free market system, the rights of property, and the individual liberty of every citizen."

File VA

*Mark*

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

May 29, 1981

The President today announced his intention to nominate Allen B. Clark, Jr. to be Deputy Administrator of Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. Clark served in the United States Army Green Berets in Vietnam, and retired as a Captain due to wounds received in combat action. His military service awards include the Silver Star for Gallantry in Action, the Bronze Star, the Air Medal, the Purple Heart, 2 battle stars for Vietnam service, the Combat Infantryman's Badge and Airborne Wings.

He served as President of the West Point Society of North Texas in 1973, as President of the Young Executives Group of the Dallas Council on World Affairs in 1977, as Chairman of the Horizons Committee of the Dallas American Revolution Bicentennial Committee in 1976 and as Chairman of the Special Gifts Division of the Dallas American Heart Association Fund Drive in 1978.

Mr. Clark attended Gonzaga Jesuit High School in Washington, D.C. and is a graduate of Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the United States Military Academy (West Point) in 1963, where he was in the top 10% of his class and served as a Cadet platoon leader. He earned a Master of Business Administration from the Southern Methodist University.

Mr. Clark was born on June 20, 1942 in McAllen, Texas. He is married to the former Jacklyn Adell McAdams of Dallas, Texas and they have two daughters.

###

TO: Mrs. Shannon Fairbanks  
Senior Policy Adviser  
Office of Policy Development

DATE: May 27, 1981

FROM: Nick Longworth <sup>NL</sup>  
Veterans Administration

SUBJECT: Acting Administrator  
of Veterans Affairs

ISSUE: Information has been received that Mr. Rufus Wilson, Acting Administrator, will be departing the Agency effective June 1, 1981. It is our understanding that he has accepted the position of Minority Counsel to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. His departure will leave the Veterans Administration without an Acting Administrator.

BACKGROUND: Title 38 U.S.C. §210 provides that in the event of a vacancy in the office of Administrator, the Deputy Administrator shall be Acting Administrator unless the President designates another officer of the Government. On February 26, 1981, the President named Rufus Wilson, who has held the office of Deputy Administrator for the past four years, as Acting Administrator. It is the opinion of the VA's General Counsel that in the event of vacancies in both the office of Administrator and Deputy Administrator that the Associate Deputy Administrator could act as Administrator. This opinion is based upon instructions contained in VA Organizational Manual M-00-1. However, the post of Associate Deputy Administrator is currently vacant. Thus, upon Mr. Wilson's departure the three top positions in the Veterans Administration will be vacant. Neither statute nor regulation provides for line of succession beyond these three positions. If Acting Administrator Wilson resigns, as expected, the law is clear in that the President must appoint an officer of the Government as Acting Administrator. In a conversation with Mr. Robert Nimmo, Administrator-Designate, on May 22, 1981, he concurred in the recommendation that the President appoint Dr. Donald Custis, the VA's Chief Medical Director, as Acting Administrator.

RECOMMENDATION: That Dr. Donald Custis be appointed Acting Administrator upon the resignation of Mr. Rufus Wilson.

NICK LONGWORTH

copies to: Mr. Franklyn C. Nofziger  
Mr. E. Pendleton James  
Mr. Morton Blackwell



NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

# AMERICAN LOGISTICS ASSOCIATION

Formerly The Quartermaster Association (1920-1961) • Formerly Defense Supply Association (1961-1972)

5205 Leesburg Pike / Suite 1213 / Falls Church, Virginia 22041 / (703) 998-5400

CABLE ADDRESS: AMLOGISTIC

William Lazarus  
Executive Vice President

July 17, 1981

Mr. Robert P. Nimmo  
Administrator of Veteran Affairs  
Veterans Administration  
810 Vermont Avenue  
Washington, D. C. 20420

Dear Mr. Nimmo:

Congratulations on your appointment as Administrator of Veterans Affairs. Your professionalism and commitment made you the only real choice for this most important responsibility and I look forward to a meaningful relationship. I want to pledge the resources of my office on your behalf, and ask you to feel free to call on me at any time.

The members of the American Logistics Association -- manufacturers, manufacturers representatives, and distributors -- serve the military patron by providing the military resale marketplace with the best possible goods at the most reasonable price, to which I am sure your veterans' constituency can at least, as they shop in the military commissaries and exchanges.

I hope we can get together soon. Again, congratulations.

Sincerely,

William Lazarus  
Executive Vice President

WL/amh

cc: Mr. Morton Blackwell



REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENTS

V. A  
file

To: Officer-in-charge  
Appointments Center  
Room 060, OEOB

Please admit the following appointments on May 18, 19 81

for Morton C. Blackwell of Public Liaison:  
(NAME OF PERSON TO BE VISITED) (AGENCY)

- NIMMO, Robert P.
- AYRES, William H.
- MEADOWS, Oliver
- VANDER CLUTE, Howard, Jr.
- HAMILTON, Frank I.
- KORALEWSKI, Joseph R.
- THORSNESS, Leo K.
- LONGWORTH, Edgar L. "Nick"
- DONOHUE, Harry J.

MEETING LOCATION

Building OEOB

Requested by SHORTLEY

Room No. 132

Room No. 134 Telephone 2657

Time of Meeting 9:30

Date of request May 14, 1981

Additions and/or changes made by telephone should be limited to three (3) names or less.

APPOINTMENTS CENTER: SIG/OEOB - 395-6046 or WHITE HOUSE - 456-6742

REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENTS

V.A  
file

To: Officer-in-charge  
Appointments Center  
Room 060, OEOB

Please admit the following appointments on May 14, 19 81

for Morton C. Blackwell of Public Liaison:  
(NAME OF PERSON TO BE VISITED) (AGENCY)

- NIMMO, Robert P.
- LONGWORTH, Edgar L. "Nick"
- BURKHART, Elizabeth
- DONOHUE, Harry J.
- DRAPER, Karen F.
- BROWN, Terrance
- RED, Arthur G.
- JACKSON, Arthur J. Jr.
- COCHRAN, Otis Fielding, Jr.
- BAZATA, Dougals
- COLE, David
- STANDLEE, Joan
- SULLIVAN, Francis
- BROWN, Diane
- DEMEO, Lawrence J.
- GILLESPIE, Richard
- TEZZA, Elizabeth
- SELB, Betty
- WADLINGTON, Ann.
- SATO, Frank S.

MEETING LOCATION

Building OEOB

Requested by SHORTLEY

Room No. 132

Room No. 134 Telephone 2657

Time of Meeting 1:30

Date of request May 14, 1981

Additions and/or changes made by telephone should be limited to three (3) names or less.

APPOINTMENTS CENTER: SIG/OEOB - 395-6046 or WHITE HOUSE - 456-6742



Veterans Administration

### REFERENCE SLIP

TO (Name or title-Mail routing symbol)	INITIALS-DATE
1. Ms. Maisel Shortley	
2. Office of Public Liaison	
3.	
4.	
5.	

REASON FOR REFERENCE

- |                                       |   |   |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> AS REQUESTED | <input type="checkbox"/> FOR YOUR FILES   | <input type="checkbox"/> NOTE AND RETURN  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> COMMENTS     | <input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION      | <input type="checkbox"/> PER CONVERSATION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CONCURRENCE  | <input type="checkbox"/> NECESSARY ACTION | <input type="checkbox"/> SIGNATURE        |

REMARKS

Attached are lists of individuals attending meetings with Mr. Robert P. Nimmo, VA's Administrator-Designate.

Thank you for arranging for our use of Room 132.

FROM <i>Nick</i> Nick Longworth Veterans Administration	DATE 5/12/81 TEL. EXT. 2267
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VA FORM 3230  
MAY 1980

EXISTING STOCKS OF VA FORM 3230,  
AUG 1976, WILL BE USED.

MEETING OF VETERANS ADMINISTRATION ADMINISTRATOR-DESIGNATE,  
MR. ROBERT P. NIMMO, WITH VA'S REAGAN-BUSH APPOINTEES

THURSDAY, MAY 14, 1981  
1:30 - 2 p.m.  
Room 132 OEOB

ATTENDEES

Mr. Robert P. Nimmo, Administrator-Designate

Mr. Edgar L. "Nick" Longworth  
Ms. Elizabeth Burkhart  
Mr. Harry J. Donohue  
Mrs. Karen F. Draper  
Mr. Terrance J. Brown  
Mr. Arthur G. Red  
Mr. Arthur J. Jackson, Jr.  
Mr. Otis Fielding Cochran, Jr.  
Mr. Douglas D. Bazata  
Mr. David A. Cole  
Mrs. Joan Standlee  
Mr. Francis P. Sullivan  
Ms. Diane P. Brown  
Mr. Lawrence J. DeMeo, Jr.  
Mr. Richard L. Gillespie  
Ms. Elizabeth Tezza  
Ms. Betty J. Selb  
Mrs. Ann Wadlington

MEETING OF VETERANS ADMINISTRATION ADMINISTRATOR-DESIGNATE,

MR. ROBERT P. NIMMO, WITH VA'S REAGAN-BUSH APPOINTEES

THURSDAY, MAY 14, 1981

1:30 - 2 p.m.

Room 132 OEOB

ATTENDEES

Mr. Robert P. Nimmo, Administrator-Designate

Mr. Edgar L. "Nick" Longworth  
Ms. Elizabeth Burkhart  
Mr. Harry J. Donohue  
Mrs. Karen F. Draper  
Mr. Terrance J. Brown  
Mr. Arthur G. Red  
Mr. Arthur J. Jackson, Jr.  
Mr. Otis Fielding Cochran, Jr.  
Mr. Douglas D. Bazata  
Mr. David A. Cole  
Mrs. Joan Standlee  
Mr. Francis P. Sullivan  
Ms. Diane P. Brown  
Mr. Lawrence J. DeMeo, Jr.  
Mr. Richard L. Gillespie  
Ms. Elizabeth Tezza  
Ms. Betty J. Selb  
Mrs. Ann Wadlington

MEETING OF VETERANS ADMINISTRATION ADMINISTRATOR-DESIGNATE,  
MR. ROBERT P. NIMMO, WITH VA TRANSITION TEAM LEADER AND  
KITCHEN CABINET

MONDAY, MAY 18, 1981

9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Room 132 OEOB

ATTENDEES

- Mr. Robert P. Nimmo, Administrator-Designate
- Mr. Morton Blackwell, Special Assistant to the President for  
Public Liaison
- Mr. William H. Ayres, VA Transition Team Leader
- Mr. Oliver E. Meadows, Past National Commander,  
Disabled American Veterans
- Mr. Howard E. Vander Clute, Jr., Past National Commander  
Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Mr. Frank I. Hamilton, Past National Commander,  
American Legion
- Mr. Joseph R. Koralewski, Past National Commander,  
AMVETS
- Mr. Leo K. Thorsness, Member, Congressional Medal of  
Honor Society
- Mr. Edgar L. "Nick" Longworth  
Special Assistant, Veterans Administration
- Mr. Harry J. Donohue  
Confidential Assistant, Veterans Administration

MEETING OF VETERANS ADMINISTRATION ADMINISTRATOR-DESIGNATE,  
MR. ROBERT P. NIMMO, WITH VA TRANSITION TEAM LEADER AND  
KITCHEN CABINET

MONDAY, MAY 18, 1981

9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Room 132 OEOB

ATTENDEES

- Mr. Robert P. Nimmo, Administrator-Designate
- Mr. Morton Blackwell, Special Assistant to the President for  
Public Liaison
- Mr. William H. Ayres, VA Transition Team Leader
- Mr. Oliver E. Meadows, Past National Commander,  
Disabled American Veterans
- Mr. Howard E. Vander Clute, Jr., Past National Commander  
Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Mr. Frank I. Hamilton, Past National Commander,  
American Legion
- Mr. Joseph R. Koralewski, Past National Commander,  
AMVETS
- Mr. Leo K. Thorsness, Member, Congressional Medal of  
Honor Society
- Mr. Edgar L. "Nick" Longworth  
Special Assistant, Veterans Administration
- Mr. Harry J. Donohue  
Confidential Assistant, Veterans Administration



OCTOBER 15 1981



Honorable Morton C. Blackwell  
Special Assistant to the  
President for Public Liaison  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Blackwell:

In my letter of September 8th, I informed you of our intention to convene a Joint Interagency Conference to discuss current concerns of veterans of all eras and age groups. This conference was suggested as one approach to improving communication between government agencies charged with carrying out programs for veterans, and the various organizations which represent a significant segment of the veteran population.

To obtain some guidance as to the topics that should be considered on our agenda, we requested recommendations from the veterans organizations who would be participating. As of today, many of these organizations have not submitted their suggested agenda items for the conference. It is important that we explore all suggested areas of concern so that we can adequately address all of them. I believe everyone agrees that a number of these issues are complex and need specific attention.

While I am committed to improving communications between this agency and all of our nation's veterans, I want to be sure that whatever we do in this regard will be meaningful, and supportive of that commitment. As a result, I have decided that we need additional preparation before we proceed with a conference or workshop such as had originally been conceived. I have, therefore, asked the Deputy Administrator Designate, Charles Hagel, a combat veteran of the Vietnam War, to provide me with recommendations with respect to the best format for addressing the many issues that are of continuing concern to veterans, particularly those who served in the Vietnam era. Mr. Hagel is actively exploring a variety of alternatives with the VA staff at the present time.

While we will not be having the conference as originally planned, please be assured that we will be seeking your guidance and maintaining close communications with you on a continuing basis in the future. We fully intend to honor the commitment we have made to support active and thoughtful communications between veterans, the various veterans organizations and those government agencies charged with administering veterans programs. We will, therefore, be in touch with you at a later date in connection with this matter.



Page 2.

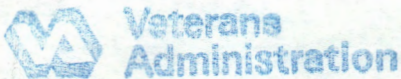
Honorable Morton C. Blackwell

If you have any specific questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact Mr. Larry De Meo of my staff. He can be reached by telephone at (202) 389-2633/2447.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robert P. Nimmo". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

ROBERT P. NIMMO  
Administrator



OCTOBER 15 1981

Honorable Morton C. Blackwell  
Special Assistant to the  
President for Public Liaison  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

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Sincerely,

ROBERT P. NIMMO  
Administrator

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

*Cancelled  
See Memo letter*

*call lawyer 1 hr.  
where: HHS*

*accept for me MB*

September 1, 1981

TO: MORTON

From; Kathy

Larry De Meo from Veterans Administration

JOINT INTER-AGENCY CONFERENCE FOR VETERANS -

came out of the commitment by Dr. Custis in the letter to the Vietnam Veterans at WAdsworth - to have a high level meeting.

~~WILL BE HELD ON OCTOBER 9th - 9AM - 5 PM~~

*Oct 30*

*at HHS*

The Veterans Administration will chair it.

It will be co-sponsored by federal agencies -

Defense, HHS, and ACTION - have already agreed.

Labor, Education, H.U.D. , and S.B.A - they are waiting for confirmation.

We have been invited. Also, Mrs. Fairbanks from OPD, and the Senate and House Committees on Veterans.

He is sending over the list of Veterans organizations they are inviting.

He will be back to us regarding further details.

*Talked with Larry 9/30 - he will be sending a letter with all the details & change of schedule -*

**REFERENCE SLIP**

TO (Name or title-Mail routing symbol)	INITIALS-DATE
1. Kathy	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

REASON FOR REFERENCE

- |                                       |   |  |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> AS REQUESTED | <input type="checkbox"/> FOR YOUR FILES   | <input type="checkbox"/> NOTE AND RETURN             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> COMMENTS     | <input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PER CONVERSATION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CONCURRENCE  | <input type="checkbox"/> NECESSARY ACTION | <input type="checkbox"/> SIGNATURE                   |

REMARKS

Here's the list of Veterans Organizations for the conference.

Also, I've enclosed a copy of our Service Directory with the latest changes (as of 24 August).

Thanks.

*Morton -  
Should we add  
any groups? -*

FROM

*LDM*  
Larry De Meo

DATE

1 Sept 81

TEL. EXT.

380-2447

List of Invitees

American Legion  
Veterans of Foreign Wars  
AMVETS  
Disabled American Veterans  
Vietnam Veterans of America  
Veterans Leadership Conference  
National Black Veterans Organization  
American GI Forum of the US  
Blinded Veterans Association  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
Military Order of the Purple Heart of the USA  
Veterans of World War I of the USA  
Center for Veterans Rights  
National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia  
American Ex-Prisoners of War  
Non Commissioned Officers Association  
American Red Cross  
Catholic War Veterans  
Jewish War Veterans  
Marine Corps League  
National Association of Uniformed Services  
Retired Officers Association



**Veterans  
Administration**

SEPTEMBER 8 - 1981



Mr. Morton C. Blackwell  
Special Assistant to the  
President for Public Liaison  
The White House Office  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Blackwell:

It is my intention to convene a Joint Interagency Conference on Current Veterans Concerns in the near future. This conference will be chaired by the VA and will be co-sponsored by other Federal agencies of the Executive Branch whose responsibilities include administering services to veterans.

At this conference, representatives of a number of veterans organizations will be invited to attend. The focus of the conference discussion will center on issues of immediate concern to veterans of all war eras and age groups, ranging from veterans of World War I to Post Vietnam Era veterans.

Representatives from both the Senate and House of Representatives Committees on Veterans Affairs will also be invited to attend the conference.

I am writing you now to formally invite you to have a representative from your office attend this conference. At the present time, it is scheduled for October 9th from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. Further details will be forwarded to you as needed.

Please forward the name of your office representative to my office, Attn: Larry De Meo (00A3).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert P. Nimmo".

ROBERT P. NIMMO  
Administrator



SEPTEMBER 8 - 1961

Mr. Merton C. Blackwell  
Special Assistant to the  
President for Public Liaison  
The White House Office  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

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Sincerely,

ROBERT P. NIMMO  
Administrator



MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

1 December 1981

TO: MARTIN ANDERSON  
ED MEESE  
THOMAS TURNAGE

FROM: JOHN McCLAUGHRY *Ma*

RE: VETERANS GROUPS' VIEWS ON MILITARY MANPOWER ISSUES

Today I met with representatives of the leading veterans and patriotic groups (list attached) to discuss military manpower issues. Here are the most important points raised by them for your consideration:

1. All groups strongly support continuation of draft registration. Reasons include:

- a) It is essential if conscription is to be resumed, and the coming "baby bust", increased manpower requirements, and reduction of unemployment through success of the President's economic program argue strongly for resumption of the draft itself.
- b) Terminating registration would be a powerful negative signal to our NATO allies, all of whom have conscription except Canada and the UK. It would suggest that European thrust by USSR would be met not with conventional forces but with nuclear weapons.
- c) Post-mobilization registration would pose equity problems: those who registered promptly would be the first drafted, while those who avoided registration would have better chances, particularly in short conflict.

2. Registration cannot be allowed to continue as at present. The President's aversion to registration, poor publicity, and inaction against non-registrants is making registration a joke. If President does not terminate registration, then he must launch strong visibility compliance campaign to make registration meaningful. All organizations pledged full support for pro-registration campaign as soon as President decides to retain it.

3. Other issues raised were:

- a) Vulnerability of Coast Guard to budget cuts in face of expanded responsibilities (Haiti) and deteriorating ships
- b) Graduation of experienced combat arms people into specialties
- c) House Appropriations cutting military perks - need Adm support
- d) Army rejects drawing employment security payments - but not those honorably discharged
- e) IRR very weak; can't be fixed by recalling veterans

Since these issues were raised by strongly pro-Administration organizations, they deserve the most serious consideration.

VETERANS AD HOC COMMITTEE MEETING

December 1, 1981

The American Legion	G. Michael Schlee
Association of the US Army	Francis Conaty
Fleet Reserve Association	James Clark
Marine Corps League	Cy Kammeirer
Marine Corps Reserve Officers Association	Col. Robert L. Talbert
National Association of Uniformed Services	John P. Sheffey
National Guard Association	Bruce Jacobs
Naval Enlisted Reserve Association	George S. Lange
Naval Reserve Association	Radm. James E. Forrest
Navy League of US	Vincent C. Thomas
Non-Commissioned Officers Association	C. A. McKinney
Reserve Officers Association	Maj. Gen. J. Milnor Roberts
The Retired Officers Association	Maurice L. Lien George Henrikus
Veterans of Foreign Wars	Cooper T. Holt Phelps Jones

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Morton,

This is very interesting. Why was Dennis Rhoades writing memos as head of the White House Veterans Coordinating Committee on Jan. 30, 1981 and/or Feb. 10, 1981. I think we were sworn in on Jan. 20, 1981.

Dennis Rhoades is presently the Veterans Employment Specialist in the office of Employment Training Assistance at the Department of Labor. He is apparently not only a Carter holdover, but he has been hired by the Reagan Administration.

M.....



Veterans  
Administration

Information Services

Washington, D.C. 20420

(202) 389-2741

*Briefing July 17*

*File*

# News Release

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The popular Vet Center counseling service for Vietnam Era veterans will be expanded by 50 percent, Veterans Administration chief Robert P. Nimmo announced today.

Nimmo, who took the oath of office July 15 as Administrator of Veterans Affairs, said 42 new counseling facilities will be added to the program under terms of the Reagan Bipartisan Budget Resolution.

The 42 new facilities will bring to 133 the number of "storefront" counseling facilities available to Vietnam Era veterans who may be suffering readjustment problems following military service during the Vietnam War.

As he had during his confirmation hearings before the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee July 9, Nimmo stressed the fact that "while the vast majority of our Vietnam veterans have successfully returned to our working society, a substantial number still suffer various degrees of readjustment difficulty."

-more-

It is those veterans, he said, "whom we will continue to reach out to through this expanded Vet Center program."

Nimmo said the centers typically have staffs of three to five persons who operate on an informal, person-to-person basis with Vietnam Era veterans experiencing emotional and other readjustment problems.

"We hope to have all of the new centers in operation within three to four months," Nimmo said. Some are almost ready to begin operations and others will be opened as suitable space can be arranged and personnel recruited.

Since the Vet Center program began operation early in 1980, approximately 72,000 Vietnam Era veterans have been counseled. Nimmo said VA officials believe the new centers will be much more efficient than the original ones because contacting and counseling efficiency have been improved.

The expectation, he said, is that the new center teams will be able to provide assistance to approximately 12,000 Vietnam Era veterans in their first year of operation.

The Vet Center program has a budget of \$29,580,000 for fiscal year 1982.

New facilities to be opened in the Northeast are: Nassau/Suffolk County, Albany, and Westchester County, N.Y.; Springfield, Mass.; Windsor, Vt.; Bangor, Me.; Trenton, N.J.; Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Harrisburg, Pa.

In the Southeast will be: Orlando, and Tampa, Fla.; Charlotte, N.C.; Greenville, S.C.; Atlanta, Ga.; Mobile, Ala.; Knoxville, Tenn.; Lexington, Ky.; Richmond, Va.; and Morgantown, W. Va.

New Vet Centers in the Central states will be located at Chicago Heights, and Peoria, Ill.; Evansville, Ind.; Sioux City, Ia.; Tulsa, Okla.; Lincoln, Neb.; Grand Rapids, Mich.; Minot, N.D.; Rapid City, S.D.; and Madison, Wisc.

In the West will be: Contra Costa County, Fresno, and Riverside, Calif.; Sioux City, Ia.; Tulsa, Okla.; Lincoln, Neb.; Eugene, Ore.; Spokane, Wash.; Fort Worth and San Antonio, Tex.; Colorado Springs, Colo.; and Window Rock, N.M.

These are in addition to facilities in Reno, Nev., and Tucson, Ariz., which opened recently.

# # #

July 16, 1981

**ROUTING AND TRANSMITTAL SLIP**

Date 6/3/81

TO: (Name, office symbol, room number, building, Agency/Post)	Initials	Date
1. MORTON BALCKWELL		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

Action	File	Note and Return
Approval	For Clearance	Per Conversation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> As Requested	For Correction	Prepare Reply
Circulate	For Your Information	See Me
Comment	Investigate	Signature
Coordination	Justify	

REMARKS

DO NOT use this form as a RECORD of approvals, concurrences, disposals, clearances, and similar actions

FROM: (Name, org. symbol, Agency/Post)  ALBERT ANGRISANI	Room No.—Bldg.
	Phone No.

5041-102

OPTIONAL FORM 41 (Rev. 7-76)

☆ U. S. GPO: 1978-0-261-647/3354

Prescribed by GSA  
FPMR (41 CFR) 101-11.206

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

May 11, 1981

TO: Jim Baker

FROM: Elizabeth Dole

Nick Longworth, our man at the V.A. has asked for our help in obtaining a two room office suite in the OEOB for Mr. Robert Nimmo, the designated Administrator for the Veterans Administration.

Given the size of this Agency and the retention of a Carter appointee as Acting Administrator, it would be smart for Mr. Nimmo to have office space in the OEOB so that he would not be inundated by "helpful bureaucrats" before he has an opportunity to get himself established.

Mr. Nimmo will need this office space to work from during his confirmation process. This same courtesy has been extended to Jerry Carmen until his final confirmation as head of GSA. I suggest we do likewise for Mr. Nimmo. He could use this office starting on May 13.

cc: Edwin Meece



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

DATE: 5/12

TO: Morton

FROM: Drana

For your info action

Per our conversation \_\_\_\_\_

Other:

Red picked up 2 things he thought should be changed in this. One typo + "our man" too colloquial.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

File  
V.A.

May 11, 1981

TO: Jim Baker  
FROM: Elizabeth Dole

*current by our highest pro-  
Reagan appointee*

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cc: Edwin Meese

# Robert Nimmo picked to head up VA

President Reagan has announced his intention to nominate Robert P. Nimmo, former California legislator and State official, as head of the Veterans Administration (VA).

With the title, Administrator of Veterans Affairs, Nimmo will head the Federal government's largest independent agency. VA has an annual budget of nearly \$24 billion and more than 216,000 employees, making it larger than most departments in the President's Cabinet.

The appointee has been a rancher and businessman for much of his life, and he has served in both the California State Senate and the State Assembly.

## Military service

Following his World War II service as a bomber pilot, Nimmo was employed by the California State Military Department until he returned to active duty with the Army during the Korean conflict. He served with the 7th Infantry in Korea during the winter of 1951-52.

Since 1976 Mr. Nimmo has served as a member of the California State Senate. He was a member of the California State Assembly in 1973-76. Mr. Nimmo served on the senate rules, finance, agriculture, and revenue and taxation committees. In 1970-73 he was appointed by Governor Ronald Reagan to serve as U.S. Property and Fiscal Officer for the state of California, with responsibility for receipt and accounting for all Federal property and Federal funds furnished the state of California for support of the Army and Air National Guard.

## Awaiting confirmation

Nimmo, who must receive Senate confirmation, will be the eleventh Administrator of Veterans Af-

fairs since VA was established by Presidential Executive Order on July 21, 1930.

It currently administers programs that provide monthly compensation payments to more than 2.3 million veterans with service connected disabilities. Approximately 878,000 wartime veterans and 989,000 survivors of veterans receive monthly VA pension checks.

Nearly 773,000 veterans are currently receiving education benefits under the GI Bill, which has trained approximately 18 million veterans since World War II.

The medical care system of the VA consists of 172 hospitals, 226 outpatient clinics and 92 nursing care homes. The agency expects to treat more than 1.3 million inpatients in the current fiscal year. An estimated 18.6 million outpatient medical and dental visits will be made during the same period.

VA also operates the National Cemetery System, which consists of 107 cemeteries in all parts of the nation, with several new ones under development.

In FY 1982 VA expects to guarantee more than 315,000 mortgage loans to veterans, worth nearly \$23 billion and bringing the total amount of such guaranteed loans outstanding to more than \$114 billion.

Nimmo acknowledged, following the White House announcement of his designation, that he faces a difficult task in running the Veterans Administration.

"My first priority will be to assure people that, while I am committed to carrying out the President's program, I will do it in such a way that no veteran will find his interests and legal entitlements in danger."

## Proposed budget cuts

He was referring to the fact that the Reagan Ad-

ministration has proposed to reduce VA's 1982 budget from \$24.9 billion to \$24.2 billion or 3.2 percent. Though President Reagan's request is five percent higher than VA's 1981 budget, there has been widespread protest because it was 3 percent less than the VA budget submitted to Congress in January.



Robert Nimmo