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file VFW

March 8, 1983  
Press Room: Idaho Room  
(202) 232-0788  
Sheraton Washington Hotel  
Washington, D.C.

Washington, D.C. -- March 8. -- A 16-year-old Sunbury, PA., high school junior is the first place winner in the national Voice of Democracy contest sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, it has been announced by James R. Currieo, Commander-in-Chief of the two-million member organization of overseas veterans.

Melissa Houghton, student at Shikellamy High School and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Nilsen, 527 S. River Ave., Sunbury, will receive the \$14,000 T. C. Selman Memorial Scholarship to the university of her choice.

Nearly a half million high school students from across the nation participated in the contest which involved writing and giving an oral presentation of a script on the theme "Youth, America's Strength."

Other national winners are:

Laurie Blackburn, 9543 Connell Dr., Overland Park, Kans., second place and a \$7,000 scholarship.

Kathryn McKee, RR1, Cynthiana, Ky., third place, \$4,500 scholarship.

Robert S. Hurst, 112 Clover Drive, W. Monroe, LA., fourth place, \$3,500 scholarship.

Michelle Nuskiewicz, 781 Pine Grove Rd., Crescent City, CA, fifth place, \$2,500 scholarship.

Angela Carol Calder, 22 Crossgates Drive, Brandon, MS, sixth place and the \$1,000 Francis J. Tallman Memorial Scholarship.

Miss Houghton, who plans a career in Law and will attend Ursinus University, has been a Student Council alternate and photographer for

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First Place VOD Winner

her high school's newspaper. She also has won honors in Spanish, speech, band and debating and is a member of the National Honor Society.

The national winners were announced at the VFW's Congressional Dinner where they were among the honored guests along with the state winners from all 50 states. The dinner is a highlight of and closes the annual Mid-Winter Conference of VFW officers and leaders.

All 50 state winners were guests of the VFW in the nation's capital where they were given the opportunity to visit national shrines and monuments and to observe at first hand the workings of the federal government.

The contestants this year were from more than 8,000 secondary schools. In addition to the \$32,000 in scholarships awarded the national winners, the monetary value of scholarships awarded at post, county, district and state levels amounted to over \$525,000.

This year's theme was selected to focus the attention of the nation's high school students on their obligations for strengthening and building upon the foundations of freedom begun by the founding fathers, Commander Currie said.

-VFW-

March 7, 1983  
Press Room: Idaho Room  
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Washington, D.C.

REMARKS BY VICE PRESIDENT GEROGE BUSH  
AT THE  
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

In the two years since we took office, our Administration has raised the Veterans' Administration budget by \$1 billion, 300 million dollars. We have begun to prepare for an increase in the number of veterans age 65 and over. As you know, at age 65 veterans become eligible for care in Veterans Administration hospitals as beds are available. In the next five years the number of such eligible veterans will nearly double. This year's budget, however, provides the VA with some 2,000 additional medical employees and contains \$868 million for the construction and repair of VA hospitals, the highest such figure ever proposed.

With federal deficits running to many billions, we're unable to give veterans all that they would like to have and that we would like to provide. But I think you'll agree that President Reagan and the Congressional Committees are doing a pretty good job. We should also give a great deal of credit to the Congressional leadership in veterans' affairs. Senators Simpson and Cranston are doing a superb job for veterans, and the work of Representatives Montgomery and Hammerschmidt is outstanding.

And I'd like to say that I think you're doing a good job. Last year, representatives of the VFW and the VFW Auxiliary performed almost a million-and-a-half hours of volunteer work at the Veterans Administration's 172 hospitals around the country. Your volunteers feed patients, read to them, and assist hospital personnel in innumerable ways. On behalf of the thousands of patients and medical workers that you help, I want to say thank you.

I want to thank you as well for helping the President get the federal deficit under control. The VFW has boldly supported the President's proposal for a six-month delay in increases in compensation for those with service-related disabilities and in compensation for those with service-related disabilities and in pensions for those with non-service related disabilities. The VFW has joined the President in asking for such a six-month delay in increases in other entitlement programs, and in calling on all Americans to support these prudent, money-saving measures. As this Administration continues to set in place a sound national fiscal policy, all of you can take pride in the part the VFW has played.

Just over three weeks ago, I returned from a trip to seven European countries. I'd like to take a moment to tell you about the message that I took to those nations and the impressions with which I returned. Then I want to discuss a matter that I know concerns you all, the state of our nation's armed forces.

During our trip to Europe, my wife Barbara and I saw so much: the mountains rising behind Geneva, the frescoed palaces of Rome, Big Ben above the Thames. But one sight stands out sharply from the rest: the village of Moedelreuth.

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March 7, 1983

Vice President George Bush

Moedelreuth lies in the farmland northeast of Nuremberg. It dates back centuries. Its inhabitants number perhaps several hundred. Down the central street of the village runs a concrete wall erected by the government of East Germany. The wall is topped with barbed wire, watchtowers, and gun turrets. The guns face not West, but East. Should any farmer or miller or baker from the East German sector of the village attempt to escape to the West, even before the guns open on him he will trip automatic pellet devices that will cut him down.

That concrete and that barbed wire, twisted in the heart of that little village, stand as an awful witness. On the far side lies a power that sets guards and guns over its own people as a matter of routine. On our side lies something the value of which we cannot measure, something that in the decades since the appearance of the walls and the border patrols that divide East from West thousands have risked their lives to reach. For on our side lies freedom.

I went to Europe half expecting to find an alliance in disarray, divided over plans for our mutual defense, divided over calls for reductions in nuclear weapons. But where I expected disarray, I found unshakeable unity.

Our talks with the European leaders centered on President Reagan's proposal to ban intermediate range nuclear missiles. The President's proposal can be stated in three points.

First, a high and moral aim. The President has proposed nothing less than that the Soviets join us in eliminating all INF missiles -- a whole class of dread nuclear weapons -- from the earth.

Second, tough but practical bargaining. President Reagan has instructed Ambassador Nitze to explore any reasonable offer the Soviets place on the table. When I was in Geneva, I myself made that point clear to the Soviet delegates.

Third, firm adherence to the 1979 NATO decision. Unless the Soviets agree to our proposal or we can agree to a proposal they might make, we will join our NATO allies in deploying intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Europe. Neither we nor our NATO allies want to do so, but we all recognize that we must. For only by deploying our missiles can we present the Soviets with a substantive incentive for reducing theirs. For our part, I can tell you that the United States will not sit for a Soviet monopoly of intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe.

As I said, I travelled to seven European countries. I met with the leaders of each. Without exception, they supported our position. Without exception, they stated their gratitude that this nation has continued without fail to stand by them.

Helmut Kohl, the West German chancellor, was one of those with whom I met. Just yesterday Chancellor Kohl won a magnificent victory, and I would like to take this opportunity to publicly offer him my warm congratulations. I can tell you that no leader supports the Alliance more firmly, or understands more clearly the value of both freedom and peace.

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March 7, 1983  
Vice President George Bush

Of course during our trip we encountered protest, mainly from those who do not understand that an arms freeze at this moment would leave hundreds of nuclear warheads pointed at the heart of Europe. Demonstrators chanted and marched at many of my stops. Reporters asked what I thought of them. I answered: "I have great warmth for anyone who is for peace. It so happens that we too are for peace. I have great warmth for anyone who is against nuclear war. It so happens that we too are against nuclear war."

I cherish the freedom that allows those protestors to speak. Who among us would not thrill at the sight of an anti-nuclear demonstration in Red Square? Who among us would not delight to hear that Sakharov or Orlov or Scharansky had at last been allowed to speak? Yet the Soviets have demonstrated how they treat freedom: East Germany: 1953. Hungary: 1956. Czechoslovakia: 1968. Afghanistan: 1979. Poland: 1981.

We did encounter protest in Europe, as I say, but we encountered much, much more support. My car flew an American flag. Everywhere I drove -- in Berlin, in Paris, in Rome, in London -- that American flag prompted not only warm smiles, but cheers.

Those cheers showed that the people of Europe understood. They understood that American forces have helped to keep the peace in Europe for nearly four decades. That is the mission of our armed forces: not to prompt war, but to defend the peace. And it is because the men and women in our armed forces perform their mission so well that President Reagan is determined to stand by them.

There were years when this nation's government allowed our defenses to weaken and decay. President Reagan has begun to make those weak defenses strong. There were years when this nation's government held our military in shameful low regard. President Reagan has replaced that low regard with honor and with respect. This Administration treats the men and women of our armed forces not as second-class citizens, but as defenders of freedom.

Since becoming Vice President, I have met many of those men and women in uniform.

When we were in Europe I visited a small base manned by the Second Armored Cavalry Regiment near the point where the West German, East German, and Czechoslovakian borders meet. The base is made up of a handful of Quonsett huts and cinder-block barracks set in a vast, dark reach of pines miles from the nearest village. When we visited, snow was falling and the ground was pitted and ridged with frozen mud.

One hundred and fifty soldiers man that camp and patrol several hundred kilometers of West German border for periods of ninety days. When their relief arrives, the men might well only go on to another such period at another such isolated base, so that the soldiers often live cut off from their families for five and six months at a time. Yet those men and their young captain told me of their high morale. They used words such as dedication and enthusiasm and sacrifice and service.

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March 7, 1983  
Vice President George Bush

In Colorado Springs last June I spoke at the Air Force Academy graduation. As I looked out on those strong, eager faces, I couldn't help thinking how fortunate we are to have such outstanding young men and women ready to put their very lives at the service of our nation.

I think back to a breakfast last May in the enlisted dining hall at Nellis Air Force base in Nevada, and hearing a young woman tell of the thrill and sense of satisfaction she felt as the crew chief of an F-15 Eagle fighter. I think of standing on the deck of the destroyer U.S.S. Comte de Grasse as she lay at anchor last year in the York River during the bicentennial celebration of the battle of Yorktown. Sailor after sailor told me of the pride they all felt when they steamed into Tangier or Naples or Gibraltar in this sleek, new American ship.

And I think back to the flight I made with a platoon of paratroopers last February in a C-130 over Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Anyone in this audience who has ever made a jump will know the feeling inside that plane. The tense excitement. The jumpmaster shouting the commands to get ready, to hook-up, to check static lines. The moment the doors roll up, the wind rushes in, and the men catch glimpses of the land slipping past fifteen hundred feet below. Then the men stamping their feet in unison and shouting "let's go, let's go"; the green light, the command to jump; the men running up to the door one after the other and thrusting themselves out so that in less than half a minute the airplane empties.

One of the men in that jump broke his leg. It happens sometimes. I sent him a note to wish him a quick recovery. Later I learned that when his platoon leader handed him my note, that young soldier's first words were to say that he hoped he hadn't embarrassed his unit.

"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." I have seen the men and women of our armed forces. I have seen them performing the difficult deeds of vigilance with dedication and with skill.

Let us share their dedication. Let us be skillful in assisting their skill. Let each of us stand with the President as he fights to give the men and women in our armed forces the support that they deserve.

Thank you.

-VFW-

March 7, 1983  
Press Room: Idaho Room  
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Sheraton Washington Hotel  
Washington, D.C.

J. EDGAR HOOVER AWARD  
GOLD MEDAL AND CITATION

Timothy J. McCarthy  
Special Agent - U.S. Secret Service

In special recognition of his demonstrated dedication and devotion to the job of protecting the lives of those entrusted to his care.

VFW AMERICANISM AWARD  
GOLD MEDAL AND CITATION

Jan Scruggs  
President, Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund

In recognition of your courage and determination in leading those who dreamed of having a Vietnam Veterans Memorial in our Nation's Capital and through your dedication, commitment and tenacity brought this dream to reality with the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the week long Salute to Vietnam Veterans, thereby providing long overdue and everlasting recognition for all Vietnam veterans.



DAILY SUMMARY  
March 7, 1983  
Press Room: Idaho Room  
(202) 232-0788  
Sheraton Washington Hotel  
Washington, D.C.

REAGAN PEACE MOVE APPLAUDED  
IN EUROPE, BUSH TELLS VFW

Washington, D.C.--March 7--After meeting with leaders of seven European countries, Vice President George Bush today (Monday, March 7) told the Veterans of Foreign Wars at the Sheraton Washington Hotel, he "found unshakeable unity" where he expected disarray.

"Our talks with European leaders centered on President Reagan's proposal to ban intermediate range nuclear missiles," Bush said.

The proposal, he continued, was for the Soviets to join the U.S. in eliminating all INF missiles -- "a whole class of dread nuclear weapons" -- from the earth.

Unless the Soviets agree to this proposal or the West can agree to one they make, he said, "we will join our NATO allies in deploying intermediate range nuclear missiles in Europe."

"Neither we nor our NATO allies want to do so, but we all can recognize that we must," he continued. "For only by deploying our missiles can we present the Soviets with a substantive incentive for reducing theirs.

"For our part, I can tell you that the United States will not sit for a Soviet monopoly of intermediate range nuclear forces in Europe."

Bush, a life member of VFW Post 4344 in Houston and the youngest commissioned naval pilot in World War II, said he wished nuclear freeze advocates had the background of VFW members so they can understand the importance of alliances and a strong national defense.

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He had high praise for the morale and dedication he found among American service personnel in Germany, especially those on the West Germany border with East Germany and Czechoslovakia.

He also lauded the VFW for its efforts in helping President Reagan to reduce the federal deficit by agreeing to accept six-month delays in cost-of-living increases in pensions and compensation and for the wide range of voluntary work VFW members perform for the Veterans Administration.

Several awards were presented by VFW Commander-in-Chief James Currieo at the general session of the Mid-Winter Conference before Bush's speech.

The VFW Americanism Award went to Jan C. Scruggs, president of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund for his work in originating and completing the memorial in Washington.

Scruggs, in accepting the award, recalled the VFW was the first veterans' organization to give his efforts moral and financial support.

Currieo presented the J. Edgar Hoover Law Enforcement Award for 1981 to Timothy McCarthy, the Secret Service agent who stepped between President Reagan and his would-be assassin 18 months ago in Washington. McCarthy's award was accepted by another Secret Service Agent, Jerry Parr, who also helped protect Mr. Reagan. McCarthy was unable to be present because he was with the families of the three agents who were killed in a car crash during Queen Elizabeth II's tour of the West Coast.

A plaque honoring the Brazilian Unknown Soldier was presented by Currieo to Brazilian Ambassador to the U.S. Azeredo da Silveira, who recalled the contribution of Brazil to Allied victories in both World Wars, especially in the second when a 26,000-man Brazilian Expeditionary Force fought in Italy.

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Miles Lerman, of the Holocaust Memorial Council, presented Currieo for the VFW a certificate of appreciation for the efforts of the VFW in collecting eye-witness accounts and memorabilia of Nazi concentration camps for the projected national Holocaust museum.

Lerman said the museum will prove to future generations that the horrors of the concentration camps were true and not wartime propaganda.

Harry Walters, newly appointed VA Administrator, pledged to the VFW members that he would be a veterans' advocate within the Reagan Administration and that he, not Office of Management and Budget Director David Stockman will run the agency.

He also said the VA will take the lead in providing for the rapidly aging veteran population who will be the major factor in what he called "the graying of America" in the next few years.

The VFW Mid-Winter Conference will conclude tomorrow. In the morning Commander-in-Chief Currieo will submit VFW legislative recommendations to the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees, followed by participation in a Peace Through Strength rally at the Capitol at noon. In the evening Sen. John Tower, the Texas Republican who chairs the Senate Armed Services Committee, will receive the VFW's Congressional Award for outstanding service to the nation at the VFW Congressional banquet at the Sheraton Washington Hotel. At the dinner also, the name of the VFW Voice of Democracy winners will be announced.

-VFW-

March 7, 1983  
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Sheraton Washington Hotel  
Washington, D.C.

#### CURRIEO REAFFIRMS VFW SUPPORT FOR POW/MIA CAUSE

Washington, D.C. -- March 7 -- Total VFW support for efforts to gain final accounting of the nearly 2,500 Americans still listed as missing in Vietnam was reaffirmed today (Sunday, March 6) by VFW Commander-in-Chief James R. Currieo, of Sierra Vista, Ariz.

Currieo voiced the organization's position during a meeting of the VFW POW/MIA Subcommittee of the National Security and Foreign Affairs Committee at the Sheraton Washington Hotel during the VFW's annual Mid-Winter Conference.

Chaired by retired Air Force Gen. John Flynn, senior American former prisoner of war, the meeting heard reports from Ann Mills Griffiths, executive director of the National League of Families, Lt. Col. Gerald S. Venanzi, of the Department of Defense; Richard Childress, of the National Security Council, and Adm. Jerry Paulson, of the Defense Intelligence Agency.

All expressed opposition to attempts by private groups and individuals to locate American prisoners or missing in Southeast Asia. They confirmed such attempts have no government backing and serve to hinder Reagan Administration diplomatic efforts.

April 8 to 13 has been designated National POW/MIA Week to generate public support for the accounting or release of any who may still be held. Since 1975, a total of 1,750 sighting reports have been received by government sources, 46% of which remain under investigation.

March 7, 1983  
Press Room - Idaho Room  
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Washington, D.C.

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION CHIEF NAMES  
AGING VET AND AGENT ORANGE AS TOP ISSUES

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- March 7 -- Veterans Administrator Harry Walters, addressing the General Session of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Mid-Winter Conference, said two basic issues the VA must deal with in the coming years are health care for the aging veteran and compensation for servicemen exposed to Agent Orange in Vietnam.

"By the year 2000, over 65% of all American males over the age of 65 will be veterans," Walters claimed. "The VA must take a leadership position in caring for these Americans who served their country so well in times of war.

Walters said in recent years the VA has come under criticism from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) but said he, not David Stockman, will run the VA.

"When the VA and OMB don't agree, veterans and the VA will have their say at the table. We will not allow the OMB to balance the federal budget on the back of the VA," Walters said.

Walters addressed the issue of compensation for servicemen claiming disability from exposure to Agent Orange.

"At present, the VA is giving medical attention to those exposed to Agent Orange. We will treat all servicemen who ask for help," Walters said. "But on the issue of compensation, the VA has its hands tied.

He explained Congress, not the VA, has the sole authority to make laws allowing for compensation. He suggested that a teamwork approach

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Veterans Administration Chief/Top Issues

including the Congress and the VA to approach the issue of Agent Orange compensation.

Walters took a hard line, saying "the VA would not be a whipping boy for the Congress" and that it is incumbent upon Congress "to bring the appropriate legislation to get the VA in to the game."

-VFW-

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March 8, 1983  
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VFW LEADER CALLS FOR SUPPORT OF  
AGENT ORANGE LEGISLATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- March 8 -- Support for legislation that would compensate Vietnam veterans for exposure to Agent Orange and other herbicides sprayed in Southeast Asia was urged today by the national leader of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

VFW Commander-in-Chief James R. (Bob) Currieo, of Sierra Vista, Ariz., made his and his organization's views known on this and a number of other issues of concern to the nation's 30 million veterans in appearances before the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees.

Currieo said the VFW has set as a priority goal, based on mandates passed at the organization's convention last year in Los Angeles, resolution of the herbicide question.

"This nightmare hangs over the heads of Vietnam veterans like the sword of Damocles and casts a shadow on their children, born and not yet born," Currieo asserted.

"These veterans and their families have lived with this mental anguish for well over a decade and the Veterans Administration has dragged its feet and been irresolute in coming to grips with the problem.

"Even now, the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta estimates it will take several years to begin to ascertain, in fact, what disabilities including genetic disabilities are attributable to herbicides containing dioxins and other toxic substances."

Currieo said indications are growing that some cancers and liver

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and intestinal diseases and metabolic and neurological disorders are related to dioxins used in herbicides.

He noted that the resolution passed by the VFW 1982 convention called for support for passage by Congress of bills introduced by Rep. Thomas A. Daschle (D-S.D.), a member of the House committee, and Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA), who serves on the Senate committee.

The bills would "grant presumptive service-connection for disabilities the VA Administrator believes to be the result of exposure to herbicides or other toxic substances used in Vietnam," Currieo said.

Although Currieo predicted the VFW may have reservations about some provisions of the proposed legislation, "which will be thoroughly discussed when hearings are held," Currieo said he urges "the early consideration and all possible support for Rep. Daschle's new bill."

"It is easy for those not affected to say wait, but our Vietnam veterans whose lives are affected can wait no longer," he continued. "I am hopeful that other veterans' organizations will join us in this endeavor."

Currieo said President Reagan's proposed 1984 VA budget of nearly \$26 billion "is an extremely good one in view of present economic conditions and the fact that the budgets for eight other functions of the federal government will be cut a total of \$22.5 billion."

He said the proposed budget provides for substantial increases in VA medical care and employment and the \$673.8 million for construction is the largest in VA history.

What Currieo described as "cause for concern," however, in the projected budget are VA medical care reductions of \$16.5 million, 110 employees, 400 beds and 1,000 patients in the average daily census in VA hospitals.



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He said these will directly affect the aging veterans population and women veterans who require specialized care that is not available in all VA facilities.

Currieo said longer delays in handling claims and appeals will result from the cut of 419 employees in the VA's veterans benefits department.

Currieo expressed VFW disappointment at the Reagan Administration proposal to grant no cost-of-living increases to active duty armed forces personnel and federal civilian employees and that cost-of-living increases for retirees will be delayed for a year.

Currieo credited the new VA Administrator, Harry N. Walters, with putting money in the 1984 budget for one more VA Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center.

Turning to veterans' employment, Currieo said the jobless rate for Vietnam veterans, 30 to 34, is 12.5%, up from 8.8% for the same period of 1982.

Sole new jobs program aimed at veterans is contained in the Job Training Partnership Act, which becomes effective in 1984 and sets aside 5% of its funding for disabled, Vietnam Era and newly discharged veterans, Currieo said. He added that the VFW hopes it will be more helpful for veterans than CETA was.

"I urge you in the strongest possible terms to be absolutely certain that any new jobs program advanced by this Congress clearly and unmistakably earmarks a proportionate percentage of funding for veterans' employment," he said.

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Currieo voiced his pleasure at the introduction in the House by Rep. G. V. (Sonny) Montgomery (D-Miss.), chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, and in the Senate by Sen. Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.) of legislation that would give cabinet rank to the VA Administrator, a goal sought by the VFW for several years.

The annual VFW Mid-Winter Conference at the Sheraton Washington Hotel will conclude tonight with the Congressional Dinner at 7 o'clock when Sen. John Tower (R-Texas), chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, receives the VFW's Congressional Award for outstanding service to the nation.

The winners of the National Voice of Democracy contest sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars has been announced by James R. Currieo. Nearly a half million high school students from across the nation participated in the contest which involved writing and giving an oral presentation of a script on the theme "Youth, America's Strength."

The winners are:

Melissa Houghton, 527 S. River Ave., Sunbury, PA, first place, \$14,000 scholarship.

Laurie Blackburn, 9543 Connell Dr., Overland Park, Kans., second place and a \$7,000 scholarship.

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Angela Carol Calder, 22 Crossgates Drive, Brandon, MS, sixth place and the \$1,000 Francis J. Tallman Memorial Scholarship.

Press Room:  
Idaho Room  
Sheraton Washington Hotel

## VFW PLEDGES TO FIGHT FOR VA MEDICAL

### CARE FOR ELDERLY VETERANS

The VFW is committed to a strong Veterans Administration medical system that will be able to care for the growing number of veterans reaching 65.

That pledge was made today (Sunday, March 6) by James R. Currieo, of Sierra Vista, Ariz., the Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, which is holding its annual Mid-Winter Conference at the Sheraton Washington Hotel.

Currieo's comments were in response to a Feb. 6 New York Times story reporting the VA's concern that it will be overwhelmed by the 11.5 million World War II who in a few years will turn 65 and then be eligible automatically for medical care at no cost to themselves.

"It is misleading to assume that every veteran over 65 will be knocking on the VA hospital doors for care," Currieo said.

"The veteran population at present is just under 30 million and only about three million now use the VA for medical care," Currieo said. "Half of these are veterans whose ailments are not service connected, but they need care and do not have the means to pay for it."

Currieo said that the VFW is proud to be counted as a member of the veterans' lobby that the Times story cited as being responsible for the VA's always emerging stronger than ever from scrutiny and criticism by liberals and conservatives.

"Service to the veteran is the principal reason for the VFW's being," Currieo said. "One way we render that service is by assuring that the VA will have enough money in its budget to provide the high quality medical care for veterans that Congress and the American people

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"If scrutiny and criticism mean a stronger Veterans Administration, then I say let's have a lot more of it."

Currieo said the future of the VA is always a concern of the VFW because it represents the means by which a grateful nation repays those who have defended her.

"We intend to continue fighting to prevent cutbacks in medical care, especially cutbacks that would mean any erosion in care for veterans when they become too old to work and need all the help they can get, now or at any time in the future.

"Changing eligibility rules as the Times story suggests, to reduce the number of veterans 65 or older who would be cared for by the VA would be a cruel way to punish them for not dying sooner."

-VFW-

DAILY SUMMARY I  
March 6, 1983  
Press Room: Idaho Room  
Sheraton Washington Hotel

SOVIET THREAT REAL, RETIRED GENERAL TELLS VFW

Problems of American security, ranging from active duty military forces to illegal immigration were discussed today by a series of speakers who appeared before the National Security and Foreign Affairs Committee of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

This meeting was a highlight of several committee sessions held at the Sheraton Washington Hotel during the VFW's annual Mid-Winter Conference.

Retired Air Force Gen. Russell Dougherty, former Strategic Air Command commander now an Air Force Association executive, warned that the technological threat from the Soviet Union has made the United States vulnerable for the first time since the War of 1812.

Until the Soviet emergence as a superpower, he said, the U.S. was protected by oceans.

Now "what it takes to deter is will and the forces to do it," he continued.

Gen. Dougherty said the nation is afraid and growth of the nuclear freeze movement is a symptom of this fear.

"Nuclear weapons are not new. It is just that more people know about them now," he added.

"We have the industrial base and the resources to make the deterrent force work forever. We have to build wisely our forces to deter and never let a gap with the Soviet Union to occur."

Quoting a World War II general, Dougherty said, "the second best poker hand is no damned good."

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Another quotation he cited was from a lecture by a West Point political science professor named Abe Lincoln who told a National War College seminar that "capability times will equal deterrence, and will to a great extent determines capability.

"The present Administration is trying to correct serious defense inadequacies and I fear the word 'superiority' scares people to death."

Dougherty said the U.S. is not in a nuclear arms race with the Soviet Union but a survival race.

Since Robert S. McNamara was secretary of defense the U.S. nuclear deterrent is one third less in megatons and 40% less in warheads, he continued.

He called targeting civilian population centers a violation of the Geneva Convention and "immoral" for obvious reasons.

The idea is to find out what the USSR's military intentions are and to block them, he said, adding that President Carter's decision to cancel the B-1 bomber was a "gross mistake based on bad advice and the cruise missile is no substitute."

Gen. P. X. Kelley, deputy Marine Corps commandant, had high praise for the quality of recruits his service is gaining.

"The Marine Corps has never before experienced such high quality people as it has today," he said.

"It is a remarkable change from seven or eight years ago, when 40% to 50% were in Group IV (lower mental ability) and now when only 6% are.

DAILY SUMMARY  
March 5, 1983  
Press Room  
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Sheraton Washington Hotel

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

TO SPEARHEAD PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH RALLY

Veterans of Foreign Wars' Commander-in-Chief James R. (Bob) Currie urged over 2,000 VFW leaders to rally in support of President Reagan's nuclear arms policy by participating in a demonstration on the north side of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. on Tuesday afternoon.

He made his appeal, Saturday, March 5 before the National Council of Administration during the VFW's Mid-Winter Conference at the Sheraton Washington.

The rally of the VFW members and others belonging to the Coalition For Peace Through Strength will be held concurrently with a demonstration being staged by groups opposed to the President's nuclear arms policy.

"We will show our resolve and explain the real issues to any who care to hear," Currie told the leadership conference.

"The nuclear freeze resolution, in our opinion, is not in the best interest of our national defense," said Cooper T. Holt, VFW Washington Office Executive Director.

Currie will address both the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees on Tuesday morning prior to leading the delegation of VFW members to the rally site. There he and other members are scheduled to address supporters of the peace through strength resolution currently before Congress.

-more-

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DAILY SUMMARY  
March 5, 1983

Also taken up in the afternoon meeting of the council were recommendations for national recognition awards to be made at the 84th National Convention in New Orleans this August. The Dwight D. Eisenhower Distinguished Service Award will go to Secretary of State George Shultz; the Citizenship Gold Medal for World Peace and Unity will go to Ambassador-at-Large Phillip Habib; News Media Award will go to presidential historian William Manchester; and the VFW Hall of Fame Award will be presented to noted jazz musician Al Hirt.

In other business taken up by the delegates, Philadelphia has been chosen tentatively as the National Convention site for 1987. New York City and Washington, D.C. were selected as alternate sites.

-VFW-



u5  
DAILY SUMMARY II  
March 6, 1983  
Press Room: Idaho Room  
Sheraton Washington Hotel  
(202) 232-0788

OFFICIAL CALLS FOR GREATER  
AWARENESS OF NEED FOR SAFETY

Diane Steed, Deputy Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) spoke out for increased public awareness of safety issues to curtail traffic-related accidents.

Speaking to National Safety Committee of the Veterans of Foreign Wars at the Sheraton Washington Hotel. Steed commended the organization's efforts to improve driver safety throughout the United States with its ongoing "Drive to Survive" program.

"The NHTSA has established two priority programs," Steed said. "Our first goal is to get the drunk driver off the road. And thanks to grass roots efforts by groups like yours, our roads are getting safer for everyone.

Steed claimed that alcohol-related deaths decreased almost 50% last year, thanks in large part to public outcry for stronger legislation, more stringent enforcement of drunk driving laws, and stiffer penalties for offenders.

"Our second goal is to make the public more aware of the life saving value of automobile safety belts," Steed said.

Steed said in a recent survey of 1200 people nationwide, 75% responded that their safety belts were broken.

"The truth is that the safety belts were not broken," Steed said. "The new inertia-type belts allow the wearer more freedom to move around in the car. Only when impact force is applied will the seat belt work, so many people think the safety belts don't work."

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DAILY SUMMARY II  
March 6, 1983

Steed requested that the VFW support the NHTSA in its continuing effort to educate the public about vehicle safety.

VFW Commander-in-Chief James R. (Bob) Currieo voiced his support for the work being done by the NHTSA and urged the Safety Council member to do more in their communities to promote safe driving practices, especially in the area of drunk driving.

Currieo presented Steed with the VFW Certificate of Appreciation for her work on the NHTSA over the past two years.

-VFW-

"It is not all related to the economy. As far as we are concerned, quality begets quality."

Gen. Kelley added that a few years ago the Marine Corps's very existence was threatened.

Of course, there are problems such as a lessening of unit cohesion due to changes in squads' living arrangements, "civilianization" of language characteristic of the services and greater use of computers.

"But I cannot be more optimistic about the future of the Marine Corps," he said. "Right now the readiness of our equipment is 90%. My emphasis is on reliability and ruggedness."

Gen. Kelley said one thing the VFW can do is to attempt impressing on civilian military suppliers the need for quality control of the equipment they sell to the services.

"It doesn't mean a thing to a Marine if he has a warranty and his rifle jams."

Roger Conner, of the Federation for American Immigration Reform, warned that illegal immigration has put the U.S. in the position of no longer controlling its borders.

Solution, he continued, is to strengthen the Border Patrol and make the hiring of illegal immigrants illegal.

Illegal aliens are a direct threat to American workers he said, charging that 30% of the construction workers in Houston, Texas, are illegals.

In addition, many of them return to their homelands and collect \$1 billion a year in Social Security benefits, a further drain on the American economy.

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DAILY SUMMARY I  
March 6, 1983

At tomorrow's session at the Sheraton Washington Hotel, Vice President George Bush will be the principal speaker at 11 a.m.

Prior to his appearance, Timothy McCarthy, the Secret Service agent who helped save President Reagan's life in the assassination attempt two years ago, and Jan Scruggs, president of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, will receive VFW awards. Brazil's ambassador to the U.S., Azeredo da Silveira, will be presented with a plaque honoring the Brazilian Unknown Soldier.

In the evening at the hotel, Sen. John Tower (R-Texas), Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, will receive the VFW's Congressional Award for Outstanding Service to the Nation.

-VFW-

DAILY SUMMARY IV  
March 6, 1983  
Press Room: Idaho Room  
Sheraton Washington Hotel  
Washington, D. C.  
(202) 232-0788

VFW LEADERS RECEIVE AWARDS  
FOR SAVINGS BOND WORK

Arthur O. Maxwell, a U. S. Treasury director of the U. S. Savings Bond Division, presented two awards today at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Community Activities Committee at its Mid-Winter Conference.

Maxwell honored National Committee Chairman George Morris with the Twin Seal Award, the second highest award from the Treasury Department for his efforts in behalf of the U. S. Savings Bond Program.

He presented the Award for Patriotic Service to the officers and members of the National Committee of the VFW.

Maxwell cited the VFW membership for its long tradition of service on three fronts: in the military, in the community, and in support of the U. S. Savings Bond Program.

Other committees meeting today were Americanism, Civil Service and Employment, Youth Activities, Buddy Poppy and Voice of Democracy.

DAILY SUMMARY III  
March 6, 1983  
Press Room: Idaho Room  
(202) 232-0788  
Sheraton Washington Hotel  
Washington, D.C.

SENATOR LINKS DEFENSE, VETERANS' PROGRAMS

Failure to provide adequate veterans' benefits could damage American defenses, Sen. Dennis DeConcini (Ariz.), a member of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, today, March 6, told the VFW's National Legislative Committee.

The session was held in connection with the organization's annual Mid-Winter Conference at the Sheraton Washington Hotel.

"Only a foolish person would think that defense can be brought about without strong veterans' programs," he said.

Few will be attracted to military service "if we ignore our commitment to veterans and veterans' programs are decimated."

"I believe in strong national defense and the veterans' system," Sen. DeConcini asserted.

Discussing several legislative proposals he has introduced or supports, he cited S 8, which would create a new GI Bill with educational incentives for service personnel with three or more years' service; S 9, which would increase present GI Bill subsistence rates by 15%, and another bill that would add \$150 million to the VA budget for the GI Bill or jobs.

He also said he is supporting legislation that would establish judicial review of VA claims decisions and another one that would give cabinet rank to the VA administrator.

-more-

Rep. John Paul Hammerschmidt (Ark.), ranking minority member of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, said the current session of the 98th Congress will be devoted largely to oversight of veterans' programs.

He cited VA construction, problems of women veterans and a wide range of other VA concerns will be watched closely by the House committee.

Donald H. Schwab, Director of the VFW's National Legislative Service, headquartered in Washington, reviewed gains made in the area of veterans' legislation in the 97th Congress and discussed some pending bills.

Schwab said the FY 1984 VA budget of \$26.7 billion is the best for several years, a view which Rep. Hammerschmidt said he concurred.

The VFW, he said, accepted six-month delays in cost-of-living increases in compensation and pensions as long as other federal entitlement beneficiaries received the same deferrals.

Deputy VA Administrator Everett Alvarez, pinchhitting for VA Administrator Harry Walters, snowbound in Denver, Colo., told the committee the FY 1984 budget will add 2,000 employees to the VA Department of Medicine and Surgery, earmark \$868 million for construction, a 58% increase over the current figure, which will be used for major expansion, modernization of VA facilities.

Alvarez praised President Reagan as the best veterans' advocate to have occupied the White House and added that Administrator Walters will be a veterans' advocate in his new post.

"Any man or woman who served the country honorably and well deserves the best the country has to offer," said Alvarez, who spent eight years as a prisoner in Southeast Asia.

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DAILY SUMMARY III  
March 6, 1983

Alvarez said the VA will work to develop a positive portrayal of the Vietnam veteran, elevation of the "focus on research," improve communication with veterans' organizations and other government agencies and seek an early resolution of the Agent Orange problem.

-VFW-



March 8, 1983  
Press Room: Idaho Room  
(202) 232-0788  
Sheraton Washington Hotel  
Washington, D.C.

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- March 8, 1983 -- A 17-year-old high school senior from Overland Park, Kansas, is the second place winner in the national Voice of Democracy contest sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, it has been announced by James R. Currieo, Commander-in-Chief of the almost two-million member organization of overseas veterans.

Laurie J. Blackburn, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Blackburn, of 9543 Connell Drive, Overland Park, who is a student at Shawnee Mission West High School, will receive a \$7,000 scholarship to the college or university of her choice.

Nearly a half million high school students participated in the contest which involved the writing and oral presentation of a script on the theme "Youth, America's Strength."

Other national winners are:

Melissa Houghton, Sunbury, PA, first place, \$14,000 scholarship.

Kathryn McKee, Cynthiana, KY, third place, \$4,500 scholarship.

Robert S. Hurst, W. Monroe, LA, fourth place, \$3,500 scholarship.

Michelle Nuskiewicz, Crescent City, CA, fifth place, \$2,500 scholarship.

Angela Carol Calder, Brandon, Miss., sixth place, \$1,000 Francis J. Tallman Memorial Scholarship.

Miss Blackburn, who plans to study for a career in Law, is president of the Thespians Club at Shawnee Mission High and also has served as treasurer of the National Forensics League.

Her high school honors include letters in music, debating and forensics, the title of Forensics Outstanding Junior Girl, a third place in the National Forensics League Debate, membership in the National Honor Society,

Page 2  
March 8, 1983  
Second Place Winner, VOD

a Letter of Commendation from the National Merit Scholarship Awards, a Girls State Representative, a Ruling Elder in the Presbyterian Church and four years on the Honor Roll.

The national winners were announced and introduced at the VFW's annual Congressional Dinner where they were honored guests along with the winners from each of the 50 states and several hundred members of Congress. The dinner is a highlight of, and closes the annual Mid-Winter Conference of VFW officers and leaders held in the nation's capital.

During the conference, the state Voice of Democracy winners are guests of the VFW and are given the opportunity to visit national shrines and monuments, and to observe the workings of the federal government.

The approximately half million contestants in this year's competition represented over 8,000 secondary schools from throughout the country.

In addition to the \$32,000 in scholarships awarded the national winners, the monetary value of scholarships awarded to the winners at post, county, district and state levels amounted to over \$525,000.

This year's theme of "Youth, America's Strength" was selected to focus the attention of the nation's high school students on their obligations for strengthening and building upon the foundations of freedom begun by the Founding Fathers, Commander Currieo said.

-VFW-

(A copy of Miss Blackburn's script is attached)

1982-83 VFW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM  
FIRST PLACE WINNER  
MELISSA A. HOUGHTON, 527 South River Ave., Sunbury, PA 17801

Today was Mr. Smith's day off. After working all week, he thought that he could just sit down and relax with his favorite paper all day. No sooner did Mr. Smith get settled until his son, Johnny, came in to the room and begged his father to play. Even though Mr. Smith really didn't want to play, he just couldn't say no. So he got an idea -- on the front page of the paper, there was a picture of the United States. Mr. Smith ripped the picture up into tiny pieces, gave them to Johnny, and told him that if he could put the picture back together, his father would play with him. Expecting to get at least another hour of relaxation, Mr. Smith no sooner got settled again until Johnny walked back into the room. He had the picture with him, and much to his father's astonishment, it was together correctly. When his father asked him how he did it, Johnny simply replied, "on the back of the map was a picture of a little boy, and I thought that if I put the little boy together right, America would be right."

American youth...strong willed, well educated -- tomorrow's leaders. True as this may be, I'm sure you've all heard it too many times before. But did you ever ask yourself if all those statements are really true? Probably not! But being one of America's youth, I did. And obviously so did Johnny. Perhaps he is right. Perhaps if the youth of America are strong enough and intelligent enough and patient enough, then America itself will hold these qualities also.

But we still didn't answer the question -- do the youth hold these qualities? In very many cases -- no! In nine out of ten kids, the potential is there, but there is just no allowance for development.

All too many times, when Johnny or Mary want to play or perhaps even just talk with their parents, they are turned away and told to wait until later or go ask big brother or sister. We have all had this done to us, and probably even done it ourselves. But what about the child who had a terrific idea that might have helped someone, or wanted to try a new innovative game. The idea will go unheard and the game unplayed. So many times slow or backward children, labeled such by society, are really quite intelligent and skillful but simply haven't been given the chance to express themselves. The youth of today must be given a chance to speak their minds, and once they do, they must be listened to, not just shrugged off as some childish mind, trying to make his way through an adult world.

On the other hand this misconception of an "Adult World" is much less than true! Each day, more and more of our everyday living is being geared towards the youth. Our television programs are being made to catch the young people's interest, the songs on the radio are what the young people want to hear, and youth are constantly being included in community activities where they were less than welcome before. There obviously must be a reason for this. And that reason has to be that the youth are the ones who are getting things done. They are beginning to have influence in today's society and therefore have to have a better understanding of what is going on.

Just think what it would be like without any young people at all. Where would we be today if everyone from ages one to 21 was suddenly not here? Where would we be without the "flappers" of the 20's who taught us how to have fun even in bad times. And how much would have been lost if we wouldn't have experienced the exploration of the 50's or the liberation of the 60's. We owe a great deal to the young mechanical geniuses of the 70's and 80's. All their ideas and many of their dreams which are still upheld today would have been lost.

So when we ask ourselves if the youth of today is America's strength, we must realize that the answer is -- yes! Even if a person may not live up to society's expectations on the outside, deep down in, there just may be a very talented person waiting to be given a chance.

You see, Johnny really was right, the youth are America's strength, the foundation of a better future. Let's give them a chance to prove it, to become strong and to develop their skills. Given the opportunity, the strength of today's youth, will become the strength of America!

# VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES



THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

December 21, 1982

*Attended  
Feb 4, Cabinet  
Room meeting  
with Pres*

Mr. Morton Blackwell  
Special Assistant to the President  
Office of Public Liaison  
The White House  
Washington, D. C. 20500

Dear Mort:

The purpose of this letter is to seek the assistance of your good office in requesting an appointment for our National Commander-in-Chief, James R. "Bob" Currieo, to meet with President Reagan at his convenience.

As you know, Mort, President Reagan has not met with our Commander-in-Chief since assuming office. Very frankly, I cannot understand this oversight. I can think of no organization who has more consistently supported the President and his programs than has the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The very first endorsement of our VFW Political Action Committee was for President Reagan. Since that time we have supported his budgetary requests (Gramm-Latta Amendment, 1982, and Latta Amendment, 1983); and have been a strong supporter of his defense and foreign policy programs, including the most recent legislation regarding the MX program.

In reading the newspapers we can't help but notice the President's meetings with individuals and groups that I personally know have never supported the President for any just causes. Most of them continue to give him hell.

We are hopeful this oversight can be rectified and that our request for an appointment will be granted. Anything and everything you can do to assist us in this matter will certainly be appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

COOPER T. HOLT  
Executive Director

CTH:nlp

# VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES



THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

February 1, 1983

Subject: COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF'S NATION-WIDE AP AGENT ORANGE STORY  
From: Cooper T. Holt, Executive Director, Washington Office

ATLANTA (AP) -- THE HEAD OF THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS MET WITH A TOP RESEARCHER AT THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL ON THURSDAY, OFFERING HELP WITH A STUDY ON THE EFFECTS OF AGENT ORANGE ON MEN WHO FOUGHT IN VIETNAM.

JAMES R. CURRIED, THE VFW COMMANDER IN CHIEF, SAID HE MET WITH DR. DAVID ERICKSON FOR TWO HOURS "TO FIND OUT HOW THEY PLAN TO PURSUE THEIR RESEARCH ... AND TO OFFER OUR HELP."

CURRIED SAID THE MEETING "WENT REAL FINE. AS COMMANDER OF THE VFW, I FEEL VERY MUCH SATISFIED."

THE CDC IS STUDYING AGENT ORANGE, A DEFOLIANT USED BY THE U.S. MILITARY IN VIETNAM, AND ANY HEALTH PROBLEMS THAT COME FROM EXPOSURE TO IT. STUDIES HAVE LINKED THE POISON TO CANCER AND OTHER AILMENTS.

THE VFW IS BACKING PROPOSED FEDERAL LEGISLATION TO PLACE THE PRESUMPTION OF AGENT ORANGE-RELATED ILLNESS ON THE GOVERNMENT, NOT THE VETERAN. CURRIED SAID THAT WOULD ALLOW VETERANS TO GET TREATMENT WITHOUT GOING THROUGH LENGTHY LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.

AGENT ORANGE RESEARCH WAS STARTED BY THE VA AND "TURNED OVER TO THE CDC -- AND WE'RE REAL HAPPY ABOUT THAT," CURRIED SAID. "WE'RE CONFIDENT THAT THE FINAL REPORTS WILL BE GOOD."

BUT CURRIED SAID THE CDC STUDY IS "STILL ON GROUND ZERO," AND THOUSANDS OF VETS AFFECTED BY AGENT ORANGE NEED HELP IMMEDIATELY.

"THERE ARE 8,000 TO 10,000 VETERANS WE KNOW OF AT THIS TIME," HE SAID. "THESE VETS NEED HELP NOW AND NEED IT DESPERATELY. THEY ARE HURTING MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY."

ABOUT 2.5 MILLION U.S. TROOPS SERVED IN VIETNAM AND ABOUT 500,000 ARE MEMBERS OF THE VFW, CURRIED SAID.

THE VFW IS WILLING TO HELP ALERT THE APPROXIMATELY 30,000 VETERANS THE CDC NEEDS FOR ITS FIVE-YEAR STUDY.

OFFICIALS OF THE FEDERAL HEALTH AGENCY CONFIRMED THE MEETING, BUT ERICKSON WAS IN OTHER MEETINGS THURSDAY AND COULD NOT BE REACHED FOR COMMENT, CDC PERSONNEL SAID.

AP-WX-01-27-83 2025EST

★ WASHINGTON OFFICE ★



Telephone  
202-543-2239

# NEWS Release

Washington Memorial Building  
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the US  
200 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002



"THE VOICE OF TWO AND ONE HALF MILLION MEN AND WOMEN OF THE VFW AND ITS AUXILIARY"

## FOR RELEASE:

IMMEDIATELY  
(Jan. 31, 83)

VFW PROUD OF PRESIDENT'S

MIA/POW STAND

WASHINGTON, D.C.--"President Reagan, announcing that the government's intelligence operations are 'fully focused' on the problem of missing U.S. military men and possible prisoners in Southeast Asia and stating that a full accounting has 'the highest priority,' fulfills a VFW priority goal," said James R. Currieo.

The VFW National Commander-in-Chief also praised the president's national security advisor William Clark who said, "This administration will work unceasingly for the fullest possible accounting." He also said, "Information now in our possession disallows us from ruling out the possibility that Americans are still being detained against their will."

"This finally proves to the VFW that they were successful in their efforts to bring attention to the past administrations that POW/MIA problems were not being addressed properly," said Currieo.

"The VFW will continue to demand an accurate accounting and/or return of our POW/MIAs," he said.

December, 1982

VETERANS NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

Cooper T. Holt  
Executive Director  
VFW Washington Office

This past November was Vietnam veterans' month in Washington and the VFW was happy to welcome all of them, regardless of whether they were members or not.

The two major events were the Veterans Day national observance at Arlington Cemetery and the National Salute to Vietnam Veterans.

The Commander-in-Chief designated Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief Billy Ray Cameron, a Vietnam veteran, to represent the VFW at all functions and to lay the VFW Wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

The special VFW events were an open house at the Memorial Building and a beer bust with food for 2,000 people at the Sheraton Washington Hotel.

VFW exhibits made specially to inform veterans what the VFW has done for Vietnam veterans were well received. About 2,000 VFW members came to Washington and most registered at the exhibits.

VFW caps were seen in large numbers during the parade which had delegations from almost every state and territory.

U.S. Park Police estimated 150,000 in attendance and about 20,000 marchers.

One VFW member, "Bulldog" Burke, Post 5907, walked all the way from St. Paul, Minn., to Washington with a POW/MIA flag. He was joined by another Vietnam VFW member, "Biff" Brenson, Post 9927, in Ohio. They were met on Capitol Hill by VFW representatives and Senator Boschwitz.

The VFW can be proud of those members who made the trip to Washington and should use our participation as a reason to get eligible veterans to join the VFW.

- - - - -

Unemployment is a great problem at this time. To assist, the VFW was able to get unemployment benefits restored for recently discharged veterans. Those discharged honorably after July 1 can now get up to 13 weeks of payment.

Benefits are payable beginning the fifth week after the week in which they were separated. Specific amounts of the payments vary according to the state laws.

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To assist veterans in getting jobs the Labor Department has recently appointed 11 new staff members in the field. Ten are Vietnam veterans and seven are disabled veterans. These appointments are state and assistant state directors for veterans employment and should be used as contacts for employment.

- - - - -



The Veterans Administration 1984 budget will become public in January. The VFW will continue to watch over the proposals put forth by the Reagan Administration and press for additional money to assure the best care for this nation's veterans.



**Telephone**  
202-543-2239

# NEWS *Release*

Washington Memorial Building  
Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.  
200 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002



"THE VOICE OF TWO AND ONE HALF MILLION MEN AND WOMEN OF THE VFW AND ITS AUXILIARY"

## **FOR RELEASE:**

IMMEDIATELY  
(Nov. 17, 82)

### VFW SEEKS CABINET STATUS

#### FOR VA ADMINISTRATOR

WASHINGTON, D.C.--"The VFW will seek from the new Congress legislation creating a Department of Veterans' Affairs and changing the title of Administrator to Secretary," said James R. Currieo, National Commander-in-Chief.

"The VFW believes that as the head of an executive department of the government the VA Administrator would be able to expedite the affairs and funding of veterans programs and entitlements.

"The VA budget and number of employees certainly entitle that agency to become an equal to other departments in the Federal government.

"But more important, it would signal that the Congress believes veterans, their dependents and next of kin are a special group of people.

"The VFW will strongly support this type legislation in the 98th Congress," said Currieo.



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# NEWS Release

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200 Maryland Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002



"THE VOICE OF TWO AND ONE HALF MILLION MEN AND WOMEN OF THE VFW AND ITS AUXILIARY"

## FOR RELEASE:

IMMEDIATELY  
(16 NOVEMBER 1972)

VFW: SOVIET THEFT OF U. S. HIGH TECHNOLOGY  
A "NATIONAL DISGRACE"

WASHINGTON, D. C. -- "America owes a solid debt of gratitude to Senator Sam Nunn (Ga.). The Reagan Administration, I regret to report, is permitting America's high technology 'family jewels' to be stolen by the Soviet Union and has been clearly unable to halt the hemorrhage. An Administration mandated to 're-arm' America is watching in frozen fascination as Yuri Andropov's KGB has master-minded the acquisition by the Soviet Union of microelectronic, laser, radar and precision manufacturing technology. A Defense Department witness before Senator Nunn's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations laid it right on the line: 'the U. S. research and development establishment is viewed by the Soviet Union as a mother lode... In fact, they tap into it so frequently that one must wonder if they regard U. S. research and development as their own national asset.'

James R. "Bob" Currieo, National Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, today continued by characterizing the extent of America's high technology losses to the Soviet Union, as revealed to Senator Nunn, as being a "bona fide, card-carrying national disgrace."

"One thing is for certain," the Arizona-based VFW leader concluded, "it is lunatic to provide the most dangerous adversary we have ever faced in our 206-year history with the very best our technology can produce. Years ago, scrap iron sold to Japan killed and wounded American fighting men in the Pacific War. Today, our stolen 'high tech' could

E N C L O S U R E

- 1a. VFW National Security Resolution Number 429, "Opposition to Sale of Weapons and Technology to Communist Countries" mandates that "we petition the U. S. government unequivocally to prohibit the sale of any weapons, armaments, military equipment or sophisticated technology which could be used for any military purpose to any communist country."
- b. In May of this year, a report, recently declassified, was provided the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations on high technology losses to the Soviet Union. The report was in response to a two-year investigative effort led by the Subcommittee's ranking minority member, Senator Sam Nunn (Ga.).
- c. Some highlights from this report:
- (1) U. S. technology, stolen or legally acquired by the Soviet Union, has permitted them to "achieve giant strides in military strength;"
  - (2) the Soviet program was directed by Yuri V. Andropov, then head of the KGB, now the apparent successor to Leonid Brezhnev;
  - (3) the Soviets have been able to acquire catapult technology, precision ball bearings needed for missile accuracy, and gyroscopes;
  - (4) U. S. microelectronic know-how "has permitted the Soviets to systematically build a modern microelectronics industry which will be the critical basis for enhancing the sophistication of future military systems for decades" (For example, Soviet Ryad computers are patterned after IBM 360 and 370 mainframe computers purchased in the West.);
  - (5) Soviet agents set up a "U. S." company that transferred \$10 million worth of sensitive microprocessor manufacturing equipment to the Soviet Union;
  - (6) the report concluded: "Through improved intelligence our government can learn more precisely what the Soviets want and need. We can then reduce the number of controlled items and do a better job of preventing the Soviets from getting the commodities they desire most.



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# NEWS Release

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"THE VOICE OF TWO AND ONE HALF MILLION MEN AND WOMEN OF THE VFW AND ITS AUXILIARY"

## FOR RELEASE:

IMMEDIATELY  
(17 NOVEMBER 1982)

VFW: A REGISTRATION DODGER WINS SMALL;  
AMERICA LOSES BIG

WASHINGTON, D. C. -- James R. Currieo, National Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, described the ruling by Los Angeles-based U. S. District Court Judge Terry J. Hatter, Jr. that a technical error by President Carter in 1980 invalidates the Selective Service draft registration system as being "a small victory for one registration dodger and, potentially, a crippling loss to the nation."

(President Carter inadvertently, yet wrongfully, ordered the Selective Service registration system into effect after waiting only 21 of the 30 days required after publication of the new law in the Federal Register.)

Mr. Currieo further noted that the defense put forward by anti-registration activist David Wayte ("registration only makes it easier for the government to wage unnecessary wars") had already been rejected in an earlier case involving a registration dodger, Benjamin H. Sasway.

The VFW leader concluded by noting:

"All Americans can expect 'full customer choice' as to options we desire on our automobiles.

"No American should expect or receive 'full customer choice' as to those laws he will obey or painlessly defy. We pay our income taxes despite disagreement with how some of our money is spent.

"Our Constitution is not a mutual suicide pact."



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# NEWS Release

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"THE VOICE OF TWO AND ONE HALF MILLION MEN AND WOMEN OF THE VFW AND ITS AUXILIARY"

## FOR RELEASE:

IMMEDIATELY  
(4 NOVEMBER 1982)

VFW LEADER: HONOR THE "USS LIBERTY"

WASHINGTON, D. C. -- James R. "Bob" Currieo, National Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, today called upon the Reagan Administration to "honor the enduring memory of all those Americans who served on the 'USS Liberty' and were subjected to a murderous Israeli air and torpedo boat attack on June 6, 1967.

"There is finally," Mr. Currieo continued, "a small monument to six Americans killed on the 'USS Liberty' and buried at Arlington National Cemetery in heretofore unmarked graves. (The other 28 Americans killed during the attack are buried elsewhere.) These 34 dead, the 171 wounded, and the 73 unscathed survivors met their fates in the service of the government and the people of the United States. For 15 shameful years, our government, presumably for domestic political reasons, has looked the other way. Well, the VFW will not 'look the other way.'

"We will lay our VFW wreath at the 'Liberty' monument at an appropriate time on November 11, 1982 -- Veterans Day.

"I further call upon this Administration on November 11th, to so formally recognize the men who served on the 'Liberty.'

"Surely, an appropriate Administration official can render long overdue honors. The 'Liberty' monument is in Section 34, Arlington National Cemetery, just off Pershing Drive.

"End this wrongful self-imposed shame and honor the below-listed six at Arlington and all who, at our bidding, were on the 'Liberty' on June 6, 1967."

The names of those buried at Arlington, their rank, state of birth and date of birth are:

James M. Lupton, Communications Technician First Class, USN; Louisiana;  
October 20, 1941

Jerry Lee Goss, Communications Technician Third Class, USN; Indiana;  
May 30, 1941

Lawrence P. Hayden, Communications Technician Fifth Class, USN; Texas  
June 16, 1947

David W. Marlborough, Communications Technician Fifth Class, USN; Massachusetts  
September 28, 1948

Carl C. Nygren, Communications Technician Fifth Class, USN, New York  
May 17, 1945

Jack L. Raper, Sergeant, USMC; Georgia  
August 28, 1944

(The electronic intelligence ship -- "USS Liberty" -- was attacked repeatedly by Israeli aircraft and torpedo boats when she was in international waters in the eastern Mediterranean on June 6, 1967. The U. S. 6th Fleet failed to respond. The Israelis claim the attack was due to the failure of the "Liberty" to identify herself. The survivors of the "Liberty" have charged that the attack was deliberate to mask Israeli military moves on the Golan Heights. The Johnson Administration, for whatever reason, swept the incident under the rug. The understandably furious survivors of the "Liberty" have long sought to tell their side of the story; i.e., they were deliberately, savagely, and repeatedly attacked. For a gripping account of what happened, see Assault on the Liberty, by James M. Ennes, Jr., officer of the deck, when the attack occurred.)

June, 1982

To  
Dana  
R.

VETERANS NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

Cooper T. Holt  
Executive Director  
VFW Washington Office

Veterans continue to wonder about the future, and they should. Here in Washington the President's Veterans Administration budget is contained in an over-all national budget neither House of Congress likes.

The Republican dominated Senate Budget Committee with President Reagan's blessing has cut out all cost of living increases for those receiving compensation for service connected disabilities and a pension.

Yet the President told the VFW at its National Convention that these veterans would be taken care of as being needy. Social Security recipients will get a 7.4 percent raise, but those who are veterans getting a pension--probably some of the most needy--won't.

Those with disabilities incurred in the service of their country will not be raised. It matters not whether your back received a strike by a bullet or a non-combat injury, the pain is the same and the disability equal, but the Senate Budget Committee disregarded the plea of the Veterans' Affairs Committee to include the boost.

Over in the House of Representatives Veterans' Affairs Committee a recommendation to keep the increase was agreed to by its



Budget Committee. If this condition continues and if the members of the House of Representatives and the Senate vote the way their budget committees recommended, a conference will be called to straighten out the mess. This will probably end in a figure lesser than the 7.4 percent increase given to welfare recipients.

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A much more serious matter has passed both the House and Senate Budget Committees. They have frozen money for medical care, regional offices and general operation expenses at the 1982 level for the next three years. We in the VFW call this "straight-lining." This means no extra money for salaries, no extra money for research, no grants to state homes, no extra money for new or replacement medical facilities, and no new doctors or nurses unless one retires or dies on duty.

This Budget does not take into consideration the fact that veterans are growing older, that Congress has mandated studies, or that those who believe they were exposed to Agent Orange and the other horrors will be treated or even examined. Can you think of a worse condition than being told that you are sick, authorized VA medical care, but come back in October 1985!

That is what the budget committees have told veterans.

We can think of no better issue to write your Representative and Senators about, or at least call their offices in your State. Does the nation owe its veterans something or not--get his answer and then tell him how you will vote!

Three months ago Federal workers were hurt by a Presidential cap on pay raises when they felt they were serving their country as a civil servant or in the military.

It now appears that these same Federal workers will not get any raises this October and will be held to a four percent increase in 1983 and 1984.

There is a good chance that Federal retirees, who are supposed to get a cost of living adjustment allowance next March, will have to wait until early 1984 for their next raise.

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Remember, Flag Day is June 14. It is also the Army's birthday. Hopefully all VFW Posts joined in some kind of ceremony for Armed Forces Day and Memorial Day.

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When you are asked to write or call your Representative or Senators don't be scared to do so. It is not a frightening duty.

Identify yourself to whoever answers the phone--it most probably won't be your busy Representative or Senator--as someone from his District or State and tell the person, in your own words, why you are calling.