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The "medevac" helicopter was a familiar and welcome sight to the troops in Vietnam after a battle. The above painting, owned by Pete Tiffany of West Pittsburg and reproduced here in honor of Veterans Day, is by Joe Kline of Gilroy, who was a helicopter crew chief in Vietnam 11 years ago and is today an engineer who paints as a hobby.

## Disillusioned Oakley vet makes painful readjustment

By JOHN LOVEJOY  
Ledger Staff Writer

Today, Veterans Day, is a time for the nation to pause to remember its military veterans.

It is also a time when veterans who survived their

wars may be remembering their buddies who did not. The survivors may also be remembering what they themselves have given in the name of freedom, even though some of them would rather forget.

Some of the most painful memories came out of America's most recent war, in Vietnam. Its veterans inherited the war's unpopularity, came home to indifference or hostility and are today trying to change the familiar media image of the returned vet, a quivering bundle of disaster unable to readjust to civilian life.

Grady Wamsley of Oakley maimed and killed fellow human beings in Vietnam, as he was expected to do, but he also took it upon himself to use the threat of his weapons to distribute the contents of stolen CARE packages to those for whom they were originally intended.

He is a combat veteran who

became disillusioned, went through painful readjustment and today is living a relatively normal life. But he and untold numbers of other veterans and civilians who served continue to suffer aftereffects of the extraordinary, undeclared war our citizens were commanded to wage in Vietnam.

Wamsley also periodically finds himself having to deal with what he calls the "cold shoulder" given him by the personnel of the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Martinez.

"It's just like I'm an old man, my patience is worn so thin," says Wamsley, 35, who wears strong, bifocal lenses and suffers from aching joints, ringing ears and tingling and numbness in his hands and feet.

His left eyeball became partially paralyzed in Vietnam for some mysterious reason. It will not turn to the left.

See OAKLEY, page 6



GRADY WAMSLEY

# Vet condemns indifference toward war's victims

By JOHN LOVEJOY  
Ledger Staff Writer

Veterans' Day should be a time "To honor those who fought and died for every citizen of this country, past present and future," according to Pete Tiffany of West Pittsburg.

"We need to reflect on what it was that those who fought really did for our country, and not confuse the politics with the warriors," says veterans' advocate Tiffany, 39, a veteran himself — of the Vietnam conflict.

Tiffany, who is now western regional director for the Chicago-based Veterans Leadership Conference, says he feels the Vietnam war was not fought for honorable reasons, except by most of those who did the actual fighting.

"Some of our leaders were genuinely concerned about the potential takeover of South Vietnam by the North Vietnamese communists, but high government bureaucrats were going into high-level military-industrial positions. The bottom line was dollars and cents. Many people got very wealthy on the war, and corporations made a lot of money.

"There were really no strenuous outcries (from U.S. citizens) during the late 1940s and early 1950s when we were providing Ho Chi Minh, then considered a freedom fighter, with weapons. Then came the French defeat in Dien Bien Phu.

"And that's the reason that so many of us volunteered — about 65 or 70 percent of us, not including civilians who served there. But, toward the end of 1969 through 1975, when the war ended, the morale of troops there was much less than optimum. There was fragging (men killing their superior officers with grenades and other weapons) and drug use.

"Entire companies refused to go into the field and continue to die when everyone knew we were going to withdraw. And, during the 1968 through 1970 protests in the States, the message came through to the GI's in battle that the people of the U.S. weren't supporting the soldiers. When you're caught between the people on one side, and the government, which is supposed to be of, by and for the people, on the other side, you're in a no-

win situation.

"America has to deal with its responsibility for our having been there. Many people just want the Vietnam war and its veterans to go away. But they need assistance to deal with their problems."

And, says Tiffany, there are other issues: "We still have 2,500 men missing in action or prisoners of war unaccounted for. How can we act like everything's normal when even one person is still there? Also, until recently, no one has addressed the issue of thousands of civilians who were serving with us. The Veterans Leadership Conference has picked up the gauntlet and is trying to run with it."

He says that although there is no great love for Vietnamese in this country, even for the South Vietnamese, the U.S. still should address itself to the question of the effects on the Vietnamese populace, as well as our own soldiers, of the millions of pounds of chemicals our government sprayed on Vietnam during the war.

Tiffany, who served in 1968 and '69 as a military police officer in Vietnam, became a veterans' activist after being home for several years. When he returned to his wife in Germany after serving in Vietnam, "I'd changed, but I didn't realize how much." After three years, they separated, and Tiffany left their two children with his wife.

Since then he has married again.

Coming back to the states, he tried to get on a police force, "but health problems surfaced from nowhere, and I never did get to be a cop."

He had joint stiffness, shooting pains, "weird" headaches, upper gastrointestinal problems. "I swallow Maalox like it's going out of style," he says.

He suffers from continually ringing ears and a hearing loss, plus something which has been diagnosed as "dermatitis" by Veterans Administration doctors.

But it was when he began to discover that about 85 percent of the other veterans he talked to had problems similar to his that he became "madder than hell."

During the time he was trying to get more information on his own health pro-



—Photo by John Lovejoy  
Pete Tiffany of West Pittsburg speaks at a veterans' rally in San Francisco last March. He became a veterans' advocate after learning that physical symptoms he has suffered since returning from Vietnam are not unique.

blems, he says, he met more and more veterans and compared notes. "We'd been in Vietnam and we were all comparatively young, and the same things were going on. I got motivated and developed into an activist."

He and Art McGowan of Martinez co-founded the local chapter of the Vietnam Veterans of America in 1979, but Tiffany split from the VVA in late June amidst charges, which he denied, that he had made derogatory remarks about the local VVA chapter during a ceremony in San Francisco.

"When I left VVA," Tiffany says, "many, many people were depending on me. Some feel I abandoned them, which kind of shocked me when I found out about it. I didn't feel my actions would be hurtful. But I think it happened for the best. I still work just as diligently with VLC, although I'm not as involved with that many people on that personal a level as I was."

He says one of his goals as a veterans' advocate is to educate the public: "It's extraordinarily important to keep the public informed. A growing number of young men and women are concerned about draft registration and the policy decisions in Washington which have an impact on them. A lot of people have indicated that, by God, they're sending their kids elsewhere rather than send them to a Vietnam-type situation."

## Tiffany to talk on radio call-in

Several Bay area veterans and others will talk with FM radio listeners on issues including Agent Orange, delayed stress, employment and counseling on KQED-FM, 88.5 on the dial, from 6:30 to 8 tonight.

The film, "Frank: A Vietnam Veteran," to be broadcast on channels 6 and 9 at 9 tonight, also will be discussed on the radio call-in.

Among the participants in the call-in will be Pete Tiffany of West Pittsburg, regional director of the Veterans Leadership Conference (VLC).

# •Oakley vet's enthusiasm killed in Vietnam war zones

From page 1

Even so, Wamsley is still able to force a smile when recalling some of the memories that are not too painful for him to discuss.

Wamsley was born in Albany, Ore. He says he was an "Army brat" and moved from place to place with his family.

By 1969, when he was 23, he discovered the draft board was after him. "A friend of mine who had served in the Navy suggested it to me, so I joined," he recalls.

After boot camp in San Diego, he served aboard a communications ship for eight months. Then, he received his orders to Vietnam, where he hadn't realized the Navy was sending its personnel. He arrived in February 1970.

At first he was "scared to death," he says. "But after a while, you lose your ability for feelings; you don't have any."

He ended up on a repair logistics ship that plied the rivers of Vietnam.

"We would ferry ground troops into different areas and go after ships or boats shot up or destroyed. We would search and destroy enemy sapper units, which would lay satchel charges under the repair ships, bridges and the different installations. We were like a floating taxicab, and would supply ammunition, arms and give support to ground forces and water groups. I also was a coxswain on an Alpha gun boat and on a landing craft."

Wamsley was on one of the first logistics crafts to go into Cambodia. "For the first two weeks there," he recalled, "there was nothing going on, but if we had been hit in Cambodia, we'd have been dead — but killed in Vietnam, as far as anyone else was concerned."

He spent about three weeks there, then went back to Dong Tam on the southern tip of Vietnam, which was getting hit with mortar and other fire about every other night.

"We got constant fire from a nearby free fire zone," he says, "and we were supposed to get permission to fire back from the main central station. But if we received fire, we'd shoot back. I figured, 'What are they going to do to me, send me to Vietnam for another year?'"

He and others also had the gruesome duty of picking up dead bodies. "Over there I guess I was kind of crazy," he says. "We'd shove the bodies in a bag and mark them if they were American or Vietnamese. We used to make jokes about it. Everybody got a turn at it."

The war was confusing and frustrating, he recalls: "It reminded me a lot of the Civil War in this country. If I had to do it all over again, I

wouldn't do it.

"There was so much going on there, I don't remember getting a full six hours' sleep while I was there. You didn't know where your lines were or who you could depend on, as far as some of the Vietnamese. A lot of them, the war had been going so long, they didn't give a damn or were just flat out tired of it. They would fight on whichever side they thought they could get the best deal out of.

"When I went there at first, I felt it was to keep communism out of Vietnam, which was a bunch of baloney, because the government officials there, but not all of them, were so damn corrupt, they were always out there with their hands out for Uncle Sam's almighty tax dollar so their wives could sit around in jewelry or smoke pot or opium. The Vietnamese were either very, very rich or very, very poor.

After being in Vietnam, Wamsley began to wonder why the war was fought in the first place. "I thought they were trying to test new weapons out on the people. It was a testing ground. And there were so many restrictions (on us). It was like going in there blindfolded with your hands tied behind your back. But our old man (commander) said that if anybody gets within 300 feet of this ship, kill 'em."

Wamsley was wounded twice: He was shot in the calf of one leg, and had both his legs crushed between a boat and mother ship during rough tides and currents. He went first to the Third Field Hospital in Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City) and struck up a friendship with a North Vietnamese nurse who also was recuperating from wounds.

"I talked to her all the time," he says, "about my home, hers — nothing political was mentioned. It was just about family, her children, her life that she lived before the takeover, or whatever. She was in her 50s."

Later, he was flown back to Bremerton, Wash., and the Naval hospital there. A doctor looked at his partially paralyzed eye and said it could have come about because of heat stroke or a heart attack.

Wamsley wasn't interested. He just wanted to get out of the hospital and out of the service. "I had seen too many people maimed, both in Vietnam and in the hospital in Washington. I had been watching

people, Vietnamese, going without anything to eat, without clothes or medical attention. I just wanted to get out. I didn't want to have anything to do with anything or anybody."

After his discharge, he went to live with his parents in Washington, and used his \$3,500 in back pay for "drinking and carousing in local bars."

The money dried up, and he borrowed \$4,500 to continue his self-destruction.

He tried to get his job back with the Safeway store where he had been working before joining the service. The law was on his side, but he had trouble convincing his employer. "I went to the Veterans Administration and the union, but they said, 'Sorry, we can't help you.'"

Through determination, he finally got his job back. But he continued his nightly drinking and carousing. Then, through friends, he met his wife-to-be, Judy, in Tacoma. "She kind of settled me out," Wamsley says.

His wife was from Martinez and wanted to be with her family, so they moved to Oakley in 1975. Wamsley began working two jobs, as a guard and orderly at a Concord convalescent hospital, while attending classes at Los Medanos Community College in Pittsburg. The jobs paid \$2.50 and \$2.75 an hour.

At Los Medanos, "I was studying anything I could get ahold of for credits, including watching movies. But that (course) was so dumb I dropped out of it after the first week."

Today, he works as a janitor for the Mt. Diablo Unified School District, but he had happened to find a course in appliance repair while at Los Medanos, and now does a bit of that as a sideline.

Looking back at the war and the United States' undignified retreat at the end, Wamsley says, "It was almost as if this government put so much money into it, only to find it had to back out without

losing money or face, but couldn't do it."

He is bitter, too, about the herbicides and pesticides that the U.S. government ordered its troops to spray in Vietnam. He and many other veterans suffering strange maladies think this spraying is responsible.

Wamsley says that besides his tingling, numbness and aching joints, he has headaches, a high white blood cell count, constant ringing in his ears and an appetite that "goes up and down" — and has had trouble getting the VA to take the symptoms seriously.

"Maybe we veterans are a constant reminder of how the U.S. screwed up in Vietnam," Wamsley says, "so we really get a cold shoulder (from the government). But I'm beginning to learn to overcome. At the Veterans Administration, looking at the bright side, at least they're talking to me."

Preservation Copy

WASHINGTON, DC, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1981

## Point of View

### Missing The Message

By Joan Maiman, Chairman  
Veterans Leadership Conference

Somewhere, in the rhetoric on Vietnam and its effect on the nation and those who served there, I fear we are missing part of the message.

First of all, to point out that there have been serious failures on the part of the government and the appropriate agencies to deal with many of the problems of those who served in Vietnam, is not equated with an attack on all the policies and standards of the government.

To point out the failures of a system in one area does not mean that one does not agree with the basic fundamentals which underlie it: the maximum freedom for the individual while preserving the common good.

This is the reason many of us went to Vietnam. Only a society as free as America would afford us the opportunity to address the problems of this war in so open a manner, indeed in any manner at all.

One of the legacies of Vietnam for me and for many of those I know, is the ability to strip away the superfluous and deal with the

basic issue at hand. I suppose in the middle of literal life and death decisions, this response becomes a matter of survival. This ability to deal with the essentials, priority sorting, could be a valuable resource for the nation.

An appreciation of the fact of just being alive, of just having survived, is also legacy of war. I am sure this is the same for all those who have ever known war. It is good to survive; one acquires a lifelong appreciation that to live is, in itself, a sort of daily miracle. Such an appreciation could do much for a weary world.

One learns that in war there are no absolutes: My enemy may appear as my friend. This does not mean that one must lose the ability to ever trust again, rather it means that the trust that is given is all the more sacred. One learns that there are the "good guys" with attributes of the "bad guys" and "bad guys" with "good guy" attributes.

Those who survive such an experience must make peace with

their own demons. This may make them more at peace with the world and able to see it for what it is, not in absolutes, and yet still able to believe that things can be better and that there is always hope.

One may go to war as a child but I doubt if many children come home.

Leadership may be developed in stress conditions. This is not to advocate war as a classroom but it (the war) happened and we would be foolish not to utilize the resource in terms of human talent that the experience has given us.

In many cases, the veterans have been content to be seen as victims. This implies a certain passivity and not the ability to act. The problems are many but the time is now for the veterans to take the lead, not in terms of handouts from the government, but to work into the mainstream. Veterans have untapped reservoirs of talent, dedication, and energy to give to this country.

In all its horror and complexity the war was a unique experience for

all of us who were there. We all saw it in different ways. It bothers me that to want to build on this experience to help the nation and those who suffer lingering problems from Vietnam is viewed by some as "radical." Just as damaging is the stereotype of the Vietnam veteran as the "cause of the year"

and deserving of all the respect we give to abandoned animals.

That Vietnam veterans must become a viable economic and political force and organization is the key to this. For too long the veteran has let others shape his place and actions. It is time that he set his own destiny. ★



A Co., 1st Bn 327th Inf., 101st Airborne Division, San Mateo's adopted Company marches past the review stand during 4 July parade.



Grand Marshal of the 4 July Parade, Vince Rios, Deputy Director Western Regional VLC, greets LTG. Theiss, Dep. Secretary of Defense for Military Affairs.

## San Mateo's 4th of July Welcome

Complete story and more photos, pages 14 and 15.

# NATIONAL VIETNAM VETERANS REVIEW

Vol. 1, No. 2

"Strength in Unity"

September, 1981

Serving All Vietnam-Era Veterans

From Sea To Shining Sea!

## Austin's Clark wanted no part of being a 'token' in VA

### Texas "No Token"

Allen B. Clark quit as the No. 2 man in the Veterans Administration because, sources say, his position had become a "token role."

Veterans of the past three wars - Vietnam, Korea and World War II - watched with pride as Allen B. Clark Jr. prepared to take over the No. 2 job in the Veterans Administration early this summer.

Not only had President Reagan tapped a highly decorated Vietnam veteran, a double amputee and West Point graduate, they thought he was sending the management-starved agency a proven line officer with a reputation for quickly getting to the heart of an issue and resolving the problems. Continued on page 21

## New VA Chief Compares Agent Orange to Acne

Washington

Robert Nimmo, the new Veterans Administration chief, said yesterday there is no medical evidence Agent Orange causes anything more than a skin rash—a comment that drew fire on Capitol Hill.

Nimmo said during an interview on the NBC "Today" show there is no "body of medical evidence" to suggest the herbicide, widely used as a defoliant during the Vietnam War, causes anything more than a skin affliction, which he compared to "teenage acne."

Representative Thomas Daschle, D-S.D., head of Vietnam Veterans in Congress, criticized Nimmo for a "very prejudicial attitude."

"He didn't know what he was talking about," Daschle said in a telephone interview. "This guy has been in the job less than a week and already he's an expert on Agent Orange. That's what drives Vietnam veterans up the wall."

Daschle, whose group has 31 members in the House and Senate, said "the evidence is clear" that Agent Orange causes cancer in laboratory animals.

"And in human beings, we have seen in at least five different studies higher incidents of cancer and other defects as a result of exposure to Agent Orange," he said.

San Francisco Chronicle, Thurs, July 16, 1981

## 40 New Vet Counseling Centers Set to Open

WASHINGTON (AP) - The Veterans Administration today announced the location of 40 new storefront counseling centers - including one in Contra Costa County - which will open within the next four months to provide advice to Vietnam veterans.

The 40 new facilities will bring to 133 the number of rehabilitation centers in existence.

The program has been popular with Vietnam veterans, many of who shun traditional VA hospitals with their formal procedures. Since the program began in early 1980, the VA said, 72,000 veterans have received counseling in the centers.

According to Gary Rossio, spokesman for the Veterans Administration Hospital in Martinez, the exact site for the new Contra Costa center is not known, "We have to go through a lot of bidding and so forth. It might take up to six months to find a suitable site."

He said a lot also depends on what local veterans want. He said he has worked closely with the Vietnam Veterans of America's Contra Costa chapter.

Art McGowan, one of the chapter's founders, was attending a Legion of Valor convention in New Orleans and was not available for comment. Steve Casteel, the president, also could not be reached.

However, McGowan said in the past that he and his membership were thinking of establishing a new center in central Contra Costa if and when new centers were ever proposed by the Reagan administration.

He also said he wanted a local new center to work more closely with the Veterans Administration than the original, 91 "Phase I" centers.

Presently, the nearest counseling center for Contra Costa veterans is in Oakland.

Continued on page 21

## Eat More Malathion

Poisoned people, poisoned pets.  
Now we're all like Vietnam vets.  
Spray each house and fruity crop.  
Rockabye baby in a tree top.  
Spray young lovers out on a spree.  
Improve their lives with chemistry.  
We're Monsanto and we are Dow  
And we don't like people anyhow.

Herb Co. Inc.

Memo Park - The room is full of men. All are in their 30's. Many wear the same brightly colored T-shirts advertising the Veterans Administration Hospital here. Most wear jeans.

They speak about putting their lives back together, about why they have chosen to spend months in the VA hospital involved in a program designed to help them get back in touch with the real world.

Because their world — a world of guns and blood and horror and death — no longer exists. The men are warriors, but now they are battling to make life worth living. The men are Vietnam War veterans.

Their stories are painfully similar. Many of them combat vets, they returned to a world that didn't understand the effects of war. They didn't understand themselves — no one had heard of delayed-stress syndromes then.

Many vets who just wanted to forget the war found drugs and alcohol were particularly effective in helping blur the memories.

"I was stumbling around Reno, Nevada, with a \$200-a-day habit," said veteran Rick Chapman. "Coke and speed. That had gone on for eight or 10 years and life didn't even mean anything anymore."

Chapman went from one hospital to another looking for help. He found it at the VA hospital here, which has the only established program of its kind in the country for Vietnam vets.

"Everybody cares about everybody here," he said, glancing around the room at his buddies. "We all have the same problems, we're the same age. It's the feeling of being needed by each other."

Continued on page 25

National Vietnam Veterans Review

P.O. Box 35812  
Fayetteville, N.C. 28303

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**Opinions**

Address your letters to 'Opinions' care of this paper.

**Vietnam Vets Deserve Answers**

**Furlton Burns**

Vietnam veterans deserve frank and candid answers from their government to the question whether they are suffering from Agent Orange contamination. A simple "yes" or "no" will do. The worst thing for them is not to know.

The Veterans Administration has been far from straightforward over the controversy. Only when confronted with demonstrations at various VA hospitals and the threat of hunger strikes did the agency come around.

As an infantry officer in Vietnam, I went on operations in areas that were sprayed with the toxic herbicide, and so far I have experienced no adverse reaction. But the compound is supposed to affect different people in different ways.

FOR EXAMPLE, a friend of mine who also served in Vietnam is convinced that he is dying of Agent Orange poisoning, and efforts by him to get VA officials to diagnose his ailments were unsuccessful. Frustrations such as that were behind much of the organized protest that made recent headlines.

The media played up the scenario that the Vietnam veterans are all dying of cancer, and the government denies that the condition exists.

The story of the veterans who went on a hunger strike in California failed to take into account the small numbers of veterans involved. The coverage of a demonstration at the Portland VA Hospital showed that only one person showed up to demonstrate. Ignored was the number of Vietnam veterans who showed up to assist the VA with crowd control, if necessary.

THE AGENT ORANGE issue in some ways must remind veterans of World War I of the mustard gas problems they encountered.

Similarly, the men who served in the 1950s, during the nuclear testing, never were told by the government of nuclear contamination.

As one who is in constant communication with Vietnam veterans from various parts of the country, I know they are not sure of the Agent Orange issue, but feel that the worst thing is to not know. The people of this country think we have the right to know.

Veterans of all modern wars have come home only to fight a battle here. The World War I veteran marched into Washington, D.C., and was fired upon. The World War II veteran wasn't just given the home loan program, the education programs and the other benefits, as some of us of the Vietnam era believe.

ONE OF THE THINGS that make the Vietnam veterans' position unusual is that the veterans' average age was 19 years. The average age of World War II vets was 27.

The government took people for service in Vietnam fresh out of high schools from the ghettos of our major cities and the rural areas of our nation. Many of these young men were deprived of education, a contented home life and other opportunities by their service in the Vietnam War.

Being raised in the patriotic era, we felt that when the country called we had to answer, for we are our fathers' sons. Yes, the fathers of so many of us were in the Great War. We had been told over and over of the glory. How were we to know that there would be no glory in Vietnam. How were we to know that the economy would leave us without jobs or that we would return to a nation in which it seemed that everywhere we looked there was corruption in government from the White House on down. Others returning from earlier wars had a stable economy and a government that was respected.

ALL THE VIETNAM veteran wants to know is whether he or she has a problem with Agent Orange. Research by the scientific community should give us an answer and help identify a cure. Living with doubt and uncertainty can put a great deal of stress on your life. Ask any victim of a natural or man-made disaster how it feels to have no control, to have the feeling of helplessness. Ask the victims of the Oregon Museum shooting, POW wives, or the hostages from Iran.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The writer is a former Army captain, now medically retired. He lives in Salem and directs the Salem Veteran Center.



**Old vets back Viet vets' claim**

**Chris Coursey**



World War I veterans voiced support of their younger counterparts Monday, saying Vietnam vets staging hunger strikes in Santa Rosa and in Southern California "should fight for everything they can get."

As Vietnam veterans collected signatures and publicity in support of their efforts to have the Reagan and Veterans administration recognize their disability claims, men who fought on the other side of the globe more than 50 years earlier were meeting at the El Rancho Tropicana for their statewide convention.

"It doesn't matter which war he fought in, a vet is a vet and we should all stick together," said Reuben Vierra of Sonoma. "All veterans deserve hospital benefits the Vietnam boys as much as any of us."

Vierra, who served as "the eyes of the artillery" in an observation balloon over France, said returning World War I soldiers ran into problems finding jobs and receiving benefits, and had to fight "for everything we got."

"There were no jobs when we got home. We had to ride on top of box cars all the way across the country. Vets' problems aren't just a modern day thing."

"These boys today should be taken care of. We all fought for this country and deserve the benefits."

Vietnam veterans had been staging hunger strikes at the Wadsworth Veterans Administration Medical Center in Brentwood in Southern California until they were removed from the hospital grounds today. They were being supported by two Vietnam veterans sitting in and fasting at the federal building in Santa Rosa. The veterans are protesting the handling of disability claims and the possibility that the Veterans Service Centers may be eliminated through Reagan administration budget cuts.

Some of the protesting vets have been turned down on disability claims stemming from delayed stress syndrome and physical ailments they claim can be traced to their exposure to Agent Orange.

**San Mateo's Gentle Gift**

**Joan M. Maiman**

The last time I made this trip west I was headed for Vietnam, 11 years ago. This time, again, it was Vietnam that brought me west for a weekend of honor for those who had served.

The weekend began with the gathering of the adopted company of the 101st Airborne and the veterans and their families.

Many of those there the first night had buttons which read "I am proud of our Vietnam veterans". The veterans were given buttons which read "I am proud to be a Vietnam veteran." As the weekend went on tee shirts expressing pride in the Vietnam vets were much in evidence.

On the Fourth of July a parade was held in Redwood City in honor of the Vietnam vets. Over 150,000 persons attended according to former Mayor John Murray the organizer of the events. I had a 'ring side seat' by the reviewing stand and the three hour parade passed quickly. Bands, floats, horse back riders and veterans were among the marchers. I heard comments all around me from Vietnam vets that this was the first time they had felt no restraint in stating that they had served in Vietnam.

At the picnic following the parade the perfect summer afternoon and all those who were there with their families brought back, for many, memories of an earlier time, before they had come to know war. On seeing the button identifying one as a Vietnam vet people would stop and say thank you, really a first for so many there.

The reception that evening was held in the early evening by a pool, a peaceful setting to honor and remember.

Sunday began with a breakfast hosted by the City of South San Francisco. Listening to those who had been in Vietnam speak, I felt that many of them were really being heard for the first time. At the Memorial Service at the Golden Gate Cemetery the acres of white brought home the horrible and final cost of this war and indeed of any war. Looking at the members of the 101st, 19 and 20 years old, my prayers for those who died in Vietnam and their families held a special hope that these young men would never see and experience what others at their age had seen in Vietnam. An airshow and band review was held in the afternoon. (No they would not let me take home a medivac helicopter as a souvenir.) Woven throughout the perfect days of the weekend were the moments of enjoyment, pagentry, poignancy and remembering. I think that I speak for many of us who were there when I say that the lasting gift of this weekend was the warmth of the people of the city and county of San Mateo.

We have heard the rhetoric from the politicians countless times before and we shall doubtless hear it in the future.

We have seen the ceremonies, these end quickly and the monuments will eventually be dust. But this time it was different as the love and concern of the people spilled over into those three summer days and this we cherish and this, and this alone, will endure. At the end of the weekend riding a cable car in the night lit city with its surrounding hills I felt a reluctance to leave this area which had given so much in so short a time.

Headed back to Chicago in the early dawn my thoughts returned to that other journey 11 years ago and the realization that for so many in their quiet way, the people of San Mateo had given a quiet and lasting gift, that of love. If only the rest of the country could do the same, how far we will have journeyed.

**Got a buddy needs help? Bring him into a Vet Center. No appointments needed, no hassles. We're here to help!**

# NATIONAL VIETNAM VETERANS REVIEW

P.O. Box 35812, Fayetteville, North Carolina 28303  
CHUCK ALLEN, Editor and Publisher

Volume Number 1  
Publication Number 2

September, 1981

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The National Vietnam Veterans Review is published monthly by Duvanal Publications, Inc., with offices at 2722 Fort Bragg Rd., Fayetteville, North Carolina 20303. Editorial material and articles should be forwarded to: Chuck Allen, Editor, National Vietnam Veterans Review, P.O. Box 35812, Fayetteville, North Carolina. Address all advertising communications to:

Combined Advertising Sales, P.O. Box 35812, Fayetteville, North Carolina 28303.

Subscription price for 12 (1 year) issues is \$9.60 per year. Special Bulk Subscription Rates for Hospitals, Schools, Vet centers, or Veterans organizations is 50¢ per copy, plus shipping/ mailing charges. Minimum order of 25 copies will be shipped at special Bulk Rate.

## Let's Hear From You!

Vets all across the U.S. we are requesting you to send us info that is locally published so we may republish and disseminate that info.

We would also like you to send us your stories for possible publication. We are looking for positive information!

Send to: Editor  
National Vietnam Veterans Review  
P.O. Box 35812  
Fayetteville, North Carolina 28303

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## NOTICES

### Universities, Colleges, Jr. Colleges, Community Colleges, Technical Schools...

You will find an increased interest in the activities of your veteran student body this coming semester. Across this country, the veteran is becoming more aware of the past treatment he did or didn't get. Your vet clubs will appreciate your providing copies of the National Vietnam Veterans Review for them! By the way, we would like to hear input from your institutions' Veterans Affairs Office. Tell us and the rest of the country what you are doing and to what end. Positive articles with photos will be greatly appreciated.

**Vet Centers...**We only have 10-12 Vet Centers that have ordered bulk VVR papers so far. We need about 85 more to order. Your Vet Walk-ins will appreciate being able to read the paper and hopefully gain some knowledge about "what's happening" elsewhere. Ask Mike Lyden of the Fayetteville, N.C. Vet Center how the papers are appreciated.

**VA Hospitals...**Only two VA Medical Facilities have thus far ordered VVR newspapers. One only ordered 25, the other ordered 400. We have a long way to go. Remember the cost (at Bulk Rate) for 50 newspapers is about the same as 1/2 hour cost to the guy that mows your lawn. We are trying to support your efforts, just as you are trying to support the problems of the veterans!

### You Can STILL Get A Deal

A National paper is really a BIG undertaking to say the least. Particularly when it's coming out of the back pocket of one vet...with six kids (two in college).

Before we bite off a lot more than this big mouth can chew, we need to make a change already. Of course the US Postal Service with their rate increase didn't help.

Starting with the October issue, the cost of a 12 month (12 issue) subscription will be \$12.00 per year.

subscription requests in to us before 1 October will still only cost \$9.60 for the year.

### NOTE!

The cost of Bulk Subscriptions must be increased with the October issue. We are finding out just what a national mailing really costs.

All Bulk Subscription requests received prior to 1 October will be honored at the present cost of 50¢ per copy, minimum 25 copies, that's only \$12.50 plus shipping for 25 papers.

After 1 October, the cost will go to 75¢ per copy (minimum of 25 copies) plus shipping. Not too bad, only \$18.75 plus shipping.

## COMING NEXT ISSUE

- Report on SOF Convention
- Women Vets - A Different Road Home
- Indepth Report
- On VA Medical Center - Fayetteville
- Analysis of Veterans' Rights

National Vietnam Veterans Review  
P.O. Box 35812  
Fayetteville, North Carolina 28303

## Nuoc Mam\*

\* Nuoc Mam is a sauce derived from spoiled and decaying fish. That sauce was used throughout Vietnam on most food dishes. To the American, Nuoc Mam was referred to as a Rotten, Stinking Mess. Vietnam!

By Steve Hanshev





## Editorials

Well, number 1's behind us. This issue was just a little bit easier to assemble, especially with the knowledge that paper No. 1 was received with such enthusiasm and wonderful comments.

I feel that several apologies are in order at this time. First, I must offer some sort of apology for the U.S. Postal Service...SAD! Some papers, mailed on 1 July, Bulk Rate, 3rd class, took 22 days to be delivered. I told our local postman "I could have walked and hand delivered them in that time." Great response - "We're overworked." My response - "You're overpaid." Oh well.

Secondly, the printing on about 25% of the papers was light and in some cases hard to read. This has been pointed out to our printer, and hopefully won't happen again.

Don't worry about the typos (typing errors). If you are more interested in the spelling contained in an article than the content of that article, you better stick to the N.Y. Times. However...count 'em in that pub. also! We're trying!



I understand one of the White House copies made it into the Oval Office. No comment yet from there, but if this issue makes it in also I would just like to say the following:

### "The Bitter Taste of Beer"

Doug Walton  
Montana State Director  
Veterans Leadership Conference

"When I die, I'll surely go to Heaven, because I've spent my time in Hell." The above lines were etched into more Zippo cigarette lighters than probably any other single verse in the history of the Viet Nam War. No one really knows where the words came from. My guess would be they came from the heart of the first person to see combat in that place that would later be referred to in our history books as, "The only War America lost".

Did I say "Hell"? Now there's an understatement. To lie face down on the ground for two hours, staring into the blank face of a boy who had just given his all for "God and Country". A boy who had just made the supreme sacrifice to become another statistic in a "Noble Cause". A boy with whom in the past six months you have revealed your innermost feelings. He's going home now. "The easy way out", you think. You zip up the flap on the body bag and tag it. Then, as gently as possible, you place him on the first available sortie back to the rear. "Take your time boys, there's no hurry now." When the fighting stops and you have time to think, you realize you have already forgotten what he looked like. You cry out loud, "Please, somebody tell me why I am here".

August 10, 1981 marks the tenth anniversary of my return from Viet Nam. As I sit here looking back through a clouded memory ten years old, I realize the only time the war becomes vividly clear to me is in my dreams. Except the name on the tag, Miles T. Westman. He was my friend, my brother. I don't know why his name stays with me after all these years, except he was the first to die at my side.

### V.V.A Director Sells Out Strikers

How quickly some vets forget. Take, for instance, Bobby Muller, Executive Director of Vietnam Veterans of America. We remember Bobby when he first got back from 'Nam and was languishing in a VA hospital trying to survive. We remember him condemning Nixon for continuing the war in Indochina. We remember him complaining about an insensitive VA, federal government, and rich man's system. Of course that was before a few TV shows and an article or two.

Now with vets fighting for their lives, look at what Bobby sends to the vets in California, to Reagan and his other buddies:

"This communication is to advise you of our hope that

Mr. President,

We have seen, Buddist Monks in S.E. Asia douse themselves with gasoline and light up. Not a pleasant sight but they did believe strongly in some cause.

Tut, tut, it was over there!

We have seen Iranians beat themselves to death with chains all in support of martyrdom or something which only they could explain.

Oh well, it was over there!

We have seen more recently, fine young Irish boys die from hunger all in support of a cause they felt strongly about.

Real damn shame, but it was over there!

And now, over here, in the Capitol of this most wonderful of all nations, we had a national disgrace brewing. The possibility of an American fighting man dying of self-imposed hunger. Would that have escalated? How many would have followed: Ten? A hundred? A thousand? What we didn't need was another camp-out of the mid 30's on the mall, with no one eating!

The demands are simple. Answers can be found. Their feelings are echoed by several million Vietnam Era veterans, most of whom were part of the "Mandate of the Eighties."

With all due respect sir, please remember Mr. Lincoln's words: "To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan."

Chuck Allen

Two days after I killed my last Viet Cong soldier, as I walked towards the baggage check-in at San Francisco International Airport, I received my first real taste of what it was going to be like to be a Viet Nam Veteran. Although the flavor escapes me, that of Coors, or Oly or something like that, the idea of that half empty can of beer hitting me in the back of the neck, has left a bitter taste in my mouth that only time can wash away.

An angry crowd of people, striking out at the only physical representation of a war in which, they felt, the end could NOT justify the means. I suppose some of my disappointment was brought on by myself. On that long eighteen hour flight home, my mind tended to wander, thinking of things like old World War II movies, where Audie Murphy comes home after saving half of Western Europe, and is received by all America with open arms. Although I never really expected anyone to strike up a brass band, upon my arrival at Travis AFB, I did feel a warm, "Welcome Home", or maybe even a little "Thank You" for a job well done, was in order. Instead I was met with paraphrases like, War Monger, Baby Killer, and Drug Addict, and of course that half empty can of beer.

There I was all decked out in my dress greens, half a pound of ribbons on my chest, including two medals for valor, my Cockrin boots all spit-shined, not understanding why anyone would want to hate me. I did my job very well, and had every right to be proud of that. Whether the war was right or wrong was totally irrelevant to me. When I was six years old, on my first day of school, I swore an oath of Allegiance to my Country. Nowhere in that oath of Allegiance did it say, "only if I think my Country is right". Now I'm sure that sounds like a whole lot of cornball, patriotic rhetoric, but if you believe in a system, and you are not in a position to change that system, you work within that system until you can change it. I was brought up to believe that, and I still do.

you will discontinue your protest at the VA Hospital. The Vietnam Veterans of America does not support your continuing protest for several reasons: we feel the Reagan Administration has acted in a commendable manner...Dr. Custis, acting VA administrator has committed the President to the most significant goals Vietnam veterans have been lobbying for over the last several months. The commitment to continue the interagency work group as a moving vehicle to resolve the Agent Orange issue pleases us greatly, as does the expanded budget for Agent Orange research. The additional commitment to honor Congressional intent in continuing to operate the vet centers in their present form, as store front facilities, at the full level Congress appropriated funding for, is a major breakthrough. To continue a positive dialog between Vietnam veterans and the Administration requires Vietnam veterans also to act in good faith, and, to continue protesting, in light of the very significant commitments the hunger

### Mr. Editor:

The Vietnam Veterans Review is an excellent publication. I recently received a copy of Volume 1, Issue 1, and I was much impressed by your staffs efforts and by the witnessing of those individuals who are still casualties of the Vietnam War.

As a Vietnam Era Vet myself, I too have suffered problems upon returning from service and though my story doesn't stack up to those of you who are combat tried and made, my problems have been just as real. All vet problems are relative to the individual.

The point is, we are all in this situation together...We know that no one organization, or person is going to help us get our act together...our branches of service have turned their backs on us...our nation has turned its back on us, and in many cases those most dearest to us have been unable to understand or help. One point has remained constant through all of this ordeal...we all want help...and as long as we are alive there is hope...we must work to keep those individuals alive who have lost perspective about the purpose of life...we must listen when we do not want to listen...and we must hear what is implied in many cases and not what is verbalized. There is no cold, humanistic design that can CURE the vets ills. All the parades; and speeches, salutes of honor can not return to the vet a clear way to think and act sanely.

Unfortunately, we must tie ourselves to organizations which can not understand us...have shown no interest in helping us...but, who act as a clearing house for information that is so badly needed. One of the most important things that we can do is to keep informed, educated, and always responsive to the public at large. We must become spokesmen and women for all Vietnam Era vets. And though we undoubtedly share the same problems with vets of other wars, it is our group that must live with our actions...and we must look at the vets of Korea, and World War II, and World War I, and ask ourselves if we desire our generation to forget us like their generation forgot them. The old cry of all for one and one for all in veterans rights has actually acted to divide the strength of the Vietnam Vet and keep any real work from being done. Other vets will benefit from any of our actions for the Nam vet.

I believe after working in veterans problems for many years that most if not all of the cry for 'national unity' among vets of all wars is coming from the very mindset that got us into Vietnam in the first place, and bespeaks of the generation that would rather 'support' the system than rock the boat. True you have to work within the system. But, our Veteran brothers are killing themselves, and the problems of Vietnam will not go away by themselves...we need a change through law and reason...and if that goal is out of step...we must realize that we've been marching to a different drummer all along...Other vets will have their problems solved incidentally if the Nam vet is allowed to pour his youth and intelligence level into new systems. Tradition is not enough to stake our lives on...there are greater values -- Life is but one.

As a district officer in a national veterans organization I lend my full support to the goals and designs of the Vietnam Veterans Review. Will you join me.

Frank R. Price

Mr. Price is a district officer in the American Legion.

strikers were given is unwarranted: any continued action on your part will only serve to give the impression of divisiveness and unreasonableness on the part of the Vietnam veterans community.

"Hopefully, you will reconsider your actions before serious and irreparable damage is done to the Vietnam veteran community."

Bobby Muller  
Washington, DC  
May 29, 1981

Gosh, Bobby! We liked you more before you appointed yourself THE LEADER of Vietnam vets. We suppose that hobnobbing with the upper crust has made you forget about the guys on the bottom.

VVAW

# Op Center

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for the wonderfully encouraging letters we've been receiving and particular thanks to the following:

**John Berndsen** ..... John sells original certificates from Vietnam. So, anyone wanting a copy to replace a lost Vietnam Decoration Certificate or to establish one that was never received, get in contact with John. See his ad in this issue.

**John B. Dwyer** ..... John is the Editor/Publisher of "Perimeter" a monthly newsletter that gives excellent account of relevant news, topical stories, historical vignettes from the war, editorial comment, features on Vietnam heroes and other extremely interesting articles. Write to John at:  
Perimeter  
John B. Dwyer  
430 Westbrook  
Dayton, Ohio 45415

**The Minister of Veterans Affairs, Senator Messner, Australia** ..... Congratulations to the Government of Australia which announced plans to set up psychological and medical counseling centers to help Aussie Vietnam veterans with problems which could have been caused by Agent Orange.

This announcement was made despite reports from Minister Messner of facts resulting from his trip to the U.S.

While here, Messner met with several nondescript groups, not including the Vietnam Veterans in Congress, and issued a report to his nation that Agent Orange is of no major concern to US veterans and that there is no "credible evidence" to link Agent Orange with symptoms.

Ed Note: Thanks Minister, your report will help a lot!

**Tom Hebert** ..... Tom is the Editor/Publisher of the "Vietnam War Newsletter." That publication is a well written, comprehensive letter on the latest news, stories from readers, book reviews and a wealth of other information concerning the Vietnam War. As Tom says, "for Vietnam veterans and others interested in learning more about America's longest war and its aftermath." See Tom's application form on page 13. Write to Tom and ask about the Red, White and Blue Campaign!

**Soldier of Fortune Magazine** ..... Our thanks for your consideration in recognizing the Vietnam veterans and selecting "A Salute to Vietnam Veterans" as the theme of your 2nd Annual Convention, Sept 17-20 in Scottsdale, Arizona. "National Vietnam Veterans Review" will be there!

**Philip E. Cushman** ..... For an indepth letter on the Constitutional Rights of Veterans. This comprehensive study will occupy 4 full pages in our October issue and should really be "must" reading for all veterans!

**Paul Scanlon** ..... Paul is the Director of Veterans Affairs at Suny College of Technology in Utica, N.Y. We thank you for the encouraging letter, the Agent Orange information and the plug in your veterans newsletter...and of course your subscription.

**Frank R. Price** ..... Particular thanks to Frank for an extremely interesting and timely letter to the Editor (this Edition) and a work called "Sometimes" which appears in this issue also.

## The Draft If They Give A War, Too Few Will Come

Can you imagine the executives of America's Fortune 500 companies saying to their sons: "Volunteer for the Army, boy, and help protect our fortune, because we can't entrust this nation's security to yardboys and janitors, to those who are ignorant or aggrieved."

If your answer is yes, you have a hyperactive imagination, because never in the history of this country has it worked that way.

In times of war or peace, the people with the most to defend have put pitchforks, guns, missiles and lasers into the hands of the poor whites, the deprived blacks, the abused Hispanics whom those most rewarded by the capitalist system would scarcely give a crumb, let alone a break.

This society is today a binge of "beefing up our defenses," and doing it by further denying the "lower class" youngsters who later will be expected to bleed and die to ensure the triumph of capitalism over communism.

Kids America sends to claptrap Jim Crow schools, to overcrowded urban facilities where "learning" deals more with sex, drugs and violence than with math, physics or chemistry, are somehow supposed to get smart enough to operate laser weapons, multiple-targeted missiles, aircraft that are electronic marvels.

I am reminded by a recent Army report of the sad history of the reluctance of the rich to fight for their riches. The report suggests that this country may either have to return to the draft or run 10,000 men short of what will be needed to meet President Reagan's military plans.

So we face the prospect of not having the people to man an expanded Rapid Deployment Force that is supposed to rush to crisis areas in the Persian Gulf, the Middle East, wherever. So we're dragging old battle-ships out of mothballs for a Navy that is already drastically short of petty officers and aviators.

What if the White House, the Congress or both decide that the all-volunteer system provides neither enough bodies nor enough brains to make our military adequate to ensure our security. Where do we go from there:

It became clear long ago that Reagan is ducking the issue of conscription, surely because he knows that the draft never has been popular among the class of people his administration represents so thoroughly.

During the Revolutionary War even bounties of money, clothing and land failed to produce enough volunteers. Only the assistance of France made it possible to avert conscription throughout the colonies.

During the Civil War a man drafted in the North could hire a substitute, or pay \$300 for exemption. The South not only permitted the hiring of subs, but would exempt a man who said he owned many slaves (15 or more) that he had to stay home to watch and supervise them.

Thus social critics called this conflict, "a rich man's war and a poor man's fight."

In World War I draft-dodging became a national sport, with 295,184 draft delinquency cases pending at war's end. Some 5 percent of these men were convicted, and a mere 5,000 or so went to prison--for terms averaging 30 days.

In World War II, up to November 1945 there were more than half a million charges of draft violations, but less than 13,000 convictions.

The Korean and Vietnam Wars produced their own grubby examples, in the millions, of the children of the affluent using college enrollment, exemptions bought through financial, political and/or social influence and even hiding out in Canada to stay far from the rigors and dangers of military service.

**Carl Rowan, Contra Costa Times**  
Friday, July-17, 1981

## Vietnam in the Arts

Vietnam in the Arts, which presented the exhibit of artwork entitled "The Vietnam Experience" last November in St. Paul, Minnesota, will mount another show this November in New York City.

VITA is seeking artists with a firsthand knowledge of Vietnam - particularly Vietnam veterans who reside in New York, the Greater New York area, New England, and the East Coast - who are interested in participating in the show. Artists are invited to submit slides of their work, which will be judged according to relevance to the Vietnam experience, poignancy, and artistic merit, no later than Monday, September 14th; artists will be notified of acceptance or rejection by the end of September. All artwork accepted will be insured for the duration of the exhibit, which is scheduled to open on Tuesday, November 10th, and run through the first week of December, at The Arsenal Gallery, Fifth Avenue at 64th Street.

VITA is also seeking assistance from those who might care to volunteer their time and services in the realms of printing, mounting an exhibit, and related areas.

Detailed information may be obtained by contacting Bernard Edelman, 209 Lincoln Place, Brooklyn, New York 11217.

## New Grants Aid Disabled Veterans

A new Veterans Administration grant of up to \$5000 will help disabled veterans make special adaptations to their homes.

To qualify, a veteran must be entitled to compensation for service-connected disability which is due to (1) blindness in both eyes with 5/2000 visual acuity or less, or (2) loss of use of both hands. If a veteran has previously received a wheelchair home grant, there is no further entitlement under the new program. But a veteran who first established entitlement under PL 385 and who later becomes eligible for a wheelchair home grant may be issued a certificate of eligibility.

## VVR Mail Room

Letters

### Reagan Directs Response

July 14, 1981

Ms. Karen Donovan  
1704 Sarkesian Dr.  
Petaluma, CA 94925

Dear Ms. Donovan:

The President has asked me to respond to your recent communication regarding issues of particular concern to Vietnam veterans.

An unfortunate legacy of the Vietnam conflict is the continuing concern of many veterans that they may have suffered, or may yet develop, health problems as a result of the long term effects of certain chemicals, particularly Agent Orange, to which they were exposed by serving in Vietnam. Many questions about this complex medical problem remain unanswered. Numerous symptoms have been reported by Vietnam veterans, but it is unclear which of these may be related to Agent Orange. The government is now pursuing a number of research activities to determine whether there may be a cause-effect relationship between exposure to Agent Orange and any specific symptoms or particular diseases. We in the Veterans Administration are now in the process of initiating a major epidemiological study which will look into all health related facets of service by veterans in Vietnam. We are hopeful that answers can be obtained soon for the questions that are still outstanding.

The President is committed to the fullest possible scientific examination of the Agent Orange issue, with the aim of ensuring that this matter is dealt with fairly and equitably. For this reason, he has decided to continue the ongoing work of the highly respected Interagency Workgroup which has been the focal point within the government for research on the possible effects of Agent Orange. The important scientific efforts being coordinated by this Workgroup, including the Air Force Ranch Hand personnel study, will be a major priority of this Administration.

We have already established a special procedure for examining those veterans concerned about Agent Orange exposure. Any veteran who believes he may have medical problems associated with Agent Orange exposure may now be examined by the Veterans Administration, and the results of this examination will be included in our Agent Orange Registry. The results of the examination are given to the veteran and will become a part of the veteran's permanent medical record, for possible use in supporting any future compensation claim.

We believe it is important to correct a widespread misunderstanding with respect to the funding of the Vietnam Veterans Outreach Centers. Many Vietnam veterans have contacted the President in recent days expressing their dismay that these Outreach Centers are to be discontinued. The President, in his nationally televised speech before the Congress on April 28, expressed his support of the Reagan bipartisan budget resolution, commonly referred to as "Gramm-Latta," which restored most of the previous proposed cuts in veterans' programs. As you may know, the Congress has basically accepted the President's proposed spending levels which include funds for the continued operation of the Vet Centers. Furthermore, both the House and the Senate have recently passed legislation, although in separate bills, extending the life of the Vet Centers for another 3 years. This extension has the overwhelming support of both parties in both the House and the Senate, and it would appear that any differences in the bills will be worked out and the 3-year extension of the Vets Center will become law.

There are, of course, still other areas of concern to Vietnam veterans. For this reason, we have, with the President's full support, announced that a national workshop will be conducted some time in the late summer to explore the various concerns of the Vietnam veteran and to share with those participating some of the activities now underway which address these concerns. We believe this workshop will provide a meaningful form to address these issues.

### our readers write Does Anyone Care?

We who served in Vietnam empathize with the recently returned hostages. They went through hell, obviously. But does anyone know or care what happened — is happening — to us?

Joan Maiman, who chairs the Chicago-based Veterans Leadership Conference said it best:

*They came home to the tears and the rejoicing of a nation — indeed, of the free world.*

*We have made of them heroes, immortalized them with yellow ribbons.*

*The cities spoke of ticker tape parades. The Statue of Liberty shone for them.*

*Their families were kept advised and we watched with them and saw their joy.*

*Four-hundred and forty-four days of captivity and a lifetime of thanks. Not that they are undeserving but this situation was not of their making to serve this nation, thus, rather it was that they were victims of time and place.*

*Think for a minute of another soul who was sent to serve in a war which was seen as the way to defend the rightly cherished freedom of this nation.*

*He came home without fanfare, without thanks, and without his legs.*

*His family was not able to afford the trip to come and see him so they waited. He spent his time with other very young men on an impersonal ward.*

*This gentle soul did not know that by all definitions he was a hero. He had served in the highest traditions of duty, honor, country. So he was quiet and the only monument he had was the tears of his family, who wondered why and where had all the heroes gone.*

*When he went out with the rest of the patients, he was spit on.*

*Where were the patriots then, where were the parades, where was the compassion?*

*If we speak of inhumane treatment let us remember our own conduct.*

*His life was measured in less than 20 years. His youth became eternal.*

*I wish I understood why just one light could not have shown for him on the Statue of Liberty. It stood so black against the sky.*

*I hope he had a handful of stars to light his final journey home.*

Joan served in military hospitals in Vietnam and was awarded the highest civilian medal for working with the military in combat.

Peter Tiffany

Let me assure you that we in the Veterans Administration are aware of this nation's obligation to all of its veterans, including those who served during the Vietnam era, and will do our best to see that this obligation is met.

Sincerely,

W.J. Jacoby, Jr. M.D.  
Acting Chief Medical Director

Karen Donovan is the Northern California Coordinator for the Veterans Leadership Conference

### A personal letter to Vietnam vets

How I wish I were able to be in San Mateo today to welcome back some of you that I had the awesome task of bidding good bye to on faraway airstrips in the late '60's.

It is almost 13 years ago to the day that I took my first planeload of servicemen into Vietnam as an airline crew member.

In the two years I worked for World Airways often taking GIs in and out of that war-torn country, I lost count of your numbers. Maybe I didn't want to keep track.

But there were thousands and thousands of you — nearly 200 per flight — I watched step down the runway ready to begin combat duty or return to it from an all-too-short week of R & R.

But though your exact numbers escaped my count, your faces and actions never will.

Long will I recall how cheerful some of you tried to be to help make our jobs easier. Forever will the obvious strain and nervousness on some of your faces stay etched in my mind. So, too, will the scores of your quiet looks that often stared into space or at someone else blankly.

Not a flight did I take to those foreign places like Da Nang, Bien Hoa, Cam Ranh Bay, or (in those days) Saigon that I didn't wonder as you all walked away how many of you would someday be walking back. And how proud I was of all of you who were lucky enough to make that trip home on a flight I was honored to be working and grateful to be transporting to a peaceful place.

I remember how surprised I was on my first MAC flights returning stateside. Most of you were all so solemn, so serious, not only at take-off but throughout the journey. I expected something else I guess, but then I never dreamed you'd be so lighthearted (or pretend to be) on the way over.

Nor could I have imagined how heartbreaking it would be on arrival in "Nam" to bid each and every one of you "Goodbye and God bless." No, it wasn't easy being the last of your countrymen to bid you farewell.

But my most memorable impressions to this day were not the sad times. They were the happy ones when we touched down on U.S. soil and a flight attendant would say unprompted: "Welcome home, guys." I still get choked up when I think of the spontaneous cheers that would fill that 707 cabin when those words were uttered.

I know I speak for millions when I say that we're sorry Vietnam veterans, that we've been such a silent majority since you've been back. Don't think for a moment that in our hearts we haven't always been tremendously proud of all of you and tremendously glad to be able to say, albeit belatedly, welcome home.

Most sincerely,

R. Logripo  
Times Staff Writer

Pass this paper on to another Veteran



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# Mail Room

## Viewpoint From an Outsider

## Is Anybody Listening?

I know little of what went on in Vietnam but that exposed through the media and small glimpses provided by a cousin and a brother-in-law. Both came back sound in body but the cerebral wounds were there--bad dreams, some suicidal tendencies, bitterness--that disturbed their peace of mind for twelve to eighteen months. This was accompanied by a drastic change in tempo from the intense rhythm of life in a war zone to the nine to five pace back in the U.S.

As a civilian, I never doubted that you who served were, for the most part, men and women of honor. I respected the courage and strength it took to be sent into six months training, to be ushered into an unfamiliar jungle terrained environment, to fight an elusive enemy. A year later you were flown back into a society who did not recognize you because we were too busy with our stricken consciences.

I can only imagine the difficulty of adjustment, the swift culture change, and the compounded resentment toward a government that gave little evidence of support. I understand that many of us lacked mature perspective and sensitivity to your situation. I know you were emotionally brutalized by our treatment. I think my viewpoint coincides with millions of Americans today. What can we do for you except try to be more sensate now and in the future?

Despite the difficulties, many thousands of you have successfully assimilated yourselves back into the mainstream of American life. My cousin, who was a Marine rifleman, is a stock broker; my brother-in-law, who was an Army reconnaissance officer, is a vice-president and partner with an investment banking firm. Both experienced the trauma of modern war and readjustment to American society. Obviously, there are more problems for some than for others, but it is also true that some would have experienced impediments whether or not they had ever been in the service or the war.

To those of you who are sick at heart, suffer mental distress, have been affected by Agent Orange, disabled by wounds, and have not received the benefits you deserve, I regret the ill treatment you have endured.

Perhaps, one way to eradicate some of this is to make yourselves better known to your countrymen. If you spoke to one or two people to whom you feel close and enlighten them about your Vietnam background a new awareness can begin. Truly, I think it has already begun. I think America is more mature than when we

asked you to go to Vietnam. I think we are more mature than when we saw you come back and spewed ugly words at you because babies had died in Vietnam.

We didn't like to know that babies died. We had forgotten or never knew that babies and children and old people die in every war.

One veteran said to me that he did not want to speak of Vietnam. I understand it must be painful, but if distress isn't shared how is it eased? Regardless of right or wrong, the burden of responsibility is on your shoulders. We cannot help you or help ourselves unless you let us.

Now we have a greater understanding of what you experienced. We know that the whole support network that was there for other men in other wars was ripped out from under you, we know that there was mismanagement at the top, we know that the war had become a media event televised in every home each evening, we know that we lost the war because we wouldn't let you win it.

That is all past now. What can we do that is constructive today? Employers must hire veterans but by the same token, veterans must be hireable. Veteran or not, many people are out of work today. We must use the lessons of Vietnam intelligently and try not to make the same mistakes again. The Veterans Administration was not prepared to handle the problems that came out of Vietnam. Perhaps, it is you Vietnam veterans who must become part of the Veterans Administration to implement new and better ways of caring for those who need attention with the aftermath of war.

How you are treated now--aside from legislation--depends on individual veterans and persons who were civilians during the war.

What we can do as the American public for you is offer some gesture of regard, awareness, and appreciation to you men and women. On a statewide basis we, citizens other than veterans, can sponsor a parade involving hundreds of thousands of Americans. Can you allow us to make some expression of gratitude to you now--without turning away from us with thoughts of "too late, too little, or trivial"? We know we owe you some psychological boost. Can you be big enough to let us try to do this for you?

by Eugenie de Rosier Petschel

*There is a problem in our country that needs attention. There are hundreds, and probably thousands, of civilian veterans of the war in Vietnam who are severely lacking in knowledge about Agent Orange, possible and probable exposure to this chemical and its dangers not only for the veteran, but his/her offspring.*

*Unlike the military veteran who had been trained for combat, civilian veterans volunteered their services to their country and went to Vietnam without being advised of existing health hazards such as Agent Orange. Though it is now somewhat after the fact, civilian veterans still need to be informed.*

*But who are the civilian veterans? Who are the men and women who served with such agencies as the American National Red Cross and the USO? Do these organizations have a list of persons employed and stationed in Vietnam? Are there any records from that time period? Are these records accessible? Can the effort be made to locate these men and women; and if so, who will make the effort?*

*Once these civilian veterans are identified...and located...and provided with information about Agent Orange, there is still another problem - medical attention.*

*These civilian veterans are entitled to medical testing facilities and medical treatment, if needed. Yet the question remains - who will provide the facilities for testing and any treatment that may be necessary? Who is responsible?*

*Is anybody listening? There are hundreds, and probably thousands, waiting for answers to these questions.*

Becky Pietz, Civilian Veteran  
6004 Knollwood Drive #T-2  
Falls Church, VA 22041  
703/931-8517  
703/558-3767

Dear VLC Member:

I would like to thank you for joining the Conference and let you know how much I am looking forward to working with you in the future.

As we have examined many of the issues facing veterans we are becoming more and more aware of the common link we have with many other groups who face exclusion from the system as they are viewed to be "different" or outsiders. This applies especially to those who have been disenfranchised by virtue of a lack of political unity and the "clout" needed to access the system.

We have come, graphically, to the realization, through numerous contacts with elected officials, that they respond only to solid numbers. The "rightness" of the issue or cause is not the prime factor in addressing the needs of the group. Rather, the numbers behind the issue is what, in the end, is the determining factor in bringing about justice. This is not to be cynical, it is to be realistic.

In view of this, we have opened the membership of the VLC not only to veterans but to those who share the same goals, full participation and justice from the system.

This does not dilute our purpose, rather, I believe, it strengthens us. We as a unified body may be able to speak for many and in numbers there is strength. If the system is to work it must work for all.

On another point, we would welcome your input and comments. Remember, this is your organization and we do not pretend to have all the answers.

Finally, we need your help in getting the word about the VLC out in the community.

Thank you again for your support and please do let me hear from you.

Sincerely,

Joan M Maiman

Ed Note: Like we say Joan, "Strength in unity."

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## Veterans' Administration

### Position Paper on Veterans Affairs

With more than 30 million veterans of voting age in the U.S., representing a significant inroad into most voting blocks, obviously there is a definite need to place strong campaign emphasis on the needs and desires of all veterans, and to develop and aggressively promote a reasonable, well-balanced and forward-moving veterans policy which will be attractive to all veterans. This policy should be so structured as to at least emphasize the following general areas of veteran interest:

1. Maintenance of the VA system as a distinct, independent agency, free from tampering by the Executive and Legislative branches of government. There have been several attempts by the Democrats to transfer traditional veterans benefits programs to other agencies. One of the major veteran complaints is that the VA is not responsive to their needs, and that it often works against veterans' interests! Establishment of the VA along the lines of the Federal Reserve Board's independence of governmental control would go a long way to alleviate these fears.
2. Re-establish veterans as the first priority of the VA Hospital System. The Democrats recently pushed the illegal aliens on the VA hospitals with priority over veterans. Vets **must** be assured of first priority for VA health care! The VA hospital system must be expanded and modernized so as to provide adequate and proper health care to all veterans who are entitled to it. This would necessitate the re-opening of the 10,000 beds Carter has abolished, the restoration of the VA budget (as a percentage of the total budget) from FY 81's 3.45% to at least FY 76's 6.7%, and the establishment of permanent pay legislation for VA personnel to stem their outflow from the VA.
3. Veterans pensions, disability benefits, vocational rehabilitation and educational assistance must be secured from budgetary tampering and indexed to the actual rise in inflation, with no subsequent slippage as the economy strengthens.
4. Although the effects of Agent Orange on Vietnam vets has yet to be scientifically proven, efforts should be made to determine the possibility of such side effects on veterans; pending final determination, it would be appropriate and responsible to grant temporary VA medical care to vets suspected of suffering from Orange toxicity. This is the least we owe to vets who may be suffering irreparable damage due to a government-sponsored program!
5. There should be active support for upgrading Vietnam-era veterans benefits! The campaign should actively recognize that there is a **difference in definition** between the terms "Vietnam war" and "Vietnam veteran", and that this is strongly perceived by the American public. This is greatly supported by a 1978 DAV study, as well as a recent major study by the Louis Harris firm. The latter study showed near unanimous public respect and support (97%) for Vietnam-era vets, that there is overwhelming support for increased benefits for Vietnam-era veterans, and that this issue is extremely popular with the 21 million non-Viet veterans. These conclusions strongly indicate, because of the density of popular support and feeling, that any media attempts to play on the Vietnam veteran issue as a Vietnam war issue **will not** carry with the voters, and that a strong, compassionate statement by Governor Reagan on the plight of Vietnam-era veterans, issued just before election day, will have a favorable effect on millions of Americans, especially in ethnic and minority groups.
6. Maintaining support for Veterans Preference in all federal hiring practices, with emphasis on the fact that this policy is fair compensation for those whose lives were interrupted by war-time military service. The Harris study concluded that there was overwhelming public support (72-21%) for the continuation of Veterans Preference even at a time when most people indicate a strong desire to see the federal bureaucracy reduced.

### VA Internal Survey Reveals Unsatisfactory AO Examination

#### Majority of Veterans Screened Say "Fair" to "Poor"

A confidential internal survey conducted by the VA on its Agent Orange screening program found that a majority of the sixty percent of veterans responding said their overall impression of the examination was only "fair" to "poor."

Forty-two of the 346 veterans surveyed rated the examination "very good," 108 "good," 99 only "fair," and 97 veterans said it was "poor."

The vast majority of the veterans surveyed felt they were treated courteously by the hospital staff at the time of the Agent Orange examination: only 31 said they were not treated courteously.

The individuals were nearly evenly divided on whether they were given proper attention during the examination: 182 felt they were and 153 responded negatively.

A VA doctor did not discuss the results of the physical with the majority of the veterans: 142 were told, 199 were not, according to the survey response. Only 66 veterans were told the results of their laboratory tests, and 285 said they were not informed of the test results.

One hundred and eleven had been seen by a non-VA physician because of Agent Orange problems, while 237 had seen only VA doctors.

Concerning the orange-colored VA pamphlet entitled "Worried About Agent Orange," 99 veterans had seen it and 250 had not.

The results of the VA survey clearly refute the VA's claim that they are providing veterans with comprehensive and satisfactory Agent Orange screening as far as the veterans are concerned.

Despite their negative feeling, however, it would be wise for all veterans who feel they are experiencing Agent Orange effects or other detrimental health problems related to military service, to secure a free physical examination and/or file a claim for disability. It is best to establish an initial record that can be supplemented or appealed later, if problems become worsened or medical evidence of Agent Orange on humans becomes more firmly established.

The Stars & Stripes, Thursday, February 5, 1981

### Veterans Administration Director met with Chairman of Veterans Leadership Conference

Robert Nimmo, newly confirmed head of the Veterans Administration, met briefly with the Chairman of the Veterans Leadership Conference, Joan Maiman, in Washington, 29 July 1981.

In the introductory meeting Nimmo told Maiman that he is looking forward to the meeting to be held in DC in the near future affording veterans leaders an opportunity to meet with heads of various government agencies dealing with veterans issues.

The position of the deputy director of the Veterans Administration remains vacant following the resignation of the deputy director designate, Allen Clark. In a previous conversation Clark had told Maiman that he is confident that the position will be filled by a Vietnam veteran.

Maiman stated "we are hopeful that this position will be filled by a person who served in Vietnam as the needs of this group are in danger of being overlooked if such action is not taken. It is especially important that the individual put into this position not be a figurehead, rather he must be someone of courage and integrity who will speak to the real issues."

## The Sound of Silence

*Who will speak for the World War I Veterans...living a life of dog food suppers...he who fought on that long ago field, and gave of his strength and his youth.*

*Who will speak for him as his strength fails?...*

*"Not I," said the Official. "I am in charge of giving priority treatment to the refugees. After all, they deserve the best this nation has to offer. They came seeking freedom."*

*Who will speak for the veterans of World War II...their country degraded in foreign lands and the flag for which their friends died, a mockery. Who will speak for them?...*

*"Not I," said the Official. "Our foreign policy must be strong and we can not afford to risk offending our allies or our foes in these troubled times. We talk, but we dare not act."*

*Who will speak for the veterans of the "police action" in Korea. Who will remember that this was a cause for which Americans died. A land which now can not "afford" to be free...Who will remember that this was a matter of national honor?...*

*"Not I," said the Official. "I am in charge of balancing the budget and everyone will have to sacrifice. Veterans should set the example as they have in the past by giving for their country."*

*Who will speak for Vietnam Veterans. Who will care that they have never really come home. It was a "bad war" so perhaps the whole thing is best forgotten. Who indeed will speak for them?...*

*"Not I," said the Official. "We are satisfied that we have created programs and the reconciliation has happened. The draft evaders are pardoned and those who did not serve are well adjusted."*

*Who will speak for them and who will care? Only you...because without you there is no sound, only silence.*

### Pete Tiffany Named to Advisory Committee

Pete Tiffany, Western Regional Director of the Veterans Leadership Conference, has been named to the State Assembly Veterans Committee for the State of California. Tiffany will be working closely with Assemblyman Patrick Nolan (R-Glendale) who is one of the prime sponsors of the California Agent Orange Bill now pending in the California House. Tiffany stated that he is hopeful that the recent publicity given to the Vietnam veterans will result in tangible gains such as this legislation. Tiffany is also a member of the Veterans Congressional Advisory Committee and in this capacity works with Congressman George Miller (D-Martinez).

**HELP WORK FOR THE RETURN OF  
POW/MIAS in Southeast Asia**



To Help, Contact:  
Ann Mills Griffiths  
NATIONAL LEAGUE  
OF FAMILIES  
1608 "K" Street, N.W.  
Washington, D. C. 20006

## A Salute to Vietnam Veterans

### *Soldier of Fortune Magazine Themes the Vietnam Vet.*

SOF's first convention drew approximately 750 of America's most newsworthy people to Columbia, Missouri. All the television networks were there and the range of magazines and newspapers was staggering: *The Times of London, New York Times, Dallas Morning Star, St. Louis Post Dispatch, Toronto Sun, Los Angeles Daily News, Philadelphia Daily News, London Daily Mail, Washington Post, London Daily Mirror, Atlantic Monthly, High Times, Penthouse, Playboy, Actuel Magazine of Paris, Armed Forces Journal* and *Rolling Stone*.

This year the 2nd Annual Convention and Shooting Championships will be held in Scottsdale, Arizona, September 17-20.

Vietnam, which divided a generation and our nation in the 1960's and early 1970's, has re-emerged as THE issue of 1981 and it is the Vietnam Veterans who have brought this to America's attention. Recognizing this, *Soldier of Fortune* has selected "A Salute to Vietnam Veterans" as the theme for this year's convention.

The Vietnam Experience may turn out to be one of the most significant events in our history, yet Americans have been unable or unwilling to reach a consensus about what it was and what it continues to do to this country. From this confusion and reluctance, a Vietnam mythology has developed that is comfortable for some, yet inaccurate to many.

When the veterans first came home they tried to express themselves—but America was not listening. Many veterans withdrew and became silent. Recently veterans have started talking and Americans are now listening, albeit with some reluctance and embarrassment.

The veterans, many of whom were scarred physically and emotionally by the war and its aftermath, are asking today that America accept Vietnam and face up to its obligations—past, present and future.

At Scottsdale you will have the chance to talk with some of the young men, and some not so young, who answered their country's call. Why they did so and what has happened to them as a result makes terrific copy.

How have they adjusted? What is the Vietnam Syndrome? What do they have to say about those who avoided the draft? How do they feel about the amnesty program? What do they say now about the people who marched in the streets? How do they react to those people when they meet them? What about the difference in this country's reaction to the hostages in Iran and Vietnam veterans? Agent Orange: fact or fiction? Are there still American POWs alive in Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia? What will it take to "bring the Vietnam veterans home"? They answered the call once; if they had to do it again, would they?

Our demographic studies show that 33% of our readers are Vietnam veterans; however, based on the number of veterans at the first convention, we know the number of veterans in attendance at Scottsdale will be far higher proportionally.

*Soldier of Fortune* does not pretend to be the voice of Vietnam veterans but a significant group of the Vietnam veterans do read the magazine. To a large extent SOF is for the Vietnam veteran; we have provided them with an outlet so that they can tell their stories.

**Subscribe to the Vietnam Veterans Review.**

### CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



\*An exhibit of Vietnam-related art and photographs created by the men and women who fought and covered the war. If you are looking for a way to put on paper what Vietnam meant to those who served there, don't miss the exhibit. All the pain, joy, horror and humor of Vietnam is captured on canvas and in bronze.

\*Seminars on the current political/military situations in Lebanon, Southeast Asia, Southern Africa and Latin America (El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala) by the SOF staffers and contributing editors who have been there. What they have to say about events in these places you probably can't pick up from the wire services.

\*Seminars on the history of Vietnam's Special Operations Group (SOG), the top-secret, clandestine U.S. operation that took the war to Laos, Cambodia and North Vietnam. Other seminars include up-to-date status of the POW/MIA issue, military small-arms development, how to survive in America's crime-ridden cities, desert survival and Soviet weapons development.

\*The Second Annual Three Gun Match at the Black Canyon Range outside Scottsdale will draw 150 of the nation's top shooters, competing for more than \$20,000 in prizes. Top prize for the overall best shooter with a pistol, shotgun and assault rifle is \$5,000. In addition, the International Practical Shooting Confederation is sanctioning the match this year and the rifle champion at the SOF match will be the IPSC national rifle champion.

\*A full automatic-weapons demonstration on Saturday, September 19, by SOF Military Small Arms Editor Peter Kokalis and his friends with machine guns ranging from a museum-quality water-cooled Vickers to a modern-day .50 cal.

\*Five-day schools in Assault Rifle, Combat Pistolcraft, Combat Medicine, Combat Shotgun and Desert Survival by some of the nation's most renowned experts prior to the convention, September 12 to September 16.

\*SOF's Banquet, during which SOF Publisher Robert K. Brown will present the "Bull Simmons' Memorial Award". Named for the Special Forces colonel who led the attempt to pull American POWs out of North Vietnam's Son Tay Prison in 1970, the award is presented each year to a warrior who has been selected by the SOF staff for his contribution to the field of high adventure. This year's award will go to a Vietnam-era Congressional Medal of Honor winner, who won his CMH for his heroism in Laos while a member of SOG.

Hotel arrangements can be made through Jeana Nugent, The Meeting Planners and Miles Travel, 5656 East Orange Blossom, Phoenix, AZ 85018, or by calling Miss Nugent at (602) 231-0200. Fill out the enclosed form today and mail to: Jim Graves, Managing Editor, *Soldier of Fortune Magazine*, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306.

### Viet Vet Author Visits Chicago

Al Santoli, author of the book *Everything We Had*, visited Chicago recently. Santoli, who served in Vietnam from 1968-1969 with the 25th Infantry, told Joan Maiman of the Veterans Leadership Conference that his book is about "giving dignity to those who served in Vietnam." The book is an oral history of the war based on Santoli's interviews with vets.

Santoli, Maiman and other local vets appeared on the ABC local program AM Chicago. Among the issues raised was the concern of the vets regarding the issue of Agent Orange and the poor quality of health care provided, in many cases, by the VA.

The vets agreed on the need for unity if they were ever to achieve their goals, and strongly agreed that the time for the image of the Vietnam vet as a "looser" is past.

Santoli is not affiliated with any group or movement in the Vietnam movement and added that he has met many "fantastic" people in his recent travels to promote the book.

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## Former prisoners of war are honored

**MARTINEZ** - Former prisoners of war and the families of men still missing in action were honored Friday at a commemoration of National POW/MIA Recognition Day.

After patriotic marches and songs by the Sixth U.S. Army Band and marching by the U.S. Navy Precision Drill Team from Mare Island, two former POWs from World War II told briefly of their experiences and what the belated recognition means.

The mother of a man who is still missing 13 years after being shot down over Vietnam and a Vietnam veteran both said after the ceremonies that they believe there are still living American prisoners in Vietnam.

Melvin Routt, commander of the California State Department of Ex-POW, Inc. introduced some of the men who were being honored by saying, "You're looking at men that can give you recipes for angleworm."

Routt said he spent time as a "guest of the emperor" of Japan, in a wry reference to his time as a World War II POW.

He said his Japanese captors told him and his comrades that Japan had not signed the Geneva Convention setting forth rules for the treatment of prisoners of war, and "they guaranteed we'd starve to death."

He said 375 men died, some from beatings, and others went on a death march, during which stragglers were stabbed to death with bayonets.

"Up until this year," he said, "we have gone unrecognized. Now it's time for us to ask for help."

He said House Resolution 1100, which would help POWs get the kind of help they need from the Veterans Administration hospital system is still being considered, and he asked those present to write to politicians and urge that it be passed.

Myles King, an ex-POW of the Germans during World War II, told of his adventures living with the French Resistance for a month after his P-51 fighter plane was shot down over France.

He was later captured by the Germans, spend three months at the notorious Buchenwald death camp and met some men who had wandered around France as free men as long as a year before being captured.

At one point King and his fellow prisoners were made to march through a blizzard that was so fierce that German guards as well as prisoners died of exposure.

At another time, his prison camp was bombed by the U.S. Air Force during the day and by the British Royal Air Force during the night.

Still later, on a forced march, American planes strafed the Germans, and then unknowingly came back and strafed 50 English POWs who were with the captured Americans.

On May 8, 1945, General George Patton's army finally rescued King and his comrades, but it wasn't until this past year, King said, that anyone said "Thank you, you did a good job."

Clarence Nixon, the hospital administrator at the Martinez facility, said he is developing a new policy for the treatment of former POWs.

"Think of the significance of what we're doing, turn to each other and draw your strength from each other," he said.

He said Americans should compare our country to the Soviet Union, which is "barely 50 years old and already geriatric, fearful, conservative, and coercive and obsessed with the need for central control and security."

Our revolution, on the other hand, Nixon said, is 200 years old "and still evolving, enhancing freedom of choices for people. It is a shining light, the beam of hope throughout the world."

After the ceremony, Alexandria Gonzales of San Francisco, the mother of Victor Romero, a pilot who has been missing 13 years since his plane was shot down over Vietnam, said, while trying to hold back tears, that she believes American men are still alive in Vietnam, still being held as prisoners."

She said she was "deeply honored" to have been invited to the ceremonies, but said she does not think the American government is doing enough to find out whether American men may still be held in Vietnam.

Jack Peffley, a 34-year-old Vietnam veteran from Oakland, being treated at the hospital for delayed stress, said he has spoken to ex-POWs from Vietnam and they believe that of the approximately 2,000 MIAs, half may still be alive.

The reason, he said, could be to use them for slave labor, or maybe use them later as a bargaining chip to assure that the U.S. Congress passes the aid package promised Vietnam by previous administrations but not yet implemented.

He added that he saw the ceremonies as "too little, too late" for veterans, including Vietnam veterans.

He said he had served two tours of duty as a Marine in Vietnam, and was wounded twice. He was exposed to herbicides there and was hospitalized in March, April and May of this year for an enlarged liver, deterioration of his blood immune system, dizzy spells, blackouts and "even periods of violence," he said.

Peffley commented, "The longest I've held down a job since my discharge is one year. I've been through three marriages."

He said he was happy to hear that the government recently approved the establishment of 40 new outreach centers for Vietnam veterans.

But he added, "I believe they'd be more effective if the total staff were Vietnam era veterans."

By John Lovejoy, Ledger Staff Writer  
Daily Ledger, Sunday, July 19, 1981

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"A Salute to Vietnam Veterans" will be this year's theme commemorating THE VIETNAM EXPERIENCE



### CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

Seminars on: History of the top secret Special Operations Group (SOG) in Vietnam, presented by vets who were there; POW/MIA situation today; Police street survival; Russian small-unit tactics and weapons; Updates on Lebanon, Afghanistan, South Africa, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

Automatic weapons demonstrations; Exhibitions of the latest gear; Martial arts, knife throwing and combat shotgun demonstrations; Laser sights and night-vision devices!

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As you can see, there will be plenty of things to do, so plan now to be there. Registration fee for the four-day convention is \$100, but for those who can attend only one day we have a special \$25 single-day rate (Saturday's single-day rate does not include the banquet.) For further information call (602) 991-2400 and ask for the SOF Convention Information Booth, or just come to the Radisson Resort & Racquet Club in Scottsdale on the day you can attend and register.



**Lest We Forget**

**Women's Corner**

**To Viet vets: Let us help heal the wound**

Sometimes they hit you by surprise. She was a tall, attractive woman who seemed not to have a care in her life. We had been talking for a few minutes when she pulled the clippings from her purse.

They were from *The Tribune* - *The Tribune* of the 1960s, which had a different look from the paper of today. The first clipping announced that the newspaper would be sending family photographs to servicemen in Vietnam, and that this particular family was among the first to be included in the project. The woman was only 19 in the photograph that accompanied the story; she was posed with her parents, brothers, and sisters. The story said that a copy of the photo had been sent to her older brother in Vietnam.

The second story was a brief one. The headline said: "Flags, Poster Welcome Viet GI Back Home." Her brother's left leg had been shattered by fragments of a land mine; he was alive, but he was not well, and he was back in Chicago.

"The whole thing has been so long," she said. "My brother came back in 1969, and we thought that after a while things would get back to normal. But they never have. In all the time since then, he hasn't had a job. He just can't seem to get over the war."

"The nerves in his arms and legs were severed, and he has no feelings in his legs. At first he would sleep all day, then stay up all night and drink and just look at the wall. That's over now, but the war is still with him, and the worst thing is, he can't talk to anyone about it, except other men who were over there with him."

She grew up in a traditional family; photographs of John F. Kennedy and Richard J. Daley flanked the Sacred Heart on their mantel. Her brother was two years older than she, and was her best friend. Nothing in her childhood prepared her for dealing with a living casualty of a war everyone wanted only to forget.

"It would be one thing if we could, in fact, forget about it," she said. "But that's not possible. It's easy to say 'forget about it' if you were never there. But the boys we sent over there—sometimes I think that we just took a loyal, honest, trusting, simple group of people who thought they were supposed to believe in something, and we threw them into a situation that no one in the world would be able to make sense of."

**'The people who were against the war have been able to go on with their lives. My brother hasn't. Something about him never came home from over there.'**

I reminded her that some very thoughtful, very caring people had been brave in a different way—in trying to stop the war her brother fought. I said that, in the midst of the current widespread discussion over Vietnam veterans, the thought might become overlooked that the people who opposed the war believed they were performing an intensely moral and patriotic duty.

"No matter what you believe about that, at least the people who were against the war have been able to go on with their lives," she said. "My brother hasn't."

**Women Viet Vets Fight Memories**

By Rosalind Rossi  
Chicago Sun Times, 29 March 1981

In Vietnam, they were called "round eyes." American men often lined up before them, seeking to perform some small chivalrous deed. The Vietnamese would stare at them quizzically, bewildered by their fair skin and round eyes.

They are the women who served in the Vietnam War, as Army nurses, Red Cross workers and volunteers. And though "the round eye was something special in Vietnam," as one woman veteran put it, that offered the women little comfort in coping with a daily bombardment of injured and a modicum of medical equipment.

On returning to the States, some struggled through their own private wars, fighting back images of agony and questions about a war vigorously rejected by many of their peers.

Something about him never came home from over there. He just...he just can't put himself on the line anymore. It's as if he doesn't trust himself.

"He refinishes furniture, for example. He could make a living that way. But he takes people's furniture in at his house, and he is so meticulous about it, he gets so angry at himself...I don't know how to explain this, because it doesn't seem very dramatic. But he will take a piece of furniture, and something inside him makes him work six or eight months on it before he's satisfied. And then when he gets done he realizes how long it took him, and he refuses to charge the people for it."

The worst thing, she said, is that she is unable to make her brother understand how she feels. She has written some poetry for him; she showed me copies of some of it. The poems had titles such as "The Homecoming," and "Where Are You?" They all had to do with her frustration at trying to make her brother understand how much she cares. The message was simple; the last line of one poem was, "I love you, and I'm glad you're here."

On the 4th of July this year, she had a picnic at her home in the suburbs and invited her whole family. Her brother came. She posted a sign on a tree: "We Salute the Viet Nam Veterans, and Wish Everyone a Happy 4th of July." She was surprised when some people across the street snickered and made some disparaging comments; her brother told her not to worry about it, because he didn't.

"But the thing is, that's the attitude that's the whole problem," she said to me. "The men who were in Vietnam are convinced that the only people who care about them are other men who were over there. You read about these rap groups that veterans are starting, so that they can talk to each other—but all that's doing is keeping the distance there. It may be helpful to them, but it reinforces the idea that no one else can understand."

"Maybe we can't understand, but we can let them know that we're ready to try. I think a lot of people are just beginning to realize that they were so much against the war that they forget about the men who were asked to fight it. People hated the war so much that the hate carried over to the soldiers, and people like my brother are still living with that."

She said that she is hopeful things are changing. Recently she took some books about Vietnam out of the public library, and she noticed on the checkout card that the books had been in circulation almost constantly for the last six months. She took that as a good sign; people are trying to learn and understand.

"Now if my brother and people like him will only let us in," she said. "It's like a wound. We've got to open it and clean it out before it will finally go away. We're a whole country with that wound, and until we do something about it we're not going to be completely well."

By Bob Greene  
Chicago Tribune, July 2, 1981

Noreen Gilroy, 45, of Wheaton, says even now she has flashbacks of Vietnam, where she served in a Vietnamese hospital for the U.S. aid for International Development program. Every time a helicopter flies into Hines Veterans Hospital, where she now works, she is flooded with memories of the injured in Vietnam. Becky Pietz, 33, of Falls Church, Va., says she has blamed Vietnam for long periods of depression riddled with crying jags, an emotional breakdown in 1975, the end of her marriage and, "probably every problem that I ever had." She was there four months as a Red Cross medical caseworker before she quit and returned to the states. "I just had one too many 17-year-old boys die on my ward," she said. "I don't know any woman who came back from Vietnam OK."

LYNDA VAN DEVANter, 33, of Washington, says she experienced her first flashback eight years after her homecoming. When a siren sounded in a nearby firehouse, she fell to the floor screaming, crawled combat-style out to the livingroom, and asked her friends what had happened. The next morning, she awoke under her bed — one of the precautions she learned as an operating room nurse during red alerts for rocket and mortar attacks in Vietnam.

Van Devanter, head of the women's project of the Vietnam Veterans of America, says some of the women who served in Vietnam suffered many of the symptoms of the "Vietnam Syndrome" experienced by male veterans.

These symptoms — rage, guilt, flashbacks, nightmares, panic, depression and emotional numbing — can surface as many as 15 years after homecoming, a recent study by the New York Center for Policy Research shows. The difference, however, is that the Veterans Administration has almost ignored their existence in women, Van Devanter said.

"It's as if they think we really don't exist and that we'd come back and readjust with no problems," said Van Devanter, who has organized a training session for veterans' counselors on the unique postwar problems facing women.

The government has almost a vested interest in not displaying us as vets because for so many years they have been saying that women will never serve in combat. As far as I'm concerned, that's a slap in the face. It denies the merit and worth of what we've done."

She credits a counseling program in which she "walked through" Vietnam with helping her soar above severe periods of depression.

IN THE LAST six months, Van Devanter has given similar training sessions, geared to the problems of women, to veterans' counselors and has visited nearly 20 percent of the 91 vet centers across the nation. However, she is concerned about the future of her program because all 91 vet centers have been targeted for elimination under Reagan administration budget-cutting plans.

Defense Department records estimate some 193,000 women served in the armed forces during the Vietnam era. More than 7,400 of them were stationed in Vietnam, with 4,500 of that number in the Army Medical Corps.

Joan Maiman, chairman of the Chicago based Veterans Leadership Conference, estimates only a minority of women, and men, who served in Vietnam are seriously affected by the Vietnam Syndrome.

MAIMAN SAID her experience as a Red Cross worker at an Army evacuation hospital changed her from the "original American innocent" into a cynical realist. However, she said, she was able to surface emotionally intact by falling back on her sense of humor, her family, including her father, an admiral, and her work with veterans.

Maiman grew up playing on the decks of the USS Iowa, watching World War II movies and ingesting "a tradition of service." But she does admit to some residual effects from the experience. She no longer likes war movies and is startled by loud noises, which remind her of rocket fire in Vietnam.





## National Association of Concerned Veterans

### FACT SHEET

"The NACV publicly states that the Veterans Administration response that "It would not be in the best interest of the VA to attend the Agent Orange Meeting," once again demonstrates the VA's caustic attitude toward Vietnam Veterans and raises the question of whether the VA truly seeks resolutions to the Agent Orange question." (Resolution unanimously passed by the 14th Annual NACV Convention, May 21, 1981).

The NACV is our nation's oldest National Vietnam War Veteran's organization, founded in 1968. In 1973, NACV brought suit against the Nixon Administration and forced the release of illegally impounded funds for College Veterans Affairs Offices.

**1978:** Agent Orange brought to the Nation's attention at the 11th Annual NACV Convention in Baltimore, Maryland.

**1979:** NACV and the National Council of Churches forms the National Veterans Task Force on Agent Orange at the NACV 12th Annual Convention in Kansas City, Kansas.

**1980:** "An Agent Orange Program that treats you like a human being, that gives you medical care and the compensation that you deserve." (Congressman Thomas A. Daschle, NACV 13th Annual Convention, Madison, Wisconsin, May 24, 1980).

**1981:** National Vietnam Veterans Conference on Agent Orange and endorsement of the film, "Agent Orange, A Story of Dignity and Doubt," at the 14th Annual NACV Convention in Baltimore, Maryland.

In 1979, NACV was the only national Vietnam veterans organization involved in the design, training and implementation of the VA's "Vet Centers" program. In 1981 NACV leads the fight to save them.

For many years NACV has fought on behalf of Incarcerated Veterans and is the only national organization of Vietnam Veterans to have groups formed in prisons.

The NACV has been active in litigation challenging the Discharge Review System.

In 1979, NACV members started the Vietnam Veterans Artist and Writers Guild and NACV endorsed it with a resolution at the 12th Annual Convention in Kansas City, Kansas.

**1978:** NACV provided testimony to the U.S. Senate suggesting a Technical Assistance Program to develop community employment programs by and for Vietnam Veterans.

**1979:** NACV aided the Department of Labor development of the Technical Assistance Program (Department of Labor Veterans and CETA Task Force).

**1980:** NACV helped implement the Department of Labor Targeted Technical Assistant Program (TTA).

**1981:** The Reagan Administration eliminates TTA.

NACV members are assisting Vietnam Veterans in establishing their own businesses and leading the effort to make Vietnam Veterans financially independent.

September 5, 1981 NACV is sponsoring the "First National Vietnam Veterans Pig Roast (3 day weekend) in Springfield, Missouri," in the Ozark Mountains. All the pig, beer and music you can consume for \$12.00. Camping is available. For more information, contact NACV Central Region, 237 S. New Ballas, St. Louis, MO 63141. Telephone: (314) 432-8510 (nights).

### Mr. Business Man...

**Need a particular skill? We'll bet there's an unemployed vet with that skill trained and experienced and available for your job offer. Contact this paper, we'll find him!**

NACV points out that David Stockman, President Reagan's budget cutter, former paid anti-war activist during Vietnam, is proposing to eliminate the following programs aimed specifically at Vietnam Era and Disabled Veterans:

**ELIMINATE:** Veterans Cost of Instruction Programs (V.C.I.P.). Funding for Veterans Offices on Campuses to provide outreach, recruitment, counseling, work-study, tutorial assistance, financial aid, career guidance, and Veterans Administration paperwork processing.

**ELIMINATE:** Targeted Technical Assistant Program (T.T.A.). Department of Labor asked Veteran Community Based Organization to help other CETA Prime sponsors to develop mandated programs to assist disabled and Vietnam Era veterans. Also, a clearinghouse of successful programs to support the program.

**ELIMINATE:** "Vet Centers" - The Veteran Administration's Outreach Program to find, encourage and assist Vietnam Era veterans and their families in adjustment, counseling, and post-traumatic stress disorders (estimates are that 700,000 will need help by 1985). From April 1, 1980 through December 31, 1980, 39,000 veterans received services with 48% requesting help with jobs.

**ELIMINATE:** Incarcerated Veterans Project. Approximately 20 self-help programs assisting incarcerated and ex-offender veterans with counseling, discharge review, etc. (1/3 of United States prison population is Vietnam Era veterans).

**ELIMINATE:** White House Outreach Programs, Multi-service Programs in major cities: Detroit, Seattle, Baltimore, Minneapolis, Los Angeles, New York, Newark, etc.

**ELIMINATE:** Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (D.V.O.P.) and Employment Service program for disabled and Vietnam Era veterans lacks funding to operate now and will be functionally eliminated by 1983.

Additional cuts proposed that will affect all veterans include:

**ELIMINATE:** Legal Services Corporation, providing discharge review and other services for indigent and rural veterans across the nation. (There is an April 1 application deadline for some 2 million veterans.)

**ELIMINATE:** Ex-service member unemployment compensation. A person who honorably finishes their first term in the military and declines offer to re-enlist then loses their eligibility for Unemployment Insurance.

**ELIMINATE:** Vital Veterans Administration Medical Research.

**ELIMINATE:** Special Programs (i.e., kidney dialysis services).

**ELIMINATE:** 20,000 employees out of the Veterans Administration Department of Medicine and Surgery by 1986.

**ELIMINATE:** 3,200 employees from the Veterans Administration Department of Veterans Benefits by 1983.

**ELIMINATE:** 2 Veterans Administration Hospitals.

## Paul Reutershan Health Care Center Opens

*An Agent Orange Clinic was opened recently by Agent Orange Victims International in Smithtown, Long Island, New York. The clinic, dedicated to Paul Reutershan, who was the first to file a damage suit against Dow Chemical, manufacturer of the herbicide, and who died of cancer in 1978, will treat illnesses that Vietnam veterans and their families believe are caused by exposure to the defoliant Agent Orange. The clinic is affiliated with the Good Samaritan Holistic Health Center in Smithtown. Medical and psychological care at a reduced cost, will be provided by forty doctors from the health center and elsewhere on Long Island.*

by Lem Genovese

## Overdose Killed Vietnam Vet

LOS ANGELES — The ex-Marine whose apparent suicide touched off protests and hunger strikes by other Vietnam Era veterans died of an overdose of 50 "knockout" drops combined with methaqualone and alcohol, Coroner Thomas Noguchi said yesterday. Tests to determine whether James Hopkins was suffering from effects of Agent Orange were negative, but some genetic abnormality similar to that caused by the defoliant in laboratory animals had been detected. Although he could confirm no cause of death until completion of an Aug. 25 inquest, Noguchi said there was no evidence of foul play and there were strong indications that Hopkins, 32, committed suicide. Hopkins' widow, Suzanne, has claimed since his death May 17 that her husband was murdered.



## National Vietnam Veterans

# PIG ROAST 1981

**COME JOIN US FOR ONE HECK OF A PARTY!!!**

1st Annual Vietnam Veteran's Pig Roast -- September 5, 1981 -- Three-day Labor Day Weekend -- Springfield, Missouri, on St. James River. All the beer and pig you can drink and eat!! All kinds of games and contests to excite and amuse you. Bands will be playing all day and night. Tickets are \$12.00 and are tax deductible.

For more information, contact:  
Charles S. Clyde, NACV Central Region Director  
237 S. New Ballas Road  
St. Louis, MO 63141  
Work: (314) 428-6534 or Home: (314) 432-8510

## Vietnam Materials Needed

The Vietnam Veterans United is in the process of putting together a slide show on Vietnam that we hope to take to universities and college campus lecture tours and are in need of photos (which we make into slides) on air assaults, firefights, artillery bases, landing zones, greased dinks, etc. Any help in this area would be appreciated.

Send materials to:  
Vietnam Veterans United  
c/o Robert Boyce  
4938 Briercrest  
Lakewood CA. 90713



## Editor Seeking War Info

I am currently researching and writing the volume on Vietnam for Garland Publishing Company's "Wars of the United States" series. These will be a collection of annotated bibliographies.

I am interested in including as many recent books and articles (1980-1984) as I possibly can. My manuscript will be submitted by 1984. If you have recently published, or have accepted for publication, a book or article on your Vietnam experience and you would like it included in my bibliography for other scholars, historians, and interested readers to see, please send me the following information.

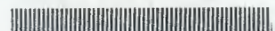
Send me the title of the book or articles; the number of pages; the publishing company and address; whether or not it has maps, charts, or illustrations and how many of each; the copyright date; if it is an article - the name of the journal or magazine, volume and number; and finally a summary of the work.

The completed work will serve as a research tool for those interested in locating information about U.S. involvement in Vietnam. The book will include chapters on Vietnamese history; North and South Vietnam; Cambodia, Laos and Thailand; official histories; documentary collections; weapons, equipment - both U.S. and communist; all branches of the service; the war in literature and the movies; personal narratives; the media war, and other areas of interest.

In the interest of allowing me the opportunity to provide the most complete annotated bibliography available on the Vietnam War I encourage you to contact me.

Please return all correspondence to:

Louis A. Peake  
3602 Skyview Drive  
Huntington, West Virginia 25701



## Vietnam War Veterans History & Archives Center

The History and Archives Center, in Santa Rosa, California is trying to reach as many Vietnam combat vets as possible in a search for personal papers, artifacts and organizational records. These articles are to be placed in a special National Archive and Museum collection to document the soldiers perspective of the Vietnam War. We understand that contributed materials will end up at Cornell University which will act as a home for the central collection.

If you think you have something that can be used, please write to the center for a questionnaire. Address correspondence to:

Vietnam War Veterans History and Archives Center  
Post Office Box 454  
Santa Rosa, California 95402  
Attn: Ms Linda Heath Curry



**Vet Centers will give you no hassles, we're here to help!**

## Vietnam Veterans to Gather in Boston

The Reunion Committee of Vietnam Veterans of New England is planning a gathering on Boston Common for all New England Vietnam veterans, families and friends, on Saturday, September 26, 1981. The theme of the reunion is "to assert our pride and dignity as Vietnam veterans and Americans in a positive and supportive manner. Not to condemn but to reach out and reconcile - not an 'us versus them' but an openness to all - not to seek pity but understanding - and to honor ourselves, our families and the nation by showing care and concern for each other and for all people." Scheduled events include: a picnic, a 10K 6.2 mile road race, entertainment, sport and national leaders who are Vietnam veterans and a memorial ceremony. For further information, write to Larry McAuliffe, Vietnam Veterans Reunion Committee, Boston, Box 318, Jamaica Plains, Mass. 02130.

## Stay Informed

# Vietnam Veterans Newsletter



### TOM HEBERT brings you back . . . to Vietnam.

America's longest war has been over for more than seven years. Your part in it ended maybe seven . . . ten . . . fifteen . . . or more years ago. The controversy over American involvement in Vietnam still exists. The American public has done its best to forget the war but for the Veteran of Vietnam there is no forgetting. We were there! We were part of it and now it is a part of us . . . forever!

Some veterans, because of their very personal experience, may not want to remember anything about the war - and I respect that. The Vietnam Veterans Newsletter is not for them. The Newsletter is for those who want to remember - want to relive the adventure - want to learn more about the war, it causes, its complexities, its aftermath - want to be able to deal with the impact the war is having on them - want to renew the camaraderie of Vietnam - and want to stand up and say "we served and we are proud".

This monthly publication is a gold mine of both interesting and valuable information. The newsletter has been published for two years and has established a working network of sources - publishers, bookstores, collectors, dozens of Vietnam Veteran organizations, and most importantly, readers who contribute news. The Newsletter functions as a clearinghouse, as Vietnam Veterans from all over the country send in information.

### 100% Money-Back Guarantee

If you are not completely satisfied with the Newsletter, you are protected by my unconditional money-back guarantee. If you are unhappy with your first few issues, just return them and I'll refund the subscription price. You can keep the Vietnam Booklist as a gift. — TOM HEBERT

### FREE BONUS The Vietnam Booklist

When you order a one-year subscription to the Vietnam Veterans Newsletter, I'll send a free copy of the Vietnam Booklist which contains complete details on 75 books on the Vietnam War.

About 40% of the books were published during the 1965-1974 time frame with the other 60% being published since 1975. The details include among other things some information on the author, the publisher, a rating, how to locate the book, and the story-line or other specifics on the nature of the book.

The Vietnam Booklist will guide you to over 16,000 pages of reading on the war. It includes fiction, nonfiction, personal narratives, pictorials, insignia catalogs, etc. The Vietnam Booklist is invaluable as it contains all the books reviewed in the Newsletter over the last two years. It normally sells for \$5.00 but it's FREE with your subscription. And it's yours to keep if you decide to cancel your subscription!

- Here's some of what you'll find in the Vietnam Veterans Newsletter:
- Reviews of books - both old and new
  - References to magazine articles - both current and past
  - Movie announcements and reviews
  - Information on Vietnam Veteran organizations
  - Information for memorabilia collectors
  - Vietnam Veterans in the news
  - Updates on current events - like the Garwood court martial
  - Updates on Agent Orange
  - Updates on the MIA's
  - Updates on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial
  - Reader's Column
  - Interviews of authors and other personalities of interest to Vietnam Veterans

### BACK ISSUES ARE AVAILABLE!

VIETNAM VETERANS NEWSLETTER, P.O. Box 122, Collinsville, Conn. 06022

- I enclose \$12.00 for a one-year subscription. Please send me my free copy of the Vietnam Booklist.
- I enclose \$21.00 to take advantage of my two-year subscription rate. Please send me my free copy of the Vietnam Booklist.
- I also enclose \$\_\_\_\_\_ for the most recent back issues at \$1.00 each (only the 12 most recent issues are available).
- I enclose \$100.00 for a lifetime subscription. I understand that I will receive all future issues of the Vietnam Veterans Newsletter and Vietnam Booklist updates without further charge that I will receive a 10% discount on all purchases from the Vietnam Bookstore, and that I am entitled to receive all future subscription incentives without charge. Please send me my free copy of the Vietnam Booklist.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Vietnam Years \_\_\_\_\_  
Service Units \_\_\_\_\_  
(optional) Location \_\_\_\_\_

## Congressional Black Caucus to Examine Problems Facing Vietnam Vets

Carl Green of the Congressional Black Caucus told Joan Maiman of the Veterans Leadership Conference that the Black Caucus will sponsor a workshop in Washington, DC on 25 September as a part of a weekend program. This workshop will deal with issues facing the Vietnam veterans and will include an "alternative budget" for the Veterans Administration and an examination of the Agent Orange issue and possible solutions.

The session will be open to all interested persons and for further information Carl Green may be contacted at the Congressional Black Caucus, House Annex #2, Washington, DC 20515, phone (202) 225-1691.

Congresswoman Cardis Collins has met with the leadership of the Veterans Leadership Conference in the past and has expressed deep concern for the problems of those who served in Vietnam especially for the Black soldiers as many of them continue to have readjustment problems and concerns over possible exposure to Agent Orange.

And there's more! Have you been wanting to get in touch with the men you served with in Nam? Think about it. Isn't there someone you served with over there you'd like to talk to or meet with again? The Newsletter will do its best to help. Do you have an opinion you'd like to express? The Newsletter's the place to do it. Have you been having trouble locating companies who deal in Vietnam Veteran related products? The Newsletter has all the information you need.

By the way, the Newsletter is not pro-war, and it's not anti-war. It is pro-Vietnam Veteran. The Vietnam Veteran has been short-changed and the Newsletter is out to turn that around.

Subscribe now! Think of it as an investment - in your past, in your present, and in your future. It costs only \$12.00 a year - that's \$1.00 an issue.

A lifetime subscription is available for only \$100.00. It entitles you to free updating of the Vietnam Booklist every time it is expanded. It also entitles you to a 10% discount off all purchases made from the Vietnam Bookstore. In addition, all future incentives offered to new subscribers will be given free to lifetime subscribers. This is a real bargain! Take advantage of it now as the lifetime rate will go up soon.

Thanks for listening!

### Not Just For Veterans

The Vietnam Veterans Newsletter should be read by anyone who wants to gain a better understanding of the Vietnam War. There is, of course, a special emphasis on the perspective of the Vietnam Veteran himself but the Newsletter content represents many other perspectives as well. Besides making for very interesting reading, the Newsletter will keep you well informed on the Vietnam War, which is likely to be a much discussed topic during the 1980's.

# San Mateo's Fourth C



## 150,000 View P Honoring Vietn

### Warm welcome, at last

Contra Costa Times, July 19, 1981

I never have written to a newspaper before, but after your front-page coverage of the "Heroes for a day: Vietnam vets, the hit of the parade" (July 5), I feel I've got to thank you for finally (publicly) opening the door to recognize the Vietnam veterans' honorable role in American history.

I was in Vietnam from 1964 to 1973. I didn't realize what I was still holding in my heart until, while reading your article, a tremendous sense of release came over me. I cried with heavy tears and it felt good.

The last time I remember shedding tears like those was when approximately 230 Vietnam vets flew into Travis Air Force Base straight from Vietnam. There wasn't a dry eye on the plane; even the flight attendants were crying with us. It was so good to be on American soil again.

As we got off the jet, we found no one was there to even say, "Hey, thanks G.I." There was no one—and for all the years that have followed, I've had to hold in my feelings and be quiet.

But now—finally—America is reaching out to us and saying "thank you" publicly. Dear God, what a feeling; what a beautiful feeling. Thank you, America.

Kenneth J. Hankel  
Petaluma

### The Forgotten Vet

by Don Edwards

I grew I learned and lived,  
And volunteered by life to give.  
A soldier like my dad I'd be  
It wasn't meant for you or me.

Through all the many months we trained,  
In hot and cold and snow and rain.  
Programmed each hour of every day,  
To hate and kill and never play.

At the age of nineteen we went to war,  
Shedding our boyhood and so much more,  
Learning of life the way we were never taught,  
And loving those that could only be bought.

They say that we learned and learned it well,  
But how come so many good men fell.  
We fought and moved and moved and fought,  
Never overcoming the enemy we sought.

We developed a sense of closeness, and yet,  
You never got close to those that you met.  
That's why today we can give so little,  
For between life and death we grew up in the middle.

We had a saying for those that lived and fell.  
"When I die I'll go to Heaven cause I've spent my time  
in Hell."

Are they really in Heaven the friends we come to  
know?

Was it all really worth it or a political show?

Someone help us understand and regain our sight,  
Did we not do our duty and not do it right?  
Can the sacrifice be forgotten and left by the way?  
Or can someone come forward to all of us and say,

Welcome home Son, we are proud of a job well done.

### Thank You S

The City and County of San Mateo, California welcomed home the Vietnam veterans over the weekend of the fourth of July. The activities began on the third with the arrival of the adopted unit of the 101st at Moffet Field. Part of the group was delayed but they managed to arrive in time for the parade on the fourth. The weekend centered around the fact that the City of San Mateo had adopted a unit of the 101st when they were in Vietnam. A member of the unit, 19 year old Sgt Joe Artavia, had written home to ask his family if they could help in seeing that his buddies got some mail as "many of them felt forgotten." The City adopted the unit and 20 days after the City Council passed the resolution Joe was killed in action. The City realized that many of those who served in Vietnam felt that the attention given to the returning hostages made the fact that they (the vets) had been ignored, and in some cases, scorned, more vivid. In light of this, former mayor John Murray and other members of the community planned to welcome home all Vietnam veterans over the weekend of the Fourth.

Saturday, July 4th, was a sunny hot day, perfect for the parade held in honor of the Vietnam veterans. Over 150,000 persons lined the parade route. Vincent Rios, Deputy Western Director of the Veterans Leadership Conference was the grand marshal for the

event. His family rode with him attending the parade with him. attending was Senator Sam Hayakawa told Joan Maiman o ship Conference that he had reporter for the Des Moines re

At the conclusion of the parad to the city park where the 101s the guests of the City of San M Helicopters used in Vietnam w the object of much interest fo attending.

An evening reception was helc alluded to the fact that the na honoring those who served. pledged to address this throug

Mayor Donna Richardson, and other officials mingled wit the evening.

Sunday a breakfast was held i The Young Veterans, a grou have worked together to readjt and spoke of their experience



101st Airborne Div. Color Guard which preceeded the adopted company.



Mayor Donna Richardson, San Mateo, Ca, Joan week, Pete Tiffany, Western Regional Director, V.L.C. at Maiman, Chairperson V.L.C, former Mayor John picnic honoring Vietnam vets, San Mateo, Calif., 4 July Murray, head of committee to plan Vietnam Recognition 1981

# f July Welcome

## rade m Veterans



### an Mateo

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Vietnam.

Joan Maiman, Chairman of the Veterans Leadership Conference, and Peter Tiffany, Deputy Western Director of the Conference spoke briefly of the aims of the group and expressed the thanks of Vietnam vets for the welcome of the city

Following the breakfast the group moved to Golden Gate National Cemetery where a memorial service was held for those who had died in Vietnam. A group of Vietnamese refugees presented a wreath to the family of Sgt. Artavia in appreciation for those who died trying to save the freedom of South Vietnam.

The weekend concluded with an airshow and band review at the race track in San Mateo. Parachute jumps were made and a demonstration of repelling from a Huey was held.

Among the units performing was the drill team from the Coast Guard. About 5,000 people attended the review.

Doug Walton, Montana director of the Veterans Leadership Conference, summed up the feelings of many vets there when he said that he felt proud to have been in Vietnam for the first time. Doug served with the 101st in Vietnam.



Western Regional Director of VLC met and spoke with Senator Sam Hayakawa (R-Ca.) during the Vietnam Veterans reception at the Vila Hotel.



Pete Tiffany, Western Regional Director VLC, Furlton Burns, N.E. Regional Coordinator VLC, Joan Maiman, Chairperson VLC, Doug Walton, Montana Director VLC, at parade honoring Vietnam veterans, San Mateo, Ca., 4 July 1981.

### We're Proud of our Vietnam veterans

Residents of this area are helping to right an historic wrong. In a series of spirited events to be held this weekend throughout San Mateo County, we are transforming the July 4 holiday this year into a special tribute to our nation's veterans—especially our Vietnam veterans, and in particular, the 101st Airborne Division.

The Times joins today in welcoming to this area the units of the 101st Airborne "Screaming Eagles" Division who by special arrangement with the Defense Department and Secretary of Defense Cap Weinberger—himself a native son—are flying here from division headquarters in Kentucky to take part in the celebration.

These units include the color guard, a rifle company and the division's marching band—all of which will enliven the parades, reviews, special displays and demonstrations planned for Saturday and Sunday by our diligent Vietnam Veterans Recognition Day Committee headed by former San Mateo Mayor Jack Murray.

It is particularly appropriate that these talented units are playing a leading role in this weekend's activities. As readers of The Times have been aware for years, the "Screaming Eagles" Division was "adopted" by the city of San Mateo while the Vietnam War was in progress and this symbolic link has been marked in public ceremonies many times since.

The detailed program for this weekend's spectacular events, beginning with the traditional Fourth of July parade in Redwood City tomorrow morning, is set forth again in the news columns of this edition of The Times.



Parade began with Welcome Home banner.

We would like to call attention to three of those events in particular. A three-hour "community picnic" in San Mateo's Central Park, beginning at 2:30 Saturday afternoon, will provide a special opportunity for visiting soldiers and veterans and San Mateo County citizens to get better acquainted. This "citizen-soldier-veteran" affair is being sponsored by veterans organizations in this area.

The community picnic will be followed at 7:30 p.m. by a reception at the Villa Hotel at which particular groups and individuals will be honored and awards presented.

A more solemn note will be struck in an hour-long memorial Sunday morning at 10:30. Through this colorful and dramatic observance, all of us will help to convey the nation's gratitude for those many individuals who gave so much, including the last full measure of devotion, in the service of their country.

It is particularly appropriate—now that the Reagan administration is encouraging a more honest and appreciative perspective toward the massive contributions made by our Vietnam veterans—that these special days of recognition be set aside to honor these contributions.

The citizens of San Mateo are sending the entire nation this weekend a significant message in joyous and unmistakable terms—we are indeed proud of our Vietnam veterans.

San Mateo, The Times  
Friday, July 3, 1981

# Vietnam Veterans Memorial

By Gary Schmitt

Another Memorial Day has come and passed. Or, more accurately, another Memorial three-day weekend has come and gone. Turning civic holidays into days designed for private a-political pursuits now seems to be an American pastime. Indeed, if the TV news people were not there to cover the local wreath-laying it is doubtful whether there would be any public perception at all of the original intent of the day. Like Lincoln's and Washington's birthday, Memorial Day has bitten the dust.

It is not surprising then, that the newest proposed capital monument, the Vietnam Memorial, should be of the same a-political genre.

Under the aegis of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund a jury composed of two architects, two landscape architects, three sculptors and one design critic met in early May to select a design for a memorial which would commemorate those who had died in the Vietnam War. Out of some 1,400 entries the jury chose a design submitted by Maya Ying Lin, a 21-year-old Yale undergraduate.

Her proposal for the memorial is for two, black granite walls to be wedged into the earth to form a stark, V-shaped retaining wall. Plans are for the memorial to be built on two acres in the northwest corner of the Washington Mall. With contoured ground surrounding it, the monument will affect the visitor with something akin to the feeling that he has just "stumbled upon it." According to Lin, the monument is meant to appear as an unexpected, black "rift in the earth."

The structure's color and its sinkhole character will be in striking contrast to the white, upright monuments toward which the wings of the Vietnam Memorial will point — the Washington Memorial and the Lincoln Memorial. Never appearing over the horizon of the mall, the monument's dominant theme seems to be: "out of sight, out of mind." Or, when in sight: an abyss.

On the black granite walls the names of the 57,692 men who died in the war will be carved. The names are not to appear in alphabetical order. Instead, they are to be etched into the stone in a chronological sequence, the sequence in which the individuals died. The list will begin on one wall at the vertex of the 'V', to the end, pick up on the end of the other wall and end at the vertex. This facet of the design has been described as indicating that the "war's beginning and end thus meet. The war is 'complete.'"

But, of course, it is not complete. How can the memorial be complete and make no mention at all of Vietnam? The listing could be of traffic fatalities for all the untutored observer might know.

## Vietnam Veterans Memorial Is a-Memorial?

### The War is "Complete"



**THEY ARE  
NOT FORGOTTEN.**

**But, of course, it is not complete.  
How can the memorial be  
complete and make no mention at  
all of Vietnam?**

Saturday, June 20, 1981 - R.C. Journal  
Public Research, Syndicated, 1981

Undifferentiated pathos appears to be the object.

The mere listing of the names and the absence of any specific reference to the war is consistent with the fund's charge to the jury to select a design that would make no political statement about the war. The memorial was to be at once a-political and something which "best honors the memory..." Yet is the bare fact that one has died, removed entirely from the context in which it happens, something to honor? After all, we all do die sooner or later.

The assumption undoubtedly lurking behind the instruction given the jury is that the war was simply a waste. To quote the words of former president Jimmy Carter, it was an effort of "intellectual and moral poverty." The tragedy was not that the war was lost but that it was ever begun. Those who died, died without reason.

The Vietnam Memorial will be, in the final analysis, a monument to men who died for an unsuccessful yet essentially correct cause. It is no small irony that this selection, with its victim motif, should occur only a few short months after the fanfare directed toward the American hostages who were held in Iran. The latter were truly victims and yet they were treated as heroes. We should be capable of seeing the difference.

Lin's design robs the dead of the context that gives meaning to their deaths. Her design, minimal in nature, reflects a minimal understanding of war and of memorials that follow them. It is not true, as one of the jurors stated, that a "confused world needs simple answers." To abstract the soldiers' deaths from the war only serves to minimize the sacrifices that they made.

The historical truth that the Republic of South Vietnam was finally overrun by a resolute and malevolent enemy from the north hardly substantiates the claim that the war and the deaths that occurred were simply meaningless. Without a doubt, the way in which the war was carried out and the way in which it ended were tragic. Yet that fact should not overwhelm and certainly cannot invalidate the moral conviction that guided the American attempt to contain the advance of communism and totalitarianism. In light of the events which have transpired in Indochina since 1975 that conviction should only be stronger. The Vietnam Memorial should reflect that conviction. It should not minimize the deaths by being a-political, by being memorial.

(Gary Schmitt is a U.S. Senate staff member.)

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## News From the VFW

### VFW Hails President's "Gutsy" Decision on Neutron Warhead

WASHINGTON, DC - In hailing President Reagan's "gutsy" decision to manufacture and store the neutron warhead, Arthur Fellwock, VFW National Commander, made the following points:

"(1) the enhanced radiation/reduced blast neutron warhead is a **defensive** weapon, in the service of a **defensive** alliance - NATO. As such, it is desperately needed to offset the 3 to 1 tank advantage that Warsaw Pact forces enjoy on NATO's central front;

"(2) Soviet propaganda ('disinformation') scored a crippling victory over the west in 1977 when terming the ER/RB neutron warhead the 'perfect capitalistic weapon' in that it 'kills people and leaves the property intact.' This disinformation contributed to President Carter's sudden decision not to produce, store or deploy the neutron warhead. Today, Soviet propagandists -- and their stooges in the west -- have pulled all the stops since President Reagan's decision, terming it 'inhuman..., cannibalistic..., mass annihilation.' The plain fact is that the neutron weapon is needed to deter a massive tank-led Soviet/Warsaw Pact conventional offensive on the central front;

"(3) according to the French Minister of Defense, the Soviets have already tested their version of a neutron warhead. I have absolutely no doubt that once they believe they are ready to move, the Soviets will deploy their neutron weapons in a mobile mode prepared to accompany their attacking forces. (This would not be 'inhuman..., cannibalistic' etc., but rather 'peaceful' and prudent.)

"(4) as far as wide-spread civilian damage is concerned, would be far less damage from a neutron warhead-armed LANCE missile or eight-inch howitzer than would be the case if these weapons were nuclear armed; and,

"(5) I again applaud the President's proper and far-ranging decision and urge deployment of these warheads to Europe as soon as the collateral issue of theater nuclear forces has been resolved."

### VFW Urges Expansion of Agent Orange Care

WASHINGTON, DC--The Senate joined the House of Representatives in improving health services for Vietnam veterans at the urging of the VFW.

"The VFW has been asking the Congress to include other defoliant agents used in Vietnam in the provisions of the bill to provide medical care when evidence suggests a link between a sickness and exposure to Agent Orange and the other herbicides sprayed during the war," said Art Fellwock, National Commander-in-Chief.

"The VFW has been an acknowledged leader in the call to recognize Agent Blue, an arsenic based spray, and the several other agents, such as Agent White and Agent Purple, affecting GIs in Vietnam," Fellwock said.

The Government will also conduct a study to determine illnesses which could be produced by exposure to these agents. A contract has been signed setting up the best methods to be used to medically determine the effects of herbicide.

Both bills continue the Vets Centers which provide counseling for veterans for three years.

"Vietnam veterans particularly need a place to go for assistance in finding out what the Veterans Administration has to offer," said Fellwock.

### VFW Assists in Restoring 1,200 VA Medical People to 1981 Budget

WASHINGTON, DC--"Backing a motion by Senator Lawton Chiles, Fla., the VFW was able to stop the cut of 1,200 VA medical care personnel this year," said Art Fellwock.

The National Commander-in-Chief noted that the Office of Management and Budget had requested Congress to defer the spending of appropriated money to fund doctors, nurses and psychologists. The request would have been approved if neither house of the Congress disapproved.

"The VFW pointed out that Congressional acceptance of the request would cause an inability of the VA to meet the expanding health care demands of the increasing number and advancing age of the veteran population.

"Senator Chiles came to the rescue of the VA medical care system to block the request and the VFW was happy to back his efforts," said Fellwock.

### V.F.W. Supports Training For Vietnam Veterans

WASHINGTON, DC--"The V.F.W. strongly supports legislation which will establish a vocational training program for disadvantaged Vietnam veterans," said Art Fellwock.

The National Commander-in-Chief asked Congress to make such training available for a two year period starting this October.

The program would identify educationally and economically disadvantaged veterans, place them in a vocational training program, find a job and then check their progress.

"The training should be recommended by a counselor at a readjustment center, a state employment office, a veterans assistance office or a VA medical facility so that only those in need receive this training," Fellwock said.

Such a program will complement the one passed by Congress last year to train disabled veterans to find a meaningful vocation.

### Viet vets get emotional hearing

WASHINGTON - One a minor scale, the bitter war in Vietnam was relived on Capitol Hill Thursday, even to blood on the marble floors, as medal-wearing veterans of that conflict plead with congressmen not to let the nation forget them.

It was a five-hour hearing of emotion - tears, shouts, hugs, applause, hisses and the silent anger of about 30 veterans.

It was five hours of attack on the Reagan Administration and the Veterans Administration and its new boss, Robert Nimmo, who only took office Wednesday.

For only a few moments, it was a defense of the VA's intentions, with a VA doctor breaking down in tears at his own memories of mangled Vietnam casualties.

For a longer time, it was a silent vigil, as a former Vietnam nurse and huddled veterans tried to staunch the blood flowing from the head of Douglas Fisher, who left the hearing room, screamed, collapsed and hit his head on the marble floor. His friends said the 33-year-old Army veteran from Los Angeles suffered from epilepsy, and had joined their hunger strike in Washington because he said VA facilities were doing nothing to help him.

### Chicago Vietnam Vets Plan Art Show

The Chicago-based Vietnam Veterans Art Group will sponsor an art show on 9 October in Chicago according to the founding members of the group, Ned Borderick, Dale Samuelson, Pete Peterson and Richard Aztlan.

According to the founders, all of whom are Vietnam vets, the purpose of the exhibit will be two fold:

- 1) "to broaden the historical perspective of the American public towards the emotions, experiences and sensitivities of the American participants and"
- 2) "to provide a forum for the previously neglected and repressed artistic statements and expressions of the Vietnam odyssey"

The Exhibit will consist of:

- 1) the art of Vietnam vets from the group and submitted works from other vets.
- 2) an audio visual presentation of personal photographic slides and a collage of the sound of the era.
- 3) a judging of the works submitted by Vietnam vets to include photographs, slides and other art pertaining to the Vietnam era.

Among the aims of the group is the creation of an archives for the preservation of the art works of the period for future generations.

Aztlan stated that they are anxious to hear from Vietnam vets who might have works to submit to the show. So far, they have had response from various parts of the country including from Mike Boyette of Texas who hopes to submit some of his bronzes.

Ray Garza, the art director for the Leadership Conference, will be a participant in the show and the Leadership Conference will be working with the Vietnam veterans arts group to get the word about the show out to the community to ensure as large a response as possible.

For further information about the show contact: Richard M. Aztlan, President, Vietnam Veterans Art Group, 2340 W. Winnemac Street, Chicago Ill. 60625. (312) 878-9342.

A cut off date of mid September is planned for accepting works for the show.

It was a dramatic interlude in a litany on the plight of nation's veterans who fought in "Johnson's dirty little war," as Rep. Don Bailey of Maine, a combat veteran, quoted the war's detractors. Bailey is one of the members of the Vietnam Veterans in Congress caucus, which scheduled the hearing to give the veterans their forum.

Said Rep. Tom Harkin of Iowa, a former Navy pilot:

"In the past our government has always taken the responsibilities for veterans injured in the war - that is, until the Vietnam War... We have denied them the dignity, the respect and the honor that they deserve."

The small group of veterans had been fasting for more than a month in Lafayette Park across from the White House to dramatize their demands for increased psychological counseling, job training, education and studies on the effects of Agent Orange, the defoliant used in Vietnam.

Spokesman Michael McCarthy, a 37-year-old former Army man, used the forum to launch an attack on the man in the White House, saying that "King Ronald" wants to deny benefits to those he calls the "motley crew."

President Reagan, he said, refused to deal with the veterans waiting outside the White House gates. "We want to remind the President that where there is a noble cause in the form of war, there must be noble warriors," McCarthy said. "They are not to be found in the film sanctuaries of wartime Hollywood."

To that, Rep. Tom Daschle of South Dakota said, "I am just as outraged. It seems to me that if you can fly six hours and spend a half a million dollars to ride a horse, you can go across the street and spend five minutes with people who flew 5,000 miles and spent a year fighting."

By Shelia Caudle  
Oakland Tribune, July 17, 1981

# News from Australia

## War veterans fight on...

by Alison Puchy

Paula Voltz was "shattered, but not surprised" when told her former husband Rex, a Vietnam veteran, had killed himself.

"It was just a matter of time," she said. "Suicide attempts weren't new to Rex — he'd tried so often before."

Mr. Voltz hanged himself from a tree in the Kew Reserve on December 28, last year.

Mrs. Voltz, 35, an invalid pensioner, claims her husband's war service in Vietnam, from 1969 to 1970, changed him from "a normal fun-loving guy" to the violent, maladjusted man who terrorised her and her children, and was in and out of 18 different psychiatric homes in the 10 years before his death.

Mrs. Voltz wants to start an appeal for the Victorian branch of the Vietnam Veterans' Association, which she says is receiving no financial assistance in its quest to provide counseling services for Vietnam veterans.

"I'm willing to kick off an appeal with \$20," she said. "that's the most I can afford on my pension."

"It's too late for Rex, but it mightn't be too late for other veterans."

The Vietnam Veterans' Association (VVA), which has branches in all states, was formed in 1979 by Mr. Hold McMinn, who served with the Australian Army Special Air Service in Vietnam.

"We are desperate for money," said McMinn, 35, who moved from Melbourne to Canberra last year to lobby on behalf of VVA.

"The Government has given no financial assistance, and the only funds we have are contributions from our members and a few RSL clubs."

Mr. McMinn said VVA had applied for a \$607,000 government grant to set up shop-front counseling services in capital cities, similar to those operating in the U.S., for Vietnam veterans with war-related problems.

"The Department of Veterans' Affairs is still considering it," he said.

Mr. McMinn said that money was also needed to fight compensation cases in court. "We've got guys who are ready to go to court any day," he said, "but the legal costs are beyond us."

Mr. McMinn said that after forming VVA two years ago, he no longer had time to run his dog boarding kennels at Woodstock, north of Melbourne. He sold the business and has since worked for VVA, unpaid, 70 to 80 hours a week.

He says his personal savings have "dried up" and he is \$6000 in debt, having spent an estimated \$40,000 on VVA work.

Mr. McMinn said that when he returned from Vietnam he had "a lot of problems" he did not connect with war service until reading of other veterans, mainly in the U.S., with similar problems.

His problems included hemorrhaging, skin rashes and anxiety.

"My wife had three miscarriages, and two babies died within 24 hours of birth," he said.

"I spoke about these problems on a national news broadcast in 1979 and was flooded with calls from veterans."

"There were too many with similar problems for it to be co-incidental," he said.

Mr. McMinn claims that many of his, and other veterans' disabilities, resulted from exposure to defoliants and other chemicals used in Vietnam.

But he also says the "nature of the war" contributed. "These people need help — and they are not getting it," he said.

## Test Survey for Agent Orange

Six hundred Australian soldiers are taking part in an Agent Orange test survey.

Three hundred Vietnam veterans, and 300 soldiers who did not take an active part in the Vietnam war, will answer questionnaires, and take part in interviews.

The Australian Veterans Herbicide Study is being conducted by the Commonwealth Institute of Health and this test survey will show the best way to question the thousands of Vietnam veterans when the full-scale study is launched.

Most of the survey questions will relate to the health of the family and the effects of exposure to herbicides in Vietnam and Australia.

One of the important parts of the survey will be to reveal the number of Vietnam veterans who have disabled children.

## War, not herbicides, blamed for ill health

The trauma of war, not exposure to Agent Orange or any other herbicide, was to blame for the health problems of Vietnam veterans, the Minister of Veterans' Affairs, Senator Messner, said yesterday.

He told a Sydney news conference there was no evidence linking the herbicides to the veterans' problems, which range from skin disorders and cancer to intense depression, uncontrollable rage, and birth defects in their children.

Senator Messner was speaking on his return from a three-week visit to the United States to see how US Government agencies handle veterans' problems and to learn more of US studies into the effects of exposure to herbicides used in the war.

He said the visit had confirmed the correctness of the Federal Government's approach of regarding the veterans' health problems as effects of their wartime experiences rather than in the narrow terms of exposure to herbicides.

Many American veterans seemed to be suffering a "delayed stress syndrome" attributed to service in a war which had divided a nation.

Senator Messner said that for Americans, the war had been lost, and there were significant feelings of guilt in the community.

Troops had faced an enemy who was an enemy at night, a friend by day. Often there had been an unfavorable reaction to their homecoming.

He said all the people he had spoken to — from chairmen of Congressional committees to veterans' representatives — agreed that Agent Orange was not a key factor, and US veterans had rarely mentioned it as a source of their problems.

However, the national president of the Vietnam Veterans' Association, Mr. Phil Thompson, said yesterday that for the Government to claim the problems were due to a post-Vietnam war syndrome was "good because it's cheap".

Accepting that the chemicals caused the problems could set the stage for huge payouts, he said.

But Mr. Thompson gave a guarded welcome to Senator Messner's announcement that the Government would expand the counseling service for veterans begun in January, possibly along the lines of the informal "shopfront" centers in the United States.

Senator Messner said the centers provided readjustment counseling, group therapy and assistance based on self-help, employment guidance, and referral to other community services such as veterans' medical centers, marriage guidance, and drug and alcohol therapy.

By Richard Eckersley, Science Reporter  
The Australian, Thursday, July 9, 1981

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## Veterans told: 'Prove Link'

The Federal Government yesterday signalled a tough "prove it" approach to claims by Vietnam veterans that herbicides sprayed during the Vietnam War were the cause of psychological and physical disorders.

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Senator Messner, said there was no "credible" evidence linking the use of Agent Orange to maladies suffered by returned servicemen or deformities in their children.

But under questioning at a press conference in Sydney, he said there was also no evidence which cleared Agent Orange of having harmful effects.

Senator Messner returned yesterday from a fact-finding tour of the United States. He said he found agreement there that Agent Orange was not a key factor in the delayed symptoms which veterans attribute to war service.

But he agreed that the US Government had not launched any substantive inquiries and those planned might not be completed for several years.

The senator said he was not aware of 800 other studies which the Australian Vietnam Veterans' Association claims cast doubt on the safety of chemical herbicides.

The association's president, Mr. Phil Thompson, last night characterised Senator Messner's stand as a "snow job", and refuted the senator's contention that herbicide use was not connected with veterans' ailments.

"I regard it as very naive that a minister of an Australian Government should accept unquestioningly the American Government's view on defoliants," he said.

"It surely must have occurred to Senator Messner how much the United States has to lose if a link is established between ill health and the chemicals used in Vietnam."

The Federal Government is conducting a \$2 million pilot study to determine whether veterans and their families have more medical problems than others in their age group, and whether a fuller epidemiological study should take place.

The results of the pilot study would not be made public.

By Richard Carey

The Australian, Thursday, July 9, 1981

## Ugly Echoes from Vietnam

Another devastating and timely documentary by Australian journalist John Pilger is primed to irritate our consciences.

Next month Channel 7 will screen Heroes, a punishing account of how America shuns its Vietnam veterans who "lost" an unwinnable war.

The program surely has messages for Australians. It also draws disturbing parallels between Indo-China and America's creeping involvement in El Salvador.

One reviewer called Heroes "a riveting exposure of a great American shame." Pilger gave viewers a taste of what to expect in an article he wrote for the New Statesman, a British publication.

"In 1979 a national poll found that 62 percent of the American people believed that the veterans of Vietnam 'fought in the wrong war, in the wrong place, at the wrong time, and were suckers.'"

This war he writes, was "a crime without the finale of a Nuremberg."

I hope Senator Tony Messner, the Veterans Affairs Minister who denies herbicides have affected the health of our veterans or their children, is watching.

He might see poor wretches like Charlie Hartz, of whom Pilger writes: "a Vietnam veterans who was exposed to Agent Orange, is going blind and is dying from cancer. His four children were born deformed."

Heroes is likely to perturb, impress and upset audiences as did Island of Dreams. Pilger's recent provocative documentary of Australia.

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# Sometimes...

The old guy over there  
he's an old war-dog  
Maybe he can understand me...  
no one else seems to care.  
No one else in this room looks like they been there.

"Howdy, you a Vet?  
"Ya' me too...Vietnam you know."

...36th Division World War II  
I've seen all those picture shows  
about Vietnam. Now, John Wayne, he  
could kick some Ass...and that dragon  
named plane thing...man...it could kill  
a thousand in one pass...we never had  
nothin' like that...you guys had it made.

FOXTROT, THIS IS EAGLE, OVER  
EAGLE THIS IS FOXTROT, GO AHEAD

FOXTROT, EAGLE ADVISES AT THIS  
TIME...NO AIR SUPPORT AVAILABLE...WILL  
ADVISE...OVER...

...when we'd catch them Krauts in big groups  
like that...it would take a month before we'd  
get relieved by a fresh battalion...ever heard  
of the Bastards of Bastone...bad dudes...You  
guys call in an air strike over in Nam...I read  
all about it...one, two, three all over with.

...WILL ADVISE...WILL ADVISE...WILL  
ADVISE...

...200 clicks out...no contact (sun too hot)  
...500 clicks out...no contact (radio too loud)  
...800 clicks out...no contact (who gives a shit)

0130 hrs (too dark) Sapper through the wire.

D.F. - NOTIFY NEXT OF KIN THAT THE  
FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS WERE KIA THIS  
DATE AT APPROXIMATELY 0130 hrs:

...WILL ADVISE...

"...Sorry, I was somewhere else. What's that you were  
saying..."

...anyway our organization been fightin' for  
you Nam vets rights all these years...even  
though we ain't had to...we've given parades  
and ceremonies...and serve as honor guards at  
funerals...when some Nam vet does the chicken.

SUICIDE RATE HIGH AMONG VETERANS...  
MEMORIAL DAY DEATH TOLL RISES  
HIGHER ON NATIONS HIGHWAYS...IRANIAN  
HOSTAGES TO HONOR NAM VETS...funnies  
page 4.

"...Sorry...I was somewhere else...what was that you  
said?"

...a veterans organization. Have you  
ever thought about joinin' our veterans  
organization?

"Well, no one ever asked before, but..."

Good!... We don't have many Nam vets

"I'm really not much of a joiner..."

'...Notre Dame survey: 75% of all Vietnam veterans  
answered "Yes" to the question: Did you ever engage  
in Combat in Vietnam...only 25% of all military  
personnel were ever in combat at any one time...'

'...a 47% failure rate at preinduction physical exams  
was the national average for Fiscal Years 1967 to 1973.  
CONFIRMED...about half failed the exam as a way  
to avoid prosecution...or conscription, say U.S.  
Attorneys and former draft counselors.'

...Greetings! (your ass is grass...)

"...Sorry...what were you saying...I was somewhere  
else..."

...we can even help you with your VA benefits.  
hospital attention and care...we got a magazine.

"Hello...VA Hospital...I need some help. I've got  
this friend...he's a Nam vet suffering from some  
psychological problems...Service Connected? Gee,  
I don't know...he wasn't this way before he left...  
I suppose so...An appointment? Ok...when...(two or  
three weeks)...What if that is too late?...(I'm sorry  
he'll have to have an appointment...)

...WILL ADVISE...WILL ADVISE...WILL  
ADVISE...

"I got this friend (he's black) and he has come  
psychological problems from Nam. Maybe your  
organization can help..."

...Ole' Patton took care of that type in the  
War. A slap here or a slap there took care of  
all that mental bullshit you hear about...cures  
a lot of that combat fatigue...and this stress stuff.  
Take for example we had this guy in third platoon...

Soldier: (to Psychiatrist) Doc, I think I'm crazy...I  
can't do the things they ask anymore...I can't put up  
with all the death...and the insanity...I need help.

Doc: You're probably the only sane one there if that is  
what is bothering you...

Soldier: What do I do...?

Doc: Get out of the Army...I got another  
appointment. Need anything else...

Sign in California restaurant 1974:

"No GI's allowed inside"

"...Sorry, what was that you were saying...I was  
somewhere else..."

...it's a pretty good place to meet at.  
Not too many young guys. A couple from the  
Korean War days...no Rock and Roll...

"One -two-three...what are we fighting for...  
Don't ask me cause I don't give a damn..."

-high school Rock and Roll Band  
towards the end of Vietnam...

...its a new building air-conditioned, bar...

1968 CONSTRUCTION FIGURES BREAK ALL  
PREVIOUS YEARS FIGURES...MEANWHILE...  
IN VIETNAM A NEW TET OFFENSIVE HAS  
STARTED, WITH THE SPOKESMAN FOR THE  
WHITEHOUSE INDICATING THAT ALL IS  
GOING WELL FOR OUR SIDE...

...and just last week, we finally got rid  
of all the niggers...got their own place,  
where they belong...All them minorities  
can go to hell...

IN VIETNAM, THE AVERAGE RIFLE  
COMPANY WAS COMPRISED OF 50%  
MINORITY INDIVIDUALS...IN 1966 BLACKS  
WERE MORE LIKELY TO BE DRAFTED...HAD  
A GREATER SHARE OF COMBAT  
ASSIGNMENTS AND WERE LESS LIKELY TO  
SURVIVE THEIR MILITARY EXPERIENCES.

...I'll be damned. His blood is the same as ours...

"...Agent Orange...ever heard of Agent Orange..."

...bug spray...or something...lotta people  
bitchin' about environment and shit...All those  
damned hippies and draftee's...tryin'  
to cram the war down our throats...should have  
sprayed more of them bastards...probably  
won the war if we had.

Agent Orange to blame?

VIETNAM VET KILLS WIFE, TURNS GUN ON  
SELF

A Vietnam Era veteran who  
complained of exposure to herb-  
icide Agent Orange murdered his  
wife today, then turned his gun  
on himself, authorities said.

The actual reason for the ho-  
mocide-suicide was undetermined  
by newstime, but, sources at the  
local VA Hospital said the veter-  
an in question had been dis-  
turbed for about five years...

"Good Morning-Vietnam...this is your Armed Forces  
Radio Station...Saigon."

diary entry 12 July 19-- (?)

The air is torn by sounds of chopper blades  
and Agent Orange filters through the  
jungled overhead on second platoon...we  
got ours yesterday...maybe it kills the  
clap...I hope so...maybe just second platoon.

"You think that shit can hurt ya..."

No way, are you kidding. Would Uncle Sugar  
spray his own roaches (meaning us).

"I guess you're right. Anyway, maybe it will make  
these Rats (C rations) taste a little better."

Anything could help. (Didn't help the spaghetti- At  
all!)

"What was that you were saying...I was somewhere  
else..."

did you ever think about joining our veterans  
organization...

"Sometimes..."

...WILL ADVISE...WILL ADVISE...WILL  
ADVISE...

(Frank R. Price is a Vietnam Era Veteran, works as a  
Disc Jockey at a Rock and Roll station and a Country  
Radio station in Texas. He is involved in counseling  
vets, and is a counselor for the Institute of Christian  
Counseling Ministries.)

Frank R. Price  
U.S. Army, M1  
1974 - 1977

# Texan "No Token" in Veterans Administration

Continued from Page 1

"We would have loved to have retained Allen Clark in the administration because he's an extremely bright, able fellow," a White House spokesman said. "We thought very highly of him all the way along. He told our people he had received another offer in the private sector."

VA and White House sources have another version. When the options became clear, sources said, the administration let Clark go rather than face the politically embarrassing prospect of losing Nimmo.

Nimmo was the fifth person seriously considered for VA administrator by the White House, sources said.

Marine Corps veteran Jim Webb removed his name from consideration after telling White House officials that "no one could survive in that job, particularly a Vietnam veteran, without having some absolute guarantees for policy and budget access beyond (David) Stockman." He also wanted authority to form his own team, which was not to include Longworth. "He was a real problem," Webb said.

Announcing plans to enter private business, Clark returned to Austin last week. In several interviews, he has declined to discuss details of his tenure at the VA and the circumstances of his leaving.

Before Clark quit the 215,000-employee agency, allegations surfaced in the press that he threw tantrums, invoked Clement's name during disputes and seemed more interested in perquisites than his duties.

"That was nonsense," said George Bayoud, director of the Clements Committee. "That's not Allen's style."

Clements said it would have been "out of character for Allen and I frankly don't believe it."

VA sources confirmed Bayoud's and Clements' suspicions.

"Those allegations were planted" with the press by agency officials opposed to Clark's assuming any policy-making role, one VA insider said.

"There are jealousies and rivalries when you're putting together a big organization like this," said VA public affairs officer Strat Appleman. "And this sort of thing does happen..."

"In one sense the story that he's a hard-charging guy is true," one veteran said. "Sure, Clark's ambitious. He wouldn't have gotten where he is if he hadn't been."

Clark, born in McAllen, grew up as an "Army brat." He was graduated from West Point in 1963 and volunteered for combat duty in Vietnam.

During the last few hours of his tour in 1967, an enemy mortar round landed between his feet. Clark was hospitalized for 15 months and both legs were amputated at the knee. He went through 12 operations and learned to walk with artificial legs.

"Only in the last four years have I learned to listen to him tell about this without crying," said Jackie Clark, a Dallas native who married Clark six months after he finished at West Point. Describing themselves as conservative Republicans and Evangelical Christians, the couple lives southwest of Austin with their daughters, Elizabeth, 10, and Christi, 7.

After earning a graduate degree in finance and investments from Southern Methodist University in 1970, Clark worked five months as personal financial assistant to Dallas millionaire, H. Ross Perot, chairman of Electric Data Systems. He left Perot for Dallas' Republic Bank, a firm that was grooming him for a top management slot when he was recruited by Clements in 1978 to head his staff in Austin.

Clark helped introduce management by objectives to state government and served as Clements' trouble-shooter on several projects, including the volatile fishing dispute between Texans and Vietnamese living near Seabrook.

Staff members who worked closely with Clark found no fault with his performance.

"I could tell you he has a temper, but I'd be lying," said Janie Harris, Clements' personal secretary. "If somebody did something wrong, he'd sit them down and talk it out. He worked with them to find a solution. The staff was heartsick when he left."

Perot, a longtime supporter of Vietnam veterans, called Clark "a top-flight man. Every part of his record makes him the kind of man you want to bring into your business."

"I was thrilled when he got the (VA) job because I thought we'd finally get somebody up there to clean up the hospitals, clean up the veterans' programs. He's tough. He'd get it done."

"But we live in a world now that's got a huge segment of the people who are career employees who don't care about getting it done. And there's not enough people looking after the veterans, and Allen Clark would have looked after the veterans."

That was the mission Clark, 39, accepted when he headed for the Potomac, leaving behind a job as special assistant to Gov. Bill Clements to become the highest ranking Vietnam veteran in the administration.

But before he even arrived in Washington, Clark's assignment underwent radical changes.

The changes were the result of political maneuvering within the VA that removed the former Green Beret from any substantive role in running the agency. Not only was the break with the traditional management arrangement condoned by the White House, Washington sources said it had the blessings of the president's inner circle.

"The bottom line is that this administration has for some reason been unable to come to terms with having Vietnam veterans in high-level positions over at the VA," said John Terzano, national membership director for Vietnam Veterans of America. "Where is this administration's commitment to Vietnam veterans?"

It wasn't long after Clark's arrival in Washington that veterans and longtime VA employees knew they were dealing with a character different from previous administrators. "He was refreshing," said one former infantryman who, like many other VA employees, feared for his job if quoted by name regarding Clark's brief tenure at the agency, where he oversees a \$24 billion budget and 172 veterans hospitals.

**"He certainly had the management capability to stabilize the agency for the first time in a good many years," the employee said.**

Faced with accepting what VA insiders described as "a token role" to appease Vietnam-era veterans or bowing out, Clark left the VA July 6 after 9½ days. Either way, sources said, substantive issues and front-line management duties were to be handled from the VA's No. 3 slot, a job given last week to former Army Sgt. Edgar "Nick" Longworth.

Longworth was personal assistant to VA Administrator Richard Roudebush during the last year of the Ford administration and then worked for the Republican National Committee.

When Reagan was elected, Longworth joined the transition team at the VA and moved into position to assume the No. 3 post and lessen the authority of the deputy administrator over day-to-day operations, two agency sources and a White House source said.

When California cattleman Robert Nimmo, 59, was named VA administrator, the World War II veteran immediately hired Longworth as the No. 3 man at the VA and retitled the position "associate deputy administrator."

Longworth and Nimmo declined to comment on the maneuverings, but a Longworth aide denied that her boss had tried to gain control over the flow of information and authority in the VA's upper echelons. The new organization plan "clearly spells out that (Longworth's post) is designed for coordination, not control, of anything," said Joan Standlee, Longworth's personal assistant.

Standlee repeated the agency's reasoning for Clark's decision to ask the White House to withdraw his deputy administrator's nomination: "The problem, basically, was that his philosophy and that of Mr. Nimmo were different. They could not agree on the direction of the agency."

The White House tells a different story, saying Clark was asked to reconsider.

**Source: The Austin American-Statesman, July 22, By John C. Henry, American-Statesman Staff**

Chairperson Veterans Leadership Conference  
Apt 3409  
300 N. State St.  
Chicago, Ill. 60610

Dear Ms. Maiman:

Several veterans organizations and many individual veterans actively supported Allen B. Clark, Jr. of Austin, Texas in his bid for Administrator of the Veterans Administration.

The President did nominate him for the position of Deputy Administrator, but due to circumstances beyond his control Mr. Clark was obliged to ask the President to withdraw his nomination thus depriving the Government and veterans of his unique capabilities.

Some press reports have been somewhat critical of Mr. Clark for asking that his name be withdrawn. I believe that the enclosed article from the Austin-American Statesman of July 22, 1981 presents a clear picture of the reasons.

I am forwarding this for your information and for such use as you may be able to make of it in advising members of your Conference of the situation.

Sincerely yours,

George Williamson  
Colonel, USAF, Retired

## More Good News

### 40 new vet counseling centers set to open

Continued from Page 1

The sites for the new facilities to be opened are:

In the West: Contra Costa County, Calif.; Fresno, Calif.; Riverside, Calif.; Eugene, Ore.; Spokane, Wash.; Fort Worth, Tex.; San Antonio, Tex.; Colorado Springs, Colo.; Widow Rock, N.M., and Fairbanks, Alaska

(There had been a push for one to be situated in Sacramento, according to Rossio, but that plan had been canceled.)

In the Northeast: Nassau-Suffolk County, N.Y.; Albany, N.Y.; Westchester County, N.Y.; Springfield, Mass.; Windsor, Vt.; Bangor, Maine; Trenton, N.J.; Philadelphia; Pittsburgh and Harrisburg, Pa.

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

In the Midwest: Chicago Heights, Ill.; Peoria, Ill.; Evansville, Ind.; Sioux City, Iowa; Tulsa, Okla.; Lincoln, Neb.; Grand Rapid, Mich.; Minot, N.D.; Rapid City, S.D., and Madison, Wis.

In addition, two new facilities recently opened in Reno, Nev. and Tucson, Ariz.

In his initial budget proposals, President Reagan called for closing the centers on Oct. 1, 1981, with Budget Director David Stockman arguing they had served their purpose. But the recommendation drew an outcry from veterans groups and the House and Senate voted overwhelmingly to keep the program alive.

At that point, the Reagan administration announced the expansion.

Robert P. Nimmo, who took the oath as VA administrator Wednesday, announced the new sites.

"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," Nimmo said.

The VA said the typical center has a staff of three to five "who operate on an informal, person-to-person basis with Vietnam-era veterans experiencing emotional and other readjustment problems."

Some of the new centers are almost ready to open and the rest will be opened as soon as space can be found and staffs recruited. the agency said.

**By Mike Feinsilber, Associated Press Writer  
Daily Ledger, Friday, July 17, 1981**

# Agent Orange:

## Little Sympathy

### For Agent Orange Victim?

MARTINEZ - Veterans service representatives at the VA Medical center "do not appear to be sympathetic to the problems of Vietnam veterans and are not well informed" about Agent Orange, a chemical defoliant used in Vietnam.

That's a conclusion of a confidential Veterans Administration report on Vietnam veterans and the medical center here, which points to a "generation gap" and a lack of understanding between VA staff and veterans.

The report signed by Dr. Barclay Shepard and dated Dec. 12, 1980, states that the hospital has had some serious problems with its Agent Orange program and in dealing with Vietnam veterans. Shepard is the head of the Veterans' Administration Agent Orange program, headquartered in Washington, D.C.

He made a special inquiry into the Martinez VA last October, in response to a formal complaint for an investigation filed by the Contra Costa Chapter of the Vietnam Veterans of America.

In a telephone interview with The Times from his Washington office outlining his report last week, Shepard praised the hospital for doing a good job, and was not highly critical of the Agent Orange program.

However, a copy of his report to VA Inspector General Allen Reynolds, obtained this week, cites a number of serious concerns. Among them:

- "There are few, if any, Vietnam-era veterans among the veterans' service organizations representatives...to whom Vietnam veterans can turn to for help and advice. The service officers assigned are older men who do not appear to be sympathetic to the problems of Vietnam veterans, and are not well-informed on Agent Orange related problems.
- Hospital director Clarence Nixon acknowledged "minimal efforts had been made to establish a meaningful dialogue with the leadership of the Vietnam veterans groups" in the area.
- Vietnam veterans have had difficulty relating to physicians who do Agent Orange examinations "because of a significant age difference and 'generation gap.'"
- Some hospital clerks and personnel "on occasion appear indifferent, callous, or even somewhat hostile."
- "Hospital staff personnel have been overheard in public places discussing certain patients or hospital procedures in crude language."
- There is no outreach center easily accessible to area veterans.

Shepard also termed "inappropriate and injudicious" an operation done on an area veteran - unnamed in the report - who underwent an unusual fat biopsy, or an extraction of an amount of body tissue, apparently at the urging of VA staff. The veteran said VA officials persuaded him to do the test to analyze the levels of dioxin in his system. Dioxin is a component of Agent Orange.

Martinez veteran and Legion of Valor representative Art McGowan says that he was the subject of such a test at the Martinez VA.

Both McGowan and his wife say they were exposed to the defoliant during their service in Vietnam. McGowan says he has never received the results of that test, or of blood tests conducted on him and his wife, though he has requested them numerous times.

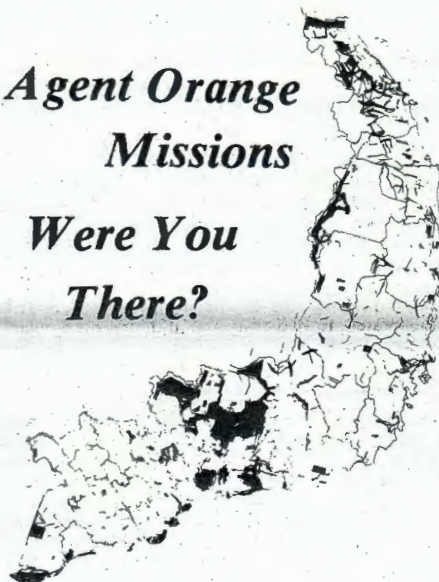
Shepard said, in his report that it is important to avoid "all special studies on any Vietnam veteran for the purpose of analyzing any body tissues for toxic substances which might have resulted from exposure to herbicides" unless it is part of an approved study.

Congressman George Miller (D-Martinez), who has been involved in veterans' affairs locally, is studying the in-depth report and will comment on the matter next week, according to a representative of his office.

Pete Tiffany, president of the Contra Costa Chapter of Vietnam Veterans of America, termed Shepard's comments "extremely relevant and of vital importance," but would not comment on specific findings until he also had viewed the report.

McGowan, who represents local veterans in the Legion of Valor, said last week Shepard's visit "developed some consciousness...but we still have problems. We certainly are going to keep working on them."

## Agent Orange Missions Were You There?



Gary Roccio, the facility's assistant chief of medical administration and spokesman, said Agent Orange "is a highly emotional issue. It is a problem, and we're dealing with the problem." But "there are so many things that the VA just does not know about Agent Orange," he said, and that lack of solid information may be contributing to the problems between the center and vets.

Shepard noted there has been an "insufficient effort" on the part of senior hospital staff to establish good contact with veterans' groups, and Roccio said the hospital staff hopes to change that soon. They have established four-times-daily showings of a film called "Agent Orange: A Search for Answers," which is viewed by all the center's new personnel, as well as staff members and patients, said Roccio.

He said staff members intend to contact local Vietnam veterans' groups next week to set up meetings and air problems which have been highly publicized in recent months.

"There has been a high level of media attention in the local press, which suggests a lack of close internal monitoring and coordination by the senior medical staff," said Shepard. His suggestion: "Impress on the staff the importance of avoiding discussion of sensitive issues with the press and media personnel."

In his written replies to the report, VA director Nixon stated that six-month follow-up examinations had been instituted at the facility for veterans who come in for Agent Orange examinations, and that a questionnaire has been developed to help "determine if we are meeting the needs and concerns of Vietnam veterans.

By Carla Marinnuci  
Times Staff Writer  
Contra Costa Times, Monday, February 9, 1981

### Agent Orange VA promises help

Daily Ledger, Friday, July 17, 1981

WASHINGTON (AP) Veterans Administration officials, saying they don't understand "this bizarre business of Agent Orange," are, nonetheless, promising to try.

But they got a skeptical reception at a public forum Thursday from members of the House Vietnam Veterans Caucus and veterans in the audience who accused the agency of being indifferent.

Agent Orange, named because it was shipped in barrels with orange stripes, is an herbicide used in Vietnam from 1962 to 1971 to defoliate trees and destroy crops. It contains a substance called dioxin, which some veterans maintain has caused cancer, birth defects and nerve and skin disorders.

Robert E. Coy, the VA's deputy general counsel, said some of the criticism of his agency is justified but added that it is limited in its powers because it is a "creature of statute."

"Mr. Coy, don't you really think that's just a bunch of bull," asked Rep. Thomas A. Daschle, D-S.D., who presided at the forum.

Coy went on to describe some of the limits he said are placed on the VA by federal law, such as lack of authority to treat children of veterans. But he promised a "serious and sincere effort" to diagnose and treat Agent Orange related illnesses under legislation nearing passage in Congress.

"I don't understand Agent Orange," said Coy. "I know it's a problem. I know it's a concern. I wish scientists had started on the problem 10 years ago."

John Avalos, a Marine Corps veteran of Vietnam, said he went to a VA hospital in Los Angeles because he was "unable to stand on my feet," but they "just examined me about five minutes and told me to go home."

Steve Androff, an Army veteran, said he went in for treatment of a skin disorder that still troubles him, but was told it was just acne and not related to Agent Orange.

Suzanne Hopkins, widow of a Marine veteran whose death in Los Angeles touched off a hunger strike by other veterans, said her husband, James, received "a mockery of an Agent Orange consultation" before the VA decided he had no problems related to herbicide exposure.

## The American's Creed

I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a Republic; a sovereign Nation of many sovereign States; a perfect Union, one and inseparable; established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice, and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes.

I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it; to support its Constitution; to obey its laws; to respect its flag; and to defend it against all enemies.

William Tyler Page



# Update

## Medical Update on Agent Orange

by Cheryl Koehler,  
Biofeedback Clinician and Medical Board Chair,  
Veterans Leadership Conference

**Complaints:** During the last three years in my work with Vietnam veterans, I have heard repeated complaints of symptoms starting in Vietnam or developing shortly after return to the States. These symptoms include inability to cope with everyday stress, mood swings from feelings of well being to that of deepest depression, loss of control over emotions, recurring episodes of rage and physical violence, anxiety, headaches, nausea, numbness, gastrointestinal disorder such as esophagitis, ulcers, colitis, constipation and diarrhea.

The most common complaint, however, is reoccurrence of red vesicles looking much like severe acne or cybiacious cysts. This condition is called chloracne or could be a symptom of porphoria cutanea tarda which is not just a skin disease but a symptom of liver disease or dysfunction.

The frequency of birth defects, miscarriages and hyperactive children appears to be higher in the Vietnam veteran group than that of the general public.

There also appears to be an increase in various cancers among this group.

**Studies:** Dioxin has been called one of the most toxic and dangerous chemicals known to man. It has been said that Dioxin is carcinogenic and mutagenic in one part per trillion levels. It also appears that some researchers have not found Dioxin to be a strong carcinogen, but a weak one. Two such studies have been done by Dow Chemical Company and one by Monsanto.

Dow Chemical Company's researchers reported that those workers exposed to dioxin dust at a level of one part per trillion experienced nasal irritation, sneezing and a bitter taste in the mouth. They also reported that they did not experience chloracne or porphyria cutanea tarda which are common reactions to dioxin as is now being reported by the Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange. In this first case study by Dow they found no cancers or deaths related directly to dioxin.

## Agent Orange vets rated 'Psychotic': lawyer

Vietnam veterans seeking treatment for Agent Orange related disabilities are routinely labeled "psychotics" by the Veterans Administration, shot up with drugs and locked in psychiatric wards, an attorney charged Friday.

Attorney Victor J. Yannacone Jr. has filed a class-action suit in U.S. District Court against the VA, seeking changes in treatment of some of the estimated 2.4 million Vietnam veterans exposed to the defoliant Agent Orange from 1962 through 1971.

Yannacone charged that Vietnam veterans with obvious physical problems are commonly diagnosed as "psychotics" by VA doctors, prescribed dangerous levels of drugs and often shut up in psychiatric wards rather than treated for their physical ailments.

"We have charged the VA with the largest institutional malpractice ever conducted on human beings," Yannacone said at a news conference in the Dirksen Federal Building. "It has almost become a knee-jerk reflex for the VA to consider any Agent Orange claim as evidence of psychosis."

Yannacone's suit, filed Jan. 9 in Chicago, Los Angeles, New York and Iowa, charges VA prescription of drugs for those exposed to Agent Orange "has caused serious permanent and irreparable damage to individual veterans," and, in some cases, death.

"Over the last two years, many sick people have been mistreated, turned away and, if they protest, viciously abused by the VA - shot up with psychotropic (mind-affecting) drugs and locked up in psych wards," Yannacone said.

Yannacone, of Patchogue, N.Y., is chief marshal of a consortium of lawyers from 150 firms that has sued the chemical companies that manufactured Agent Orange.

His suit charges VA officials have failed to warn Vietnam veterans of the risk associated with exposure to Agent Orange, which contains a toxic chemical, Dioxin, that has been linked in some studies to degenerative diseases and birth defects. The

"pernicious practice" of inappropriate prescriptions of anti-depressants, muscle relaxants and tranquilizers - without regard for American Medical Association guidelines - constitutes "cruel and unusual punishment," the suit charges, and is a violation of veterans' civil and human rights.

The suit asks for various changes in VA treatment of Agent Orange victims, such as mandatory psychiatric examinations before the prescription of drugs and the informed consent of veterans to such prescriptions.

Yannacone called the placing of veterans with physical problems in psychiatric wards without their consent "the ultimate holding without due process" and advised veterans to bring a friend with them when seeking treatment at a VA hospital.

"Once they grab you, they can fill you with enough psychotropic drugs to boil your brains permanently," Yannacone said.

Chloracne is a skin disease characterized by blackheads, cysts postules and abscesses.

Porphoria cutanea tarda is classified under metabolic anomalies or disorders. This group of diseases are inherited or acquired by exposure to toxic chemicals such as lead or dioxin. Porphoria cutanea tarda is a liver dysfunction which frequently causes skin to be extremely sensitive to light and sun exposure. Hirsutism is a condition of hair in unusual places on the body as well as increase in skin coloration and other skin structure changes and abdominal pain and neurological disturbances have been noted.

In the second case study by Dow they found that many of their workers exposed to dioxin did develop chloracne with the severity ranging from severe to questionable. They also reported porphyria cutanea tarda, liver toxicity and a wide variety of poorly defined neurological abnormalities.

In this study they had four deaths of sixty one exposed to dioxin, three of these deaths were attributed to cancer. This appears to represent an increase in cancer related deaths. It does seem that dioxin is an immunological depressant retarding the body's ability to defend itself against cancer.

From this study we find no single tumor type and it does not appear to be organ or tissue specific. From this study it appears that dioxin is a weak carcinogenic.

The one study by Monsanto covered 121 people exposed to dioxin. These people immediately experienced symptoms following exposure. Their symptoms ranged from eye and respiratory tract irritation, headaches, dizziness, nausea and severe skin reactions.

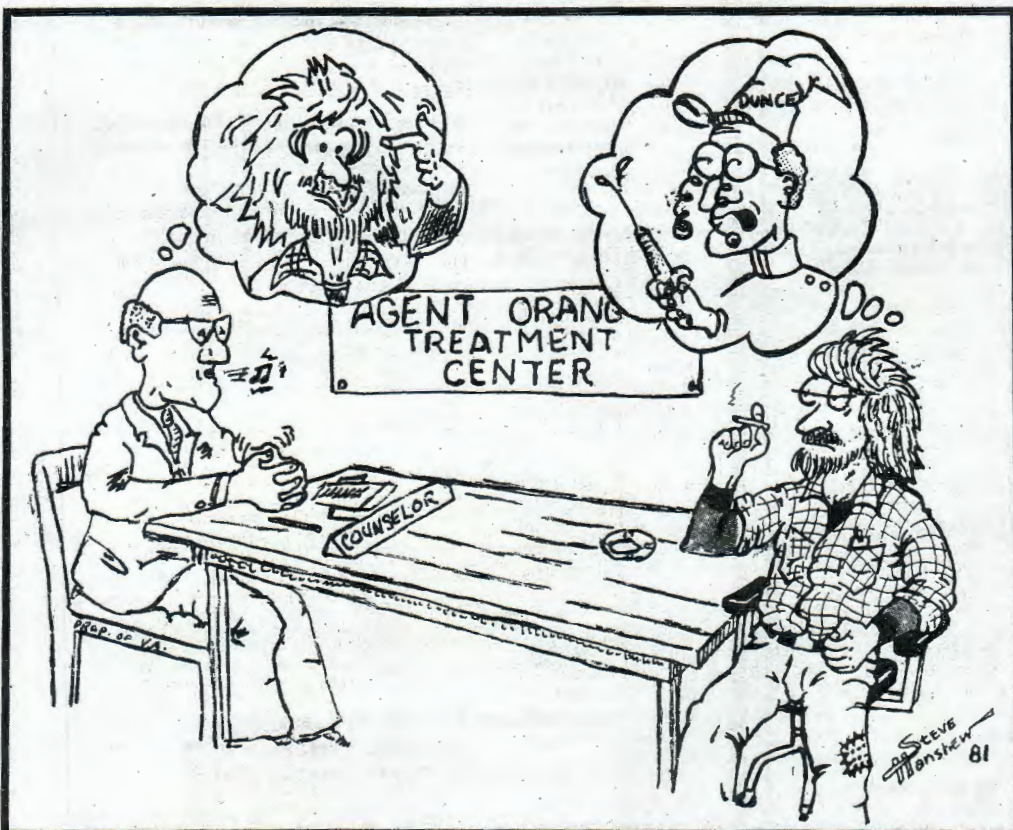
After the initial symptoms subsided chloracne and other symptoms such as liver dysfunction, peripheral neuritis and dysfunction in fat metabolism and porphyria cutanea tarda were prevalent.

**Conclusions:** We still have only limited studies and research on the long term effects of dioxin exposure. It is important that if you feel that you were exposed to dioxin you should inform your doctors and your health should be watched carefully.

I would also suggest that you report to the nearest VA hospital for the Agent Orange screening program.

At this time there is no definite test to prove Agent Orange exposure but this is being worked on throughout the country. Also as of right now, there is no cure for the toxic effects of dioxin.

I would recommend good maintenance health care and a well balanced diet.



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Veterans Leadership Conference  
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## Just What is the Veterans Leadership Conference?

### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

It is a commonly accepted fact that Vietnam veterans tend not to receive from the government the full benefits to which they are entitled. Also, many of the existing programs make no distinction between those who served in Vietnam as military and those who served there in support of the United States military action. As a result, the civilians who served in Vietnam have been overlooked in many instances.

The most common problems faced by those who were in Vietnam are post-traumatic stress disorder, unemployment, the effects of exposure to toxic chemicals, including Agent Orange, and the attitude of the public in general.

The purpose of the Leadership Conference is to link a very large, fragmented, dispersed, and often alienated group of persons so that they may have an input into the development of needed programs and may easily access such programs. Such action addresses both the immediate and long term needs of the group.

To date, the Leadership Conference has united over 20 groups nationwide with the base in Chicago, and has had direct input into the positions of both of the major parties during the last presidential election, engaged in voter registration and education, promoted better harmony and understanding between the so-called traditional and non-traditional groups by activities

such as the recognition day in Grant Park in 1979 and attempted to create a more positive public attitude through numerous radio, television and print articles.

Through networking and information sharing, including a large group of veterans in Australia who served in Vietnam as members of the SEATO force, we seek input on program development geared to the needs of the veterans, and strive to achieve a degree of political awareness and involvement. Our goal is to bring the unutilized resource of the Vietnam veteran into the mainstream of American society so that both the veterans and the society which they served so well may profit.

## Let's do it ourselves

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## Duty, Honor and Country

By Joan M. Maiman

The responsibility of any citizen of a Republic is to serve the nation when called upon to do so. It is perhaps simplistic, but bears repetition that if one is to enjoy the blessings of liberty, one must be willing to serve to secure and preserve these blessings. Indeed, historically, in any society, the rights of citizenship have been co-existent with the obligation of service.

In the United States many types of service have evolved. The military has been the most common, but other forms include missionary service, the Peace Corps, the Red Cross, the United Service Organization, lay church service. To date, the military has been the only service which guaranteed benefits upon completion of tour or incapacity.

Perhaps the time has now come for us to look closely at the system which has evolved out of this concept. The enormous cost of supporting the Veterans Administration has now come under fire from many groups. The inequity of one group of persons receiving benefits at cost to the taxpayers, while another group or groups who served, many times in the front lines of combat, are without any such benefits is pronounced.

A case in point is the issue of Agent Orange. Those who served in Vietnam at the invitation of the military, such as the Red Cross, the USO and the church groups, are without any testing and treatment programs, as it now exists.

The need for readjustment programs for some of those who served in the Vietnam conflict is well documented. However, the treatment centers which now exist are open to all who served in the Vietnam-era, whether or not they were in the combat zone, while excluding the civilians who saw extensive combat.

The hostages and their families were given educational benefits, while again many others who served in combat in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam are without any such benefits. Certainly, we went into the combat zone knowing that we were doing so without any repayment in terms of benefits or services. The knowledge that we had served was and is payment enough.

However, it might be worth considering in light of the inequities which exist and the move toward a form of national service, that perhaps the criteria for benefits should be for those who were injured in service of country in any location or capacity.

As it stands now, some forms of service are apparently more lucrative than others. Persons who never saw combat are rewarded more than those who served under fire.

If we are to recognize our citizens for fulfilling their obligation to serve, let us look at the many forms of service available, and make the system more equitable and just for all. It is an honor to serve and we should honor all those who served under fire.

## Vietnam Veterans Battle

Continued from Page 1

Chapman has been enrolled in the voluntary program for nine weeks. Since then, he says he has made lots of friends and discovered that his "brothers" care about his welfare.

Research for the Young Vietnam Vets Program started seven years ago when hospital people began reaching out to vets on the streets and quizzing them about what kind of help they needed.

In 1978, the hospital reorganized its services and started the in-patient, voluntary veterans' program, said program director Fred Gusman. Vets were encouraged to come together for group therapy and talk about their common experiences.

"We at the hospital were the first to take the risk," he explained. "It had never been done in the VA system. Remember, one of the concerns at the time was, 'If you put 30 or 40 Vietnam War veterans together, will they create a revolution and take over. It sounds crazy, but people had those concerns.'"

Gusman says the program is offered free of charge to any Vietnam-era veteran who feels he needs help.

"It's a therapeutic community that allows a vet to get back in touch with who he was before the service, what happened to him while he was there and when he came back and where he's going to go."

"Vets learn to deal with anger, frustration, and pain," Gusman said. "They feel like they can finally cry," he said, adding the veterans face the double burden of being male and conditioned to block out the pain of the war to survive.

The symptoms of being adversely affected by the war are pronounced, says Joaquim Gallardo. Gallardo, team leader of a San Francisco vet center, says many men come in drunk or drugged looking for help.

"Some guys who come in are so enraged they can't even speak," he says. Symptoms include not being able to hold down a job, difficulties in relationships and alcohol or drug addiction that he calls "self-medicating."

"They feel that they've been literally raped and no one really gives a damn," he said. "They are desperately looking for a support group—for a unit to belong to."

By Caroline Young  
Examiner Staff Writer  
San Francisco Examiner, Tuesday, July 7, 1981

Refraining from taking drugs or drinking alcohol is one rule that Gusman doesn't want broken. He says it is vital for vets to learn that crutches won't help in the long run, but if somebody slips, they won't be kicked out. The group will help the vet understand why he fell back.

There are basically three phases in the program, Gusman says. The first involves making the vets comfortable with the program. When a man feels part of the vet community, there is a "coming home" celebration, Gusman says, and the man gets hugged from all the other vets.

Getting a chance to practice what they learn outside of the hospital is the second phase, and finding a job or going back to school is the final part. Most vets stay between five and nine months.

Gusman has recently started a special kind of group therapy. Almost all the 50 or 60 men in the program sing in a choral group. Led by Pat Bob, hospital nurse and counselor, the men adequately belt out such tunes as, "What the World Needs Now," "Lean On Me," and "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing."

The group has sung in public a couple of times, but its goal is to earn enough money to go to Washington, D.C. and sing at the Capitol on Veterans Day in November.

The singing group is indicative of the fellowship the vets feel.

Larry Bank returned from Vietnam in 1970. "I was unable to cope. I went through 30 or 40 jobs. I had nightmares and stress. I've been holding this inside since 'Nam. But we've all been there," he explained, relating the phrase each vet seems to use. "We can relate to one another."

Stephen Berman, assistant chief of social workers at the hospital, likes to compare the veterans enrolled in the program there with the vets who have recently staged demonstrations about the lack of medical care around the country.

"They have real legitimate complaints," he said of the vets. "But this is the other side of the story. These are vets who have problems and have a special program geared to their needs... We try to help them."

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## Whether Report?



## Education Loans, Flight, Courses

WASHINGTON - Elimination of the low-interest education loan program, flight training and correspondence courses under the GI Bill and post-service dental care for many veterans was approved by the House June 26.

Also approved as part of the cuts in the House's FY82 budget reconciliation bill was a measure to tighten eligibility for the \$300 burial allowance and \$150 plot allowance paid by the Veterans Administration. That measure is more liberal than the one approved by the Senate June 25.

The education loan program now permits an eligible veteran or eligible dependent to borrow up to \$2500 per school year to attend college. Those enrolled in flight training or in a course leading to a professional or vocational objective that requires at least six months to complete also are eligible. Current annual interest rate for the loan is seven percent.

All of the veterans benefits reductions passed by the House would take effect October 1.

Also targeted for October 1 elimination by the House were flight training and correspondence courses under the GI Bill. GI Bill payments for correspondence courses were cut from 90 to 70 percent of their cost last October 1 and flight training payments dropped from 90 to 60 percent.

As passed by the House, payments to those now in correspondence or flight programs would stop October 1.

The Senate left intact the education loans and GI Bill payments for flight and correspondence students. But its version of the limits on VA burial benefits for veterans who die of non-service-connected causes was stricter than the version passed by the House. Neither version would affect the \$1100 payment authorized for a veteran who dies of service-connected causes.

Under the House version, the \$300 burial allowance and \$150 plot allowance would be limited, effective October 1, to veterans with adjusted incomes of \$20,000 or less during the 12-month period before death. That adjusted income would be based on the taxable income of a single veteran or the combined taxable income of a married veteran and spouse.

The Senate version would limit the \$450 death benefit, as of July 1, to veterans with service-connected disability ratings of 30 percent or greater and those receiving VA pensions whose incomes are low enough to meet the VA pension limit. On October 1, when FY 82 begins, eligibility would be restricted to those with at least a 20 percent disability rating. Only those with a 40 percent or greater service-connected disability rating would be eligible in FY 83 and thereafter.

## Veterans Panel Cool to Benefits Transfer

WASHINGTON - There is little support in the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee for a proposal to let service members transfer unused GI Bill benefits to their dependents, according to a committee staff member.

However, the staff member said the committee is considering an alternative that would allow service members to trade in unused GI Bill education benefits for the privilege of obtaining a special no down payment, low-interest home loan.

A provision that would authorize service members up to 18 months of education leave to pursue full-time studies under the GI Bill has wide support on the panel, he said.

Committee hearings on legislation to revive the GI Bill are scheduled to begin July 22. At that time, the panel will consider a number of proposals. "One option in lieu of transferability would be to permit servicemen to their 18th to 25th years of service to trade in their unused GI Bill education benefits for a no down payment home loan at below-market Veterans Administration interest rates," he said.

Interest on the home loan would be three, four or even five percentage points below the prevailing VA interest rate while the service member remained on active duty. Once he or she retired, the interest rate would be increased to the level of the prevailing VA interest rate, the staffer said.

The special home loan program would be in addition to the regular loan program that has long been available to active duty people and veterans. The special loan program for careerists could be financed from the VA revolving fund now used to provide direct loans to home buyers who reside in rural areas.

The Senate panel is considering providing basic GI Bill benefits along the lines of a bill introduced by Sen. William Armstrong (R-Colo). The Armstrong bill would provide eligible service members with up to 36 months of tuition aid, limited to \$3000 annually, and a monthly allowance of \$250.

Committee members also favor restricting educational benefits for Reserve Component service to those in paid drill status.

The committee is expected to complete its work on the GI Bill legislation and send it to the Senate floor for a vote by mid-September, the staffer said.

In the House, two committees are considering the GI Bill legislation. The House Veterans Affairs Committee on May 12 approved a measure to reinstate the GI Bill. It included a provision that would permit service members to transfer unused GI Bill educational benefits to one or more dependents after their 12th year of service. The House Armed Services Committee currently is reviewing the measure. Although the armed service committee normally does not handle veterans legislation, it is reviewing the GI Bill reinstatement proposals because of their potentially high cost.

The Senate staffer said, "Most members of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee feel transferability would cost too much money. They're also against providing aid to dependent children who are old enough to enter military service to qualify for their own GI Bill educational benefits."

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## Vietnam Vets Not Alone!... W.W.I Vets Want \$150 Monthly Pension

If it wasn't for the veterans of World War I, veterans of later generations would have probably received the same "shabby" treatment as their forefathers, according to an 81-year-old vet.

"The Vietnam veterans can thank the Lord and the World War I vets to have the DAV and American Legion to help them. Without them they would be in terrible shape.

"When the World War I veterans came home there was no VA to go to. He had nothing to go to, said Bennie Sprouse, W.W. I, W.W. II, Korean Conflict and Vietnam veteran of South Carolina.

When W.W. I ended in 1918 the doughboys returned from gay Paris to the old farm with memories, \$60, a coach ticket (not a pullman) and a promise to do better from their Uncle Sam.

According to Sprouse, the military realized that the average foot soldier or seaman 1st Class had been grossly underpaid for his service. Sprouse's top pay as a seaman 1st Class was \$21 per month.

So with the backing of the newly formed American Legion the Federal government promised to give the veterans a "bonus." For every day the serviceman spent in the service in the states he would receive \$1. For every day he spent overseas he would get \$1.25. The government called this a "bonus," said Sprouse, "but it was really an adjustment in pay."

Uncle Sam may have had good intentions, but he didn't have the cash.

In 1929 the government told the veterans it couldn't pay them their "bonuses" in one lump sum, but that they could pay the men on an endowment policy payable in 1945.

But to help the veterans, many of whom were out of work and "selling apples on street corners," the government told them they could borrow up to 50 percent of their bonuses at 6 percent interest.

With the onset of the Great Depression in 1929 many veterans were in dire need of help. As times went from bad to worse, the veterans began to demand payment, but were ignored. In 1935, 35,000 veterans marched on Washington.

"I was one of the organizers," said Sprouse, a native of Union. "We live in Tent City."

The veterans stayed in Washington, living in shacks and as best they could, until "Hoover ordered them out at the point of a bayonet," in 1936.

In 1937 Sprouse got \$550 of his bonus, which was more than most men got because they had already borrowed on it, he said.

The American Legion, made up entirely of W.W. I veterans, went out to fight for the G.I. Bill of Rights and low interest home loans. But they never reaped any of these benefits. But the veterans of other wars did. Not until last year were W.W.I veterans eligible to get VA hospital treatment.

Now, 63 years later, the remaining 400,000 veterans, whose average age is 85 are still trying to get help from the government.

Before the House of Representatives is Bill H.R. 1918, which would entitle all W.W. I veterans, regardless of income, to a \$150 monthly pension.

At a rate of 200 W.W. I veterans dying per day, it would cost the taxpayer \$1.2 billion, give or take \$200 million, for fiscal year 1982. Each year afterward would cost less and less. There are about 4,000 W.W. I veterans in South Carolina.

"If you think about it, we (WWI Vets) were treated shabbier than any other (group of veterans). Even the veterans of the Civil War and the Indian Wars got state pensions. We're only asking for the same amount paid to the Spanish American War veterans...\$150."

Source: Vetletter, USC, Summer 198  
 Steve Wong, Editor

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# VETERANS LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

300 NORTH STATE STREET, SUITE 3409  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60610

JOAN M. MAIMAN

June 25, 1981

Mr. Allen B. Clark, Jr.  
Deputy Administrator Delegate  
Veterans Administration  
810 Vermont Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20420

Dear Mr. Clark:

The conference you mentioned to be held in Washington on 18 July appears to be a gesture of good faith on the part of the Veterans Administration, but we again reiterate the following reservations.

The response of the Reagan administration to date has been less than optimal in that the degree of communication to the response has fallen off markedly since the November election. It was the understanding of many of those who gave the last bit of faith they had to see that Mr. Reagan was elected, that his administration would be one of honor. To date, such a perception has not been forthcoming.

We are hopeful that the conference will be productive and establish a system of accountability for the VA and open channels of communication.

The main topics of concern from the members of the Leadership Conference are as follows:

Agent Orange - what studies are in existence, what is being done by the Reagan administration, what is the time-frame for completion of such activities, and perhaps most importantly, what will be done for the very real suffering of those affected by their service in Vietnam in the interim?

Outreach Programs - what is the plan to make Operation Outreach accountable and ensure that the staffing and services provided to those who served in Vietnam are the best the VA can offer in terms of quality. What follow-up studies are planned for the program to ascertain if it is following the best program design.

What is the future of the so-called community-based organizations. It can be documented that in many cases, they are providing the services the Government has failed to provide, and are doing so on a far more cost-effective basis.

Page two.

Mr. Allen B. Clark, Jr.

June 25, 1981

At this time, I am unable to make a definite commitment regarding attendance at the conference due to the matter of funding, but I shall advise you at the earliest possible date if I and other members of the Conference shall be in attendance.

In summary, we realize that the scope of the existing problems and the current frustration level of those who served in Vietnam did not arise overnight, and the solutions will not be simplistic or in many cases rapid. But the time for action is long overdue, and either excuses or procrastination would be unconscionable.

It would be supremely ironic if the only avenue open to redress of the grievances, real and perceived, of the Vietnam veteran would be suffering and death. We do believe at this point that this is an accurate observation, but we are fast running out of options.

I close with the thoughts of many of us that what little trust we do have left is fragile at best. Hopefully, your actions and those of the new administration will reinforce it. For I truly fear that if, once again, we find it is "all talk" the damage will be irreparable.

Such a final betrayal would be the real tragedy of Vietnam, not so much that the war happened for this is beyond our power to change, but that we could not as a nation find it in our hearts to deal with the aftermath.

I remain, Sir,

Very truly yours,

*Joan Maiman*  
Joan Maiman  
Chairman  
Veterans Leadership Conference  
(312) 828-9563

JM/sg

# Veterans leader takes on new post

By JOHN LOVEJOY  
Ledger Staff Writer

Pete Tiffany of West Pittsburg became the first western regional director of the Veterans Leadership Conference (VLC) when he resigned Friday as president of the Contra Costa chapter of Vietnam Veterans of America.

Tiffany's assistant director is Vince Rios of South San Francisco.

Taking over Tiffany's position in the VVA is Steve Castille of San Ramon.

According to Joan Maiman, chairman of the Chicago-based VLC, Tiffany is now in charge of VLC chapters in the western third of the U.S. Other new VLC state directors are Chris Johnson of South Dakota, Doug Walton of Montana and Furlton Barnes of Oregon.

Johnson, who heads Vietnam Veterans of South Dakota, quit his membership in VVA, according to Tiffany. Walton, who heads Agent Orange Victims Northwest, also quit VVA, Tiffany said. Burns, who heads a chapter of the National Association for the

Advancement for Colored People, is continuing to work with "a loose coalition of veterans' groups," according to Tiffany.

Maiman said that the VLC now plans to keep its headquarters in Chicago and use three regional centers to cover the country. She had been considering moving the headquarters to California.

Tiffany told members of VVA Friday that he was resigning because of "a perception that the national office has and continues to have managerial problems which impact upon my ability to perform as I think I should."

He said he had notified VVA national director Bobby Muller and others of his decision to resign.

Tiffany was one of the co-founders of the local VVA chapter, and was in recent weeks re-elected as the chapter president.

Tiffany was careful to point out Friday that he plans to remain in the veterans' movement and "I want you to know that I have not taken these decisions lightly, but have tried to look at all the facts as they concern both organizations. I feel that the Veterans Leadership Conference offers a much

greater opportunity for veterans and other citizens to achieve our common, in the case of the Vietnam veteran, unique goals."

He said today that he has signed up 10 members in VLC since Saturday.

In other developments, Myron A. Burger, the VLC's legal counsel, said VLC will help civilians who served in Vietnam if they believe they are suffering from the effects of the defoliant Agent Orange. He said civilians have "the same rights to remedies as veterans."

For further information, contact Tiffany at 458-3289, Burger at 312-677-0846, or Maiman at 312-828-9563.

Burger's address is 8201 Kilpatrick, Slokie, Ill., 60076.

Tiffany's address is 57 Water St., West Pittsburg, 94565.

Maiman's address is 300 North State St., Suite 3409, Chicago, Ill., 60610.

Individual membership is \$5 per year or \$10 for a family.

## Is Anybody Listening

is anybody listening?  
There is a problem in our country that needs attention. There are hundreds, and probably thousands, of civilian veterans of the war in Vietnam who are severely lacking in knowledge about Agent Orange, possible and probable exposure to this chemical and its dangers not only for the veteran, but his/her offspring.

Unlike the military veteran who had been trained for combat, civilian veterans volunteered their services to their country and went to Vietnam without being advised of existing health hazards such as Agent Orange. Though it is now somewhat after the fact, civilian veterans still need to be informed.

But who are the civilian veterans? Who are the men and women who served with such agencies as the American National Red Cross and the USO? Do these organizations have a list of persons employed and stationed in Vietnam? Are there any records from that time period? Are these records accessible? Can the effort be made to locate these men and women; and if so, who will make the effort?

Once these civilian veterans are identified...located...and provided with information about Agent Orange, there is still another problem—medical attention.

These civilian veterans are entitled to medical testing facilities and medical treatment, if needed. Yet the question remains—who will provide the facilities for testing and any treatment that may be necessary? Who is responsible?

Is anybody listening? There are hundreds, and probably thousands, waiting for answers to these questions.---Becky Pietz, civilian veteran, 6004 Knollwood Dr. T-2, Falls Church, VA 22041. ★

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to [unclear] - [unclear]  
[unclear] - [unclear]

# VETERANS LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

300 NORTH STATE STREET, SUITE 3409  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60610

file

JOAN M. MAIMAN

23 February, 1981

Mr Morton Blackwell  
Special Asst. Public Affairs  
Executive Office Bldg. Rm. 128  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr Blackwell:

As per our conversation of this date, I am forwarding some material regarding the Veterans Leadership Conference.

We shall look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

*Joan M. Maiman*

Joan M Maiman  
Chairman  
Veterans Leadership Conference  
(312)828-9563

DIRECTORY

VETERANS LEADERSHIP  
CONFERENCE

JOAN M. MAIMAN  
CHAIRMAN

300 N. STATE ST.  
APARTMENT 3409  
CHICAGO, IL 60610

NOVEMBER, 1980

312-828-9563

*Since this list was printed we have had  
& new groups form. Sorry its  
outdated -*



VETERANS LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

NAME - AGENT ORANGE WOMENS SUPPORT GROUP - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - 4316 NUTMEG LN.  
 LISLE, IL 60532  
 PHONE - 312-968-2267  
 CONTACT - CHERYL KOEHLER R.N.  
 PURPOSE - COUNSEL WOMEN WHO ARE RELATED TO AGENT ORANGE VICTIMS

NAME - AMERICAN GI FORUM - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - 10550 TORRENCE AVE.  
 CHICAGO, IL  
 PHONE - 312-933-9849  
 CONTACT - JOSEPH NERI  
 PURPOSE - COUNSELING AND EMPLOYMENT REFERAL

NAME - CALIFORNIA VIETNAM VETERANS - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - 57 WATER ST.  
 PITTSBURG, CA 94565  
 PHONE - 415-556-1575  
 CONTACT - PETE TIFFANY  
 PURPOSE - COUNSELING AND SUPPORT FOR VIETNAM VETERAN

NAME - CAVEAT, INC. - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - 4316 NUTMEG LN.  
 LISLE, IL 60532  
 PHONE - 312-968-2267 - MIKE SKYER, 217-356-7482 - RON DEYOUNG  
 CONTACT - MIKE SKYER, RON DEYOUNG  
 PURPOSE - INFORMATION AND ACTION ON AGENT ORANGE

NAME - CENTREL PENN. CONCERNED VIET NAM VETERANS ASSOC. - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - RD. 1 P.O. BOX 72  
 PARKSBURG, PA 19365  
 PHONE - 215-857-3967  
 CONTACT - KEN DOHNER  
 PURPOSE - SERVICES TO VIET NAM VETERANS

NAME - DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - 536 S. CLARK ST.  
 CHICAGO, IL 60605  
 PHONE - 312-353-3960  
 CONTACT - ROBERT VALASKI  
 PURPOSE - SERVICES TO ELIGABLE VETERANS

NAME - DROP IN CENTER - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - 51 CLIFTON AVE. NUMBER C2101  
 NEWARK, NJ 07104  
 PHONE - 201-481-2876  
 CONTACT - JAMES CREDLE  
 PURPOSE - ASSISTANCE FOR DISCHARGE UPGRADE AND INCARCERATED VETS

NAME - GOODWILL INDUSTRIES - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - 120 S. ASHLAND BLVD.  
 CHICAGO, IL  
 PHONE - 312-738-3860 EXT. 266  
 CONTACT - MRS. SHIRLEY MORLEY  
 PURPOSE - VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION TRAINING

V E T E R A N S   L E A D E R S H I P   C O N F E R E N C E

NAME - ILLINOIS VIETNAM VETERANS CIVIC COUNCIL - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - 4316 NUTMEG LN.  
 LISLE, IL  
 PHONE - 312-968-2267  
 CONTACT - MICHEAL SKYER  
 PURPOSE - ADVISE VA ON VIETNAM ERA MATTERS

NAME - KANE COUNTY VETERANS ASSOC. - FRIEND  
 ADDRESS - KANE COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
 GENEVA, IL  
 PHONE - 312-232-2400  
 PURPOSE - REFERRAL

NAME - LOOP COLLEGE - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - 64 E. LAKE ST.  
 CHICAGO, IL  
 CONTACT - PAUL GALVAN - VETERANS ADVISOR

NAME - MALCOM X COLLEGE - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - 1900 W. VAN BUREN  
 CHICAGO, IL 60612  
 PHONE - 312-942-3151  
 CONTACT - TONY JOHNSON  
 PURPOSE - SERVICE TO VETERANS

NAME - METRO VETS CENTER - FRIEND  
 ADDRESS - 1100 GARFIELD ST.  
 OAK PARK, IL 60304  
 PHONE - 312-383-3225  
 CONTACT - DAVID B. BINGAMAN  
 PURPOSE - READJUSTMENT COUNSELING TO ELIGABLE VETS

NAME - MIDWEST BIOFEEDBACK INST. - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - 4316 NUTMEG LN. NUMBER 269  
 LISLE, IL 60532  
 PHONE - 312-968-2267  
 CONTACT - CHERLY KOEHLER - DIRECTOR  
 PURPOSE - GIVE SUPPORT, DO RESEARCH AND THERAPIES TO VETERANS AND FAMLIES

NAME - NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - 407 S. DEARBORN - SUITE 1519  
 CHICAGO, IL 60605  
 CONTACT - REV. HERBERT MARTIN  
 PURPOSE - INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

NAME - NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK VETERANS - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - C/O GATEWAY M.B. CHURCH  
 1503 W. ROOSEVELT  
 CHICAGO, IL  
 CONTACT - CLEM HENDERSON  
 PURPOSE - UPLIFTING OF VETERANS EDUCATIONALLY AND INTELLECTUALLY

NAME - OPERATION PUSH - FRIEND  
 ADDRESS - 930 E 50TH ST.  
 CHICAGO, IL  
 PHONE - 312-373-3366  
 CONTACT - REV. WILLIE BARROWS  
 PURPOSE - REFERAL AND OUTREACH

VETERANS LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

NAME - UNITED STEEL WORKERS OF AMERICA DISTRICT 31 - FRIEND  
 ADDRESS - FIRST NATIONAL BANK BUILDING  
 720 W. CHICAGO AVE.  
 EAST CHICAGO, IL 46312  
 PHONE - 312-221-5813 OR 219-298-2051  
 CONTACT - RUDY NICHOLS  
 PURPOSE - LABOR UNION

NAME - VETS OF MASSACHUTSETTS - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - 81 ST. NICHOLAS RD.  
 FRAMINGHAM, MS 01701  
 CONTACT - GAIL STEINECKE  
 PURPOSE - REFERRAL

NAME - VET CENTER - FRIEND  
 ADDRESS - 5242 W. CHICAGO AVE.  
 CHICAGO, IL 60618  
 PHONE - 312-626-1882  
 CONTACT - DAVE EIZINGER, EARL BROWN, GEORGE VANODORE, CLEM HENDERSON  
 PURPOSE - COUNSELING AND REFERAL FOR VIET NAM ERA VETS

NAME - VETERANS AFFAIRS - THORTON COLLEGE - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - 15800 SOUTH STATE ST.  
 SOUTH HOLLAND, IL 60473  
 PHONE - 312-596-2000 EXT. 319,318  
 CONTACT - R. V. KING  
 PURPOSE - VETERANS ASSISTANCE

NAME - VETERANS OF CINCINNATI - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - 2674 WENDEE DR., APT. 2347  
 CINCINNATI, OH 45238  
 PHONE - 513-662-5291  
 CONTACT - TIM CULVERTSON  
 PURPOSE - COUNSEL VIET NAM VETERANS

NAME - VETERANS OF ELGIN - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - 330 WATRES  
 ELGIN, IL  
 PHONE - 312-742-7015  
 CONTACT - PAUL BLECKE  
 PURPOSE - REFERRAL

NAME - VETERANS OF MICHIGAN - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - 3520 MONROE  
 DEARBORN, MI 48124  
 PHONE - 313-561-2760  
 CONTACT - SETH SUAREZ  
 PURPOSE - REFERRAL

NAME - VETERANS FOR PEACE - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - 542 SOUTH DEARBORN -ROOM 510  
 CHICAGO, IL  
 PHONE - 312-922-0056  
 CONTACT - MICHEAL PARISI 312-549-1609  
 PURPOSE - TO PROMOTE VETERANS ISSUES AND PEACE

V E T E R A N S   L E A D E R S H I P   C O N F E R E N C E

NAME - VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - P.O.BOX 20184  
 CHICAGO, IL 60620  
 PHONE - 312-651-1583  
 CONTACT - PETE ZASTROW, BARRY ROMO  
 PURPOSE - TO ORGANIZE VETS ESPECIALLY VIETNAM ERA VETS TO MEET NEEDS

NAME - VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC. - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - 329 8TH ST. NE  
 WASHINGTON, DC 20002  
 PHONE - 202-546-3700  
 CONTACT - JOHN TERRANZO  
 PURPOSE - MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATION FOR VIETNAM VETERANS

NAME - VIETNAM OF SOUTH DAKOTA - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - P. O. BOX 2037  
 RAPID CITY, SD 57709  
 PHONE - 605-787-5330  
 CONTACT - CHRIS JOHNSON  
 PURPOSE - COUNSELING INFORMATION ON AGENT ORANGE

NAME - VOTERS REGISTRATION PROJECT - MEMBER  
 ADDRESS - 629 N. ROOT ST.  
 AURORA, IL 60505  
 PHONE - 312-897-6472  
 CONTACT - WILLIE COLLINS  
 PURPOSE - INFORMATION REGARDING VOTER REGISTRATION

NAME - SENATOR HAROLD WASHINGTON - ADVISOR  
 ADDRESS - 6301 S. WENTWORTH  
 CHICAGO, IL  
 PHONE - 312-994-5000  
 CONTACT - KAREN HOWARD  
 PURPOSE - ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE

NAME - T.C. KING AND ASSOCIATES - ADVISOR  
 ADDRESS - 300 N. STATE ST. SUITE 4705  
 CHICAGO, IL 60610  
 PHONE - 312-467-6370  
 PURPOSE - TECHNICAL ADVISOR

NAME - VETERAN EMPLOYMENT SERVICE - ADVISOR  
 ADDRESS - 910 S. MICHIGAN AVE.  
 CHICAGO, IL  
 PHONE - 312-793-4047  
 PURPOSE - GOVERNMENT AGENCY

NAME - VETERANS ADMINISTRATION - ADVISOR  
 ADDRESS - 536 S. CLARK ST.  
 CHICAGO, IL 60605  
 PHONE - 312-353-4101  
 CONTACT - JOHN HAND  
 PURPOSE - GOVERNMENT AGENCY

NAME - CITY OF CHICAGO DEPT. OF HUMAN SERVICES - ADVISOR  
 OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
 ADDRESS - 640 N. LASALLE  
 CHICAGO, IL 60610  
 CONTACT - CESAR RIVERA  
 PURPOSE - VETERANS PROGRAMS

VETERANS LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

NAME - LT. GOVERNOR DAVE O'NEAL - ADVISOR  
ADDRESS - RM. 214 CAPITAL BUILDING  
SPRINGFIELD, IL 62706  
PHONE - 312-933-9849  
CONTACT - RICHARD WHITNEY

NAME - CHICAGO URBAN LEAGUE - ADVISOR  
ADDRESS - 2108 E. 71ST ST.  
CHICAGO, IL 60649  
PHONE - 312-324-5900  
CONTACT - ROSE PARKER  
PURPOSE - VOTER REGISTRATION

NAME - MAUDE DI VICTOR - ADVISOR  
ADDRESS - 50 W. 71ST ST. APT. NO. 511  
CHICAGO, IL 60621  
PHONE - 312-353-0839  
PURPOSE - AGENT ORANGE INFORMATION

NAME - CURTIS COLIN PHD. - ADVISOR  
ADDRESS - 55 W. CHICAGO AVE.  
OAK PARK, IL 60302  
PHONE - 312-353-3996  
PURPOSE - ADVISOR REGARDING VIETNAM VETERANS READJUSTMENT

NAME - MONTFORD POINT MARINES - ADVISOR  
ADDRESS - 312 E. 75TH ST.  
CHICAGO, IL 60619  
PHONE - 312-488-9027  
CONTACT - BURT POTTS

## VETERANS LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

On Memorial Day of 1979 in Chicago, the members of 45 veterans groups gathered in Grant Park for a picnic. Over 5,000 persons attended. The event was conceived and organized by Joan Maiman with the generous cooperation and assistance of the Mayor's Office, the veterans groups, and various public officials, business firms, entertainers and media personalities.

This was not a political event. Rather, it was a social community-unifying event. The many photographs taken will show VFW members, Amvets and American Legion members mingling with members of groups such as the Afro-American Vets, Black Veterans Association, Montford Point Marines and Vietnam Veterans Against the War. The 45 participating groups represented every political persuasion, religion, age, race, and socio-economic background. Present also were Gold Star Wives and Mothers, CAVEAT and other closely related group.

Since that time, several persons from among the leadership have met frequently and discussed the felt needs of the Chicago area communities "to do more" -- but what. In the course of these discussions, it was concluded that "more" constitutes the following:

1. To reduce the fragmentation among veterans groups and consequent sense of alienation and powerlessness. While this refers particularly to the Vietnam veteran, all veterans are included with special compassion for the elderly and the paralyzed.
2. To improve the delivery of all available medical, social, employment, benefits and other support services to veterans. This means especially to reach out to the unserved veteran and to bring that veteran to the needed service.

The next step will be a Veterans Leadership Conference to be held March 15, 1980. Representatives of the original 45 groups have been invited as well as many other concerned individuals and groups. This will be a Midwest conference drawing on representatives from groups in Wisconsin, Missouri, Minnesota, Michigan, Ohio, and possibly other states as well as Illinois.

At the Conference the representatives will have the following put before them for their review:

1. A PLEDGE TO SUPPORT EFFORTS IN BEHALF OF VETERANS JOINTLY, THAT IS, AN "UMBRELLA" COMMITMENT TO THE NEEDS OF VETERANS IN GENERAL. This will not preclude in any way the pursuit of specific issues or concerns by any individual group, e.g., medical care, Agent Orange, etc.
2. Preparation and review of a PLATFORM OF ISSUES AND CONCERNS which should be brought to the attention of the public and elected officials.
3. Discussion of a COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATE IN DIRECT SERVICES by the VLC, for example, a service outreach project. (see attached)

The conference will be structured organizationally in the following way:

Executive Committee  
Medical Services Committee  
Economic Needs Committee  
Social Service Needs Committee  
Mental Health Committee

SUMMARY OF THE FIRST MEETING  
OF THE  
VETERANS LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

The coalition of 20 veterans groups met in Chicago on March 15, 1980, and was divided into five committees:

Medical Needs  
Mental Health  
Social Services  
Economic  
Legislative

The committees developed platforms and then the platforms were presented to the group as a whole for endorsement.

The reports of the committees are attached.



## MENTAL HEALTH

The mental health committee dealt mainly with the area of post-Vietnam syndrome, and stated that this was a misnomer. In reality, the problem of PVS affects each person in a different way, and the committee felt that it was not possible to stereotype the effects.

The committee also felt that the effects of Agent Orange was an area of primary concern to the Vietnam Veterans and more testing and treatment was needed in this area.

## LEGISLATIVE

The legislative committee drafted the five resolutions which were adopted as the basic platform for the incorporation for the VLC.

## ECONOMIC NEEDS

The economic committee felt the primary problems of the Vietnam vet could be divided into three areas:

### Bad Discharges

There was a recommendation for one type of discharge and it was felt that the punishment for offenses which would be minor in civilian life were dealt with harshly by the military and became a part of a man's record. It was felt that a disproportionate number of minorities were affected with bad discharges.

### Jobs

The proposed cut in CETA funding was opposed and in conjunction with this, the third point, education, was addressed. An extension of the delimiting date on the GI Bill was favored.

The social services committee was concerned mainly with the self-help concept for the veteran.

The basic goals of the veteran were seen as self-enlightenment, political education, social change, and productive citizenry.

March 15, 1980

VETERANS LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

MEDICAL COMMITTEE

REPORT

The medical committee finds the overall concerns of veterans in the health care field to be:

1. Quality and scope of care;
2. Information systems are inadequate;
3. Attitude of health care providers.

Specific concerns in the Agent Orange issue:

1. Research is needed by private and government agencies.
2. Immediate treatment for symptomatic patients and their families.
3. Identification of asymptomatic patients.
4. Dissemination of information to all potential victims and families.
5. Linkage with civilian groups working in this area.

We believe care for all veteran patients should be the maximum available in terms of state-of-the-art knowledge, combined with a compassionate attitude

MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION:

Public Education thru use of mass media, ethnic media, trade publications, professional journals, professional associations, etc.

Legislative Endeavors: funding and support of programs needed to implement such actions mentioned above.

Public Relations to solicit public support and sympathy.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED AT THE MEETING  
OF THE  
VETERANS LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

- I. We urge the government to educate, test and compensate Agent Orange victims, veterans and survivors.
- II. We urge Federal, State and local governments to coordinate all support systems to deal with exposure of citizenry to toxic chemicals.
- III. We urge improvement in the condition of treatment by services of the V.A. including the maintenance of the integrity of all records.
- IV. We urge the re-authorization of the 30 million dollar spending authority of the Department of Labor of unobligated funds. We strongly urge that such funds be reprogrammed to community-based veterans organizations.
- V. We urge the House Senate Committee to pass HR 5288 Title II, III, IV, V, VI, VIII, IX, S-870 cost of living, DASVE to ASVE and extension of GI Bill delimiting date.

## our readers write

### *Does Anyone Care?*

We who served in Vietnam empathize with the recently returned hostages. They went through hell, obviously. But does anyone know or care what happened — is happening — to the us?

Joán Maiman, who chairs the Chicago-based Veterans Leadership Conference said it best:

*They came home to the tears and the rejoicing of a nation — indeed, of the free world*

*We have made of them heroes, immortalized them with yellow ribbons.*

*The cities spoke of ticker tape parades. The Statue of Liberty shone for them.*

*Their families were kept advised and we watched with them and saw their joy.*

*Four-hundred and forty-four days of captivity and a lifetime of thanks. Not that they are undeserving but this situation was not of their making to serve this nation, thus, rather it was that they were victims of time and place.*

*Think for a minute of another soul who was sent to serve in a war which was seen as the way to defend the rightly cherished freedom of this nation.*

*He too came home without fanfare, without thanks, and without his legs.*

*His family was not able to afford the trip to come and see him so they waited. He spent his time with other very young men on an impersonal ward.*

*This gentle soul did not know that by all definitions he was a hero. He had served in the highest traditions of duty, honor, country. So he was quiet and the only monument he had was the tears of his family, who wondered why and where had all the heroes gone.*

*When he went out with the rest of the patients he was spit on..*

*Where were the patriots then, where were the parades, where was the compassion?*

*If we speak of inhumane treatment let us remember our own conduct.*

*His life was measured in less than 20 years. His youth became eternal.*

*I wish I understood why just one light could not have shown for him on the Statue of Liberty. It stood so black against the sky.*

*I hope he had a handful of stars to light his final journey home.*

Joan served in military hospitals in Vietnam and was awarded the highest civilian medal for working with the military in combat.

**PETER TIFFANY**

# Voice of the People

## *'A lack of honors for Viet Nam veterans'*

CHICAGO—All of us who served in Viet Nam share the joy of the nation on the safe return of the hostages from Iran. However, we would like to take this opportunity to call to your attention the contrast with the treatment the nation has given to those who served in Viet Nam.

We have yet to see a true welcome home, let alone special privileges or benefits such as those being showered on the former hostages.

From my own experience based on a year in Viet Nam and seven years of work in military hospitals during the conflict, I am aware of many young men who came home and were unable to see their families for an extended period on their arrival. Families were unable to afford the trip. No special fares were offered to such families and no public-spirited group came forward to sponsor them.

We do not mean in any way to take away from the courage of the hostages, but it is very confusing to see such praise for their service to the country and compare it to the scorn which greeted those who served in Viet Nam.

It is long past time that we addressed ourselves as a nation to ensuring that the Viet Nam veterans receive the honor and recognition we are giving to the former hostages.

**Joan M. Maiman**  
Chairman,  
Veterans Leadership Conference

## views

### Forgotten heroes

All of us who served in Vietnam share the joy of the nation on the safe return of the hostages from Iran. However, we call to your attention the contrast with the treatment the nation has given to those Americans who served in Vietnam.

We have yet to see a true welcome home, let alone special privileges like those being showered on the returning hostages.

It is long past time that we addressed ourselves as a nation to ensuring that the Vietnam veterans receive the honor and recognition that we are giving to the hostages.

Joan M. Maiman, chairman  
Veterans Leadership Conference

4 THE STARS AND STRIPES—THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE, Thursday, January 29, 1981



### Honor And Recognition Long Overdue

All of us who served in Vietnam share the joy of the nation on the safe return of the hostages from Iran. However, we would like to take this opportunity to call atten-

tion to the contrast with the treatment the nation has given to those who served in Vietnam.

We have yet to see a true welcome home, let alone special privileges or benefits such as those being showered on the returning hostages.

From my own experiences based on a year in Vietnam and seven years of work in military hospitals during the conflict, I am aware of many young men who came home and were unable to see their families for an extended period of time as the families were unable to afford the trip. No special fares were offered to such families and no public-spirited group came forward to sponsor them.

We do not mean in any way to take away from the courage of the hostages but it is very confusing to see such praise for their service to their country and compare it with the scorn which greeted those who served their country in Vietnam.

It is long past time that we addressed ourselves as a nation to ensuring that the Vietnam veterans receive the honor and recognition we are giving to the former hostages.---Joan M. Maiman, Chairman, Veterans Leadership Conference, 300 North State St., Suite 3409, Chicago, IL 60610. ★

# Sunday Sun-Times

Chicago, November 9, 1980

## Vets expecting aid from Reagan

By Sarah Snyder

A leader of a national veterans organization said Saturday she is confident Ronald Reagan as president will offer medical benefits for the first time to Vietnam veterans suspected of suffering from Agent Orange.

The defoliant is blamed by Vietnam veterans for causing cancer and for birth defects in their children. But its effects have not been proven, and the Veterans Administration does not now provide benefits to those allegedly suffering from its effects.

At an advance Veterans Day ceremony at Daley Plaza, Joan Maimon, chairman of the Veterans Leadership Council, said she had a written commitment from the Republican National Committee supporting temporary medical benefits to suspected victims of Agent Orange.

The position paper that Maimon received from Bill Ayres, chairman of the Veterans Division of the Republican committee, states: "Although the effects of Agent Orange have yet to be scientifically proven . . . pending final determination, it would be appropriate and responsible to grant temporary VA medical care to veterans suspected of suffering from Orange toxicity."

She told the assembled veterans that Ayres assured her last week that Reagan supports such benefits.

"Reagan's people are very much more interested in Agent Orange. Carter's people were abominable," she said.

But Barry Romo, a national coordinator for the Vietnam Veterans Against the War, said, "Carter said those same things. When I see it, I'll believe it."

The Republican statement given Maimon also endorses an independent commission to investigate the effects of Agent Orange, and linking veterans' benefits to inflation.

(Chicago Sun-times)

# Agent Orange: Reagan Supports Aid to Victims

By CARLA MARINUCCI  
Times Staff Writer

WASHINGTON — Ronald Reagan's national campaign veterans' affairs advisor has contacted leaders of the Contra Costa County Vietnam Veterans of America to tell them that the candidate supports "temporary Veterans Administration medical care" for Vietnam veterans who say they suffer from the effects of Agent Orange.

"This is the least we owe to veterans who may be suffering irreparable damage due to a government-sponsored program," he said.

The call from Congressman Bill Ayres came in the wake of a controversy between local veterans and the VA Martinez Medical Center regarding treatment of vets who say they now have major health problems because of exposure to Agent Orange.

Local and national Vietnam veterans leaders say those statements from Reagan's top campaign advisors constitute the first solid position taken by any presidential candidate on the Agent Orange issue.

Said Joan Maimen, head of the Chicago-based Veterans' Leadership Conference: "We haven't heard a blessed thing from Carter. Anderson spoke out on Agent Orange some months back, but hasn't said a thing since then. This means quite a bit to the veterans."

Pete Tiffany, president of the Contra Costa chapter of Vietnam Veterans of America — who has been outspoken on veterans' rights and their treatment at the Martinez VA hospital — said, "This is the first time anyone, to my knowledge, has come out and made a forceful statement in the campaign concerning Vietnam vets. It's been a good thing."

Reagan's staff — with input from Reagan, his advisors, and veterans around the country, including those from Contra Costa County — has developed a "position paper" on the treatment of Vietnam veterans who

may have been exposed to Agent Orange, said Ayres.

Reagan and his staff have taken the position that "although the effects of Agent Orange... have yet to be scientifically proven, efforts should be made to determine the possibility of such side effects on veterans. Pending final determination, it would be appropriate, and responsible, to grant temporary VA medical care to veterans suspected of suffering from Orange toxicity."

Ayres said Reagan supports the position that a special commission be established to determine exactly how Agent Orange exposure may be affecting Vietnam veterans, but that "this would be an independent group, not VA-sponsored. We feel that the VA and some of their people are career people, and might be prejudiced" in the findings of such a study.

Joan Maimen, head of the Chicago-based veterans' rights group, said Reagan's veterans' affair coordinator Jack Kelly met for hours with her group to outline concerns.

Kelly this week contacted the Contra Costa veterans' president, Pete Tiffany, saying that Reagan wants to study the issue of compensation for veterans and their children who may have been harmed by direct or indirect Agent Orange exposure, according to Tiffany.

The Veterans' Administration is presently undertaking a "registry" of all Vietnam veterans which will help identify vets and "document their current health status," said Layne Drash, assistant to Dr. Barclay Shephard, who heads the VA's Agent Orange program in Washington.

Shephard contacted all of the national VA medical centers this week to discuss the Agent Orange program and outline systems and criteria for testing in each of the facilities.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR *Agent Orange*

We read with interest the article regarding the victims of Agent Orange written by Carla Marinucci.

John Smyrni, along with many other American young men, enlisted in the Armed Services during the Vietnam conflict when it was not popular to do so to say the least. These men were exposed to Agent Orange, some forewarned, others not.

We wish there was more concern for those unfortunate enough to have been exposed. Whether some of them contracted cancer, rashes, etc., as a result of exposure to Agent Orange or from other sources must be important only secondarily. To insist on proof that Agent Orange is responsible for each individual case of illness before committing the nation's loyal and total support to these veterans is callous to say the least.

To paraphrase a great American, Walt Whitman, "Let us not merely pity the suffering person, we must ourselves become the sufferer."

FREDRIC AND MIMI JOHNSON  
Pleasant Hill



# Reagan to act on Agent Orange: vets

By Sam Smith

A STUDY OF Agent Orange's effects on veterans will be undertaken by the Reagan administration, a Viet Nam veterans group said Saturday.

Several veterans groups have claimed that the toxic defoliant used widely during the Viet Nam War has caused cancer in servicemen exposed to it and birth defects in their children.

The study would mark a major breakthrough in the veterans' fight to examine the chemical. So far the government has not admitted that Agent Orange caused any illness. The issue is the subject of a class action suit on behalf of thousands of veterans.

SPEAKING AT a Daley Center pre-Veteran's Day rally Saturday, Joan Maimon, chairman of the Veterans Leadership Council and a Red Cross worker in

Viet Nam during the war, said officials of the Republican National Committee said last week that Reagan intends to support an independent commission to investigate and will order treatment for veterans suffering from any side effects of Agent Orange.

Spokesmen for Reagan and the Republican National Committee could not be reached for comment by The Tribune.



## *Letters to the Editor*

### **Noble Cause**

As one who spent a year in Vietnam serving in a civilian capacity with the Armed Forces of the United States, I would like to comment on the speech which Mr. Reagan made to the VFW in which he referred to the Vietnam War as a "noble cause."

I appreciate the courage which it took to make such a statement. Most of the young men with whom I was privileged to serve, showed a nobility of spirit which I have yet to see matched. They went to Vietnam, believing that they served their country in the highest tradition by literally putting their lives on the line for their fellow citizens.

It is not given to the soldiers of any war to define the "rightness" of their cause and, in so far as they were able, I believe that these young men served with extraordinary courage and maturity in a highly confusing and controversial situation.

In so doing, they set an example for their fellow citizens which deserves praise and respect, rather than ridicule and isolation.

In general, the treatment of those who served in Vietnam by their countrymen and elected officials has been, at best, indifferent and, at times, shameful.

Regardless of how history will stand in judgment of the issue of Vietnam, those who went and gave of their youth and their future, deserve the best this nation has to offer, as do the Veterans of all wars.

Perhaps the negative reaction to Mr. Reagan's statement can best be addressed by the realization that a large part of this nation has not yet come to realize that while a war,

per se, may not be noble, those who would lay down their lives for their country give definition to the word noble.—Joan M. Maiman, VLC No. 3409, 300 North State St., Chicago, IL 60601. ★

## Operation Push Supports Agent Orange Bill

At a meeting of Operation Push on August 23rd in Chicago, George Reddick, Vice President of the organization, told those assembled and the radio audience that he encourages them to support passage of HR 6377, the Agent Orange Bill introduced by Rep. Tom Daschle of South Dakota.

Rev. Reddick said that the new legislation is of critical import for both black and white veterans and their families and that his organization would be closely monitoring the bill's passage through the Congress.

Guests at the meeting were members of the Veterans Leadership Conference, Chicago, IL, whose Chairman, Joan Maiman had discussed veterans' problems at the Operation Push meeting in June.

"We are most appreciative of the support Operation Push has given us in attempting to reach Vietnam

See Agent Orange Pg. 10

## Agent Orange

veterans in the community who have lost faith in traditional organization and the government," said Maiman.

"The community is beginning to realize that Vietnam veterans are 'out there' and the situation for them in terms of jobs, training, and health care in some cases is deplorable, with nothing being done by the government to

From Pg. 1

specifically and immediately address their problems, the negative image of the Vietnam war has, in effect, 'buried' many of these men and we hope to reach them through community agencies such as Operation Push," Maiman continued.

Maiman said that another important part of the Veterans Leadership Conference is their direct involvement with the community. "We will be working with the Urban League on 'Project Big Vote,' a voter registration and education program."

Project Big Vote is a coalition of

community groups which includes Operation Push, the NAACP and the Urban League, all members or supporters of the Veterans Leadership Conference.

"We realize graphically that only by encouraging veterans and all concerned citizens to become involved in the political process will we begin to make progress in community oriented solutions to the problems facing our veterans and their families." Maiman said.

## Coalition waiting to hear from government

Joan Maiman would just like to see a definitive statement from the U.S. government about Agent Orange. So would the leaders of other Vietnam veteran's groups.

The Veterans Administration has ducked the issue for years, she said. But recently Congress ordered the VA to study the health of thousands of GIs to see if they are suffering any effects from contact with Agent Orange.

Ms. Maiman, who served with the Red Cross in Vietnam, is the chairwoman of a national coalition of veterans groups which is dealing with the Agent Orange issue. The government keeps postponing the issue, she said, because of possible liabilities.

"We have to draw the public's attention to Agent Orange and get the news out," said Ms. Maiman, who is suffering a respiratory problem she

attributes to exposure to Agent Orange.

"Once we get a definitive statement, we would like to see funding set aside for immediate treatment of those veterans who have symptoms of Agent Orange-related problems."

Some 12 million gallons of the herbicide were sprayed on Vietnam jungles during the war to destroy the hiding places of communist troops.

The spraying was eventually stopped following reports that Vietnamese women were giving birth to unusually high numbers of children with birth defects.

Agent Orange contains traces of dioxin, which is considered one of the most toxic chemical substances ever made. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has banned many domestic uses of the prime ingredient of Agent Orange, a substance

known as 2,4,5-T, which contains dioxin.

Veterans groups have been arguing for years that GIs who were in areas sprayed with the herbicide were suffering in disproportionate numbers with a variety of disorders, including cancer, emotional problems, and kidney, liver and nerve disorders.

Ms. Maiman said of the 2.9 million Vietnam veterans, probably 2.5 million have been affected in some way by contact with Agent Orange. She estimates there are some 250,000 such veterans just in the greater Chicago area.

About 3,000 veterans and their survivors have filed lawsuits against the herbicide manufacturers. About 150 lawyers from across the country who are representing these veterans are meeting in Chicago this weekend to discuss the cases.

# The Sunday Times

Contra Costa Times

"JUDGED BEST DAILY NEWSPAPER BY CALIFORNIA NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION FEBRUARY 16, 1980"

WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1980

1161

Exposure to the Herbicide Causing Health Problems

## CC Vets Organize Over Agent Orange Issue

By CARLA MARINUCCI  
Times Staff Writer

CONCORD — Pete Tiffany, a burly Army reserve major, stood up in front of the crowd of Vietnam veterans with tears in his eyes.

His voice was husky as he asked Friday for a memorial salute to Bob Gillespie, a Concord veteran who died in late July, his body riddled with health problems that friends and family believe were caused by exposure to Agent Orange.

"I'm tired," Tiffany says later. "I'm tired of always having to fight

for what we deserve as human beings."

Tiffany, and many other members of the Contra Costa County chapter of Vietnam Veterans of America, have been active in a war that they've taken up in the years since they returned from Vietnam.

They are still facing higher unemployment, suicide, and divorce rates than other veterans. And they are still trying to deal with psychological and physical problems that relate to their war service.

For some, past exposure to herbi-

cides like Agent Orange are now resulting in severe health problems for both vets and their children.

Thousands of Vietnam vets say they are still fighting to get the government, and the Veterans' Administration, to help them.

Frustration "is at an explosive point," says Tiffany. "I've talked to too many vets who are ready to pick up a gun and go shooting."

But Tiffany and others say veterans have learned some hard political lessons in the past decade. Members of the Contra Costa group are becom-

ing part of a nationwide network of Vietnam-era vets who are getting politically organized, working through legislators and hoping to reach the public conscience.

"Up until now," says Tiffany, "there's been nothing but a Band-Aid approach" to the problems of the Vietnam vet.

Nationwide, veterans' groups are starting to form under an umbrella group called the Veterans Leadership Conference, to wield more political power.

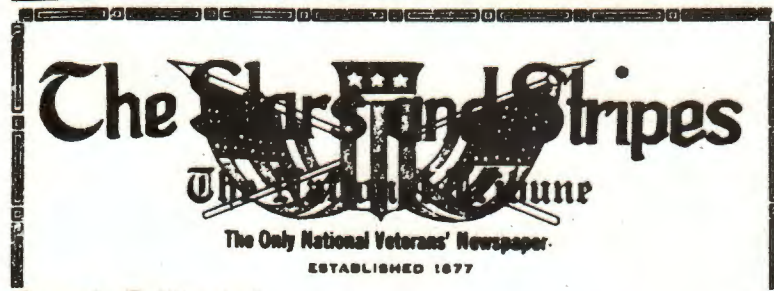
And locally, the Contra Costa

group is working with legislators like Congressman George Miller, D-Martinez, in an effort to see change.

Art McGowen, a Vietnam veteran and ex-POW who was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, four Bronze Stars and four Purple Hearts, is a liaison to Miller's Veterans' Advisory Committee, which is studying and acting on veteran-related issues.

Says McGowen: "I envy the organizations like the Urban League that

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## Guest Editorial

### *The Sound Of Silence*

Joan M. Malman

*Who will speak for the World War I Veterans...living a life of dog food suppers...he who fought on that long ago field, and gave of his strength and his youth.*

*Who will speak for him as his strength fails?.....*

*"Not I," said the Official. "I am in charge of giving priority treatment to the refugees. After all, they deserve the best this nation has to offer. They came seeking freedom."*

*Who will speak for the veterans of World War II...their country degraded in foreign lands and the flag for which their friends died, a mockery. Who will speak for them?...*

*"Not I," said the Official. "Our foreign policy must be strong and we can not afford to risk offending our allies or our foes in these troubled times. We talk, but we dare not act."*

*Who will speak for the veterans of the "police action" in Korea.*

*Who will remember that this was a cause for which Americans died. A land which now can not "afford" to be free...Who will remember that this was a matter of national honor?...*

*"Not I," said the Official. "I am in charge of balancing the budget and everyone will have to sacrifice: Veterans should set the example as they have in the past by giving for their country."*

*Who will speak for Vietnam Veterans. Who will care that they have never really come home. It was a "bad war" so perhaps the whole thing is best forgotten. Who indeed will speak for them?....*

*"Not I," said the Official. "We are satisfied that we have created programs and the reconciliation has happened. The draft evaders are pardoned and those who did not serve are well adjusted."*

*Who will speak for them and who will care? Only you...because without you there is no sound, only silence.*



## Guest Editorial

# What Does It Take To Be Recognized?

By Joan Maiman

*What does it take to be recognized as a deserving citizen? Obviously we are not going about it in the right way.*

*Remember last year when the White House declared a day honoring Vietnam Vets? We held a picnic that day in Chicago's Grant Park. Out of that huge gathering grew a hope that the White House program set up for Vietnam Vets might be of substance rather than another example of empty rhetoric.*

*For eleven months, 250,000 of Chicago's vets have been waiting. After almost a year of no response and no action from the White House Federal Veterans Coordinating Committee, a coalition of veterans met in Chicago on March 15, 1980, to put together their own concrete program of action covering five areas in which vets most need assistance.*

*Prior to that meeting we had submitted a proposal to the White House Committee and to the VA requesting funding for this community based organization. After two more months of no written response, an appointment was made with William Lawson, Chairman of the White House Committee, for April 22, 1980, 3:30 p.m. This appointment was confirmed in writing, and again by phone.*

*Three of the leaders of the coalition, the Veterans Leadership Conference, flew out to Washington at our own expense to keep this meeting, to relay to the Committee through Mr. Lawson the concerns of the Midwest veterans, and to*

*return with his response.*

*We were informed that Mr. Lawson would not be in when we called the White House to confirm our arrival early on the 22nd. We met with a reluctant Mr. Higgins, who advised us that he was sorry, Chicago had been dropped from the list of "Target cities." He was able to offer no explanation or remedy, "I can not do anything else for you."*

*We are still unclear what if, anything, the White House Coordinating Committee (WHCC) is supposed to do, but obviously it has nothing to do with the problems of veterans in Chicago.*

*Our meeting ended with no support or referral from the Committee, and a suggestion that if there was indeed a large membership of 250,000, then we ought to form a political base and put pressure on the City of Chicago where the CETA money is.*

*No, Chicago cannot be reconsidered for funding by the White House."*

*It is an appalling education to learn that the Chicago veteran is not one of the reasons for the existence of this Veterans Committee. It is also educational to learn, once again, that veterans must continue fighting; this time for the readjustment, retraining, and employment that has been pledged by their government.*

*We would really like to know who is deserving of the services of this White House group. Maybe after the next election we'll know.*

# The Stars and Stripes

The National Tribune

The Only National Veterans' Newspaper

ESTABLISHED 1877

## A Republic That Has Endured

Inscribed on the memorial to the  
Confederate dead Arlington, Virginia.

<i>Not For Fame Or Reward</i>	<i>Obedience To Duty</i>
<i>Not For Place Or For Rank</i>	<i>As They Understood It</i>
<i>Not Lured By Ambition</i>	<i>These Men Suffered All</i>
<i>Or Goaded By Necessity</i>	<i>Sacrificed All</i>
<i>But In Simple</i>	<i>Dared All - And Died</i>

## Concord Hymn:

Sung At The Completion Of  
The Battle Monument  
April 19, 1836

<i>By the rude bridge that arched the flood,</i>	<i>On this green bank, by this soft stream,</i>
<i>Their flag to April's Breeze unfurled,</i>	<i>We set to-day a votive stone;</i>
<i>Here once the embattled farmers stood,</i>	<i>That memory may their deed redeem,</i>
<i>And fired the shot heard round the world.</i>	<i>When, like our sires, our sons are gone.</i>

<i>The foe long since in silence slept;</i>	<i>Spirit, that made those heroes dare</i>
<i>Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;</i>	<i>To die, and leave their children free,</i>
<i>And Time the ruined bridge has swept</i>	<i>Bid Time and Nature gently spare</i>
<i>Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.</i>	<i>The shaft we raise to them and thee.</i>

## Memorial

Joan Malman

What memorial can we build for  
the honored dead more fitting than  
one which serves the living?

Our veterans grow old and they  
are alone.

Our veterans are disabled and we  
do not care for, or about them.

Our veterans are unemployed and  
we can not find jobs for them.

Our veterans are dying and we

research it.

Honor is a word out of vogue in  
this country but it is one which we  
need to address.

In the end, this is our Nation, our  
country. In its name, we served and  
our friends and families died. Yet,  
it is this same Nation which now  
gives empty ceremony and rhetoric  
to the dead and counts the living  
among the dead.