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VIETNAM VETERANS FOUNDATION

July 28, 1983

President Ronald Reagan
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing you by direction of the Board of Directors of the Vietnam Veterans Foundation. Incorporated in 1979, the VVF is a national non profit organization dedicated to providing small business opportunities and economic development programs to this nation's Vietnam veterans. I was a member of the SBA's Task Force on Special Consideration for Veterans and co-chair the SBA's Task Force Subcommittee on loans and other financial assistance.

My purpose in writing you is to inform you that the Small Business Administration's Office of Veteran's Affairs and its Director, Mr. Steven Mollett are failing to carry out the mandates of Congress. He is resistant to create any meaningful program to assist disabled and Vietnam veterans in spite of Public Laws calling for such aid.

The current Director of Veterans Affairs is both incompetent and attitudinally inept. Mr. Mollett is not qualified nor experienced to head up a multi-million dollar program nor has he done so in the past. He has not only failed to carry out Congressional mandates but has taken actions that we believe to be otherwise improper. Mr. Mollett's lack of leadership and programatic experience over the past year now causes this organization to ask you to remove this individual from this vital post. Further, we request the appointment of a qualified and sensitive Director of Veteran's Affairs in the SBA.

The Director of Veteran's Affairs, Mr. Mollett, has been responsible for the following failures and improprieties:

- Failure to design a program of outreach and technical services for Vietnam veterans that would result in the full expenditure of \$3 million dollars allocated by the Congress

under P.L. 93-237. Though on the books since 1974, P.L. 93-237 was allocated these first time funds on December 21, 1982 and are due to expire on September 30, 1983. Once again, SBA publicly committed before Congress to fully expend these funds. Yet, Mr. Mollett immediately took actions that will result in actual spending amounting to less than half of the allocated funds before the close of FY 1983. Mr. Mollett's attitude is that SBA could not properly spend these funds eventhough ten months were left in FY 1983 to design and fund a program as called for by Congress and committed to by SBA. This one individual has caused Vietnam veteran business aid funds to be cut in half in spite of the legislative process and Congressional will. His actions have hindered rather than helped Vietnam veterans.

● Foregoing an SBA policy that has brought about the failure of P.L. 97-72 (signed by you on November 3, 1981) which created a Small Business Act for Vietnam and disabled veterans. As President, you signed appropriation legislation for this program on December 2, 1982. The law calls for the spending of 25 million in direct loans. Congressman Sonny (G.V.) Montgomery insisted that this 25 million be above and beyond direct loan levels received by this group in preceeding fiscal years. In FY 1981 Vietnam veterans received \$24.8 million in direct loan funding. It was and is Congressional intent that approximately \$50 million in direct loan funds be expended in FY 1983 for Vietnam veterans. On March 23, 1983 SBA officials agreed to this mandate before the House Veterans Affairs Subcommittee on Investigation and Oversight. Yet, Mr. Mollett has implemented a program that circumvents Congressional intent. Mr. Mollett's actions in reference to P.L. 97-72 represents a total failure to implement this act of Congress..

● Providing misleading information to Maryland state officials on the implementation of Public Law 97-72. In a meeting with a staff member of the Maryland Community Economic Development Program. Mr. Mollett labled P.L. 97-72 "a phantom program" that would be eliminated by an OMB deferral request when he knew the Congress would override OMB's request for deferral. He also told this state offical that any Maryland state effort to provide business aid would be a "duplication of effort". Fortunately, Maryland did not heed Mr. Mollett's discouraging and disparaging remarks. On May 10, 1983, the Governor of Maryland signed legislation that makes Maryland the first state to create a Counsel appointed by the Governor to assist disabled and Vietnam veteran owned businesses. Mr. Mollett's attitude and reluctance to cooperate almost destroyed a program for Maryland's 177,000 Vietnam Veterans. Documentation of Mollett's actions in this matter is available.

● Attempted to create an illegal "cash" award system for SBA Veterans Affairs Officers outside of the normal civil service merit systems. This action has been reported to the Inspector General of the SBA for investigation.

● Circumvention of the competition for the Veterans Business Advocate Award. The Office of Veterans Affairs under Mr. Mollett failed to conduct state competitions in the 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. In spite of nomination and selection procedures, the SBA Office of Veteran's Affairs selected its own illegal method for this activity. This action has also been reported to the Inspector General of the SBA for investigation.

● Statements threatening to withhold Federal funds from certain cities where the VVF is involved. These statements can be verified by individuals in Dallas, Texas.

● Conducting a personal vendetta against a non governmental organization based on philosophical and/or policy differences. Mr. Mollett has sought to illegally remove the VVF from the SBA Veterans Task Force and has personally slandered the VVF and its leadership on many occasions.

● Politicalization of the Office of Veterans Affairs. While the Director of Veterans Affairs position is held by a career employee, Mr. Mollett is conducting his affairs as if he were a Schedule C appointed by the President to forge Administration policy.

Mr. President, this one man is rapidly becoming a "lightning rod" for all that is wrong in Government. He is another potential embarrassment to you and your Administration. In an effort to resolve this matter, we have met with senior SBA officials who have taken a defensive posture. We have also briefed V.A. Administrator Harry Walters on the above matters and other compelling problems surrounding this individual who is neither acceptable nor worthy of holding this challenging post.

Now, our organization is attempting to bring this situation to your attention. We are most interested in meeting with you or your appointed representative in an effort to resolve this matter on behalf of those Vietnam veterans who earned their small business entitlements by way of military service.

Mr. President, I implore you to look very closely into this request for removal of the current Director of Veterans Affairs and to replace him with a competent and sensitive Director.

The current situation is similar in nature to the causes and effects of the resignation of former V.A. Administrator Robert Nimmo.

Please contact me as to when our organization's representatives can meet with you or other White House officials to discuss this explosive problem further. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,
Thomas J. Wincek
Thomas Wincek,
Chairman.

cc: J. Thomas Burch, Jr. VVF General Counsel
Robert Sniffen, VVF Executive Vice Chairman



THE VIETNAM VETERANS ADVISER

Though the majority of Vietnam veterans have successfully made the transition to productive civilian life, there are far too many who suffer from unresolved problems. For those who were deeply wounded in body or spirit, readjustment to civilian life has been painful and incomplete.

There has been much public confusion as to the nature of these problems. But the government also misunderstands and invariably asks the question: What do these veterans want? It would be much more to the point to ask them what they need.

Ever since Vietnam veterans began returning to the U.S., they have been plagued by the lack of an adequate GI Bill for education and a workplace that says, "No machine gunners need apply." Splashy job programs for Vietnam veterans have been announced by successive administrations from Nixon's on, but all that these produced was publicity for the celebrity figures who lent their names to the effort. Today, after two years of Reaganomics, the issue of jobs for Vietnam veterans is more than a problem—it is a national tragedy.

According to Stanley E. Zwalk, national commander of the Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A., "One thing we already know about Vietnam era veterans is that they are over-represented in unemployment statistics." In speaking before the Joint House-Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs on March 17, 1983, Zwalk noted:

"The Department of Labor's January 1983 figures say 883,000 Vietnam era veterans are unemployed and looking for work; among twenty-five-to-twenty-nine-year-olds, 21.8 percent of Vietnam era veterans are unemployed, compared with 13.7 percent of their nonveteran peers. As many as 217,000 Vietnam era veterans between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-four have been unemployed for four months or longer." Even more disturbing is a Labor Department estimate that in December 1982, an *additional* 513,000 Vietnam era veterans were neither employed nor seeking employment—they were just too discouraged to look for work. The number of unemployed Vietnam veterans is close to 1.4 million, out of a total of 8.7 million who served during that era.

These statistics have shown little change in the first half of

1983. As such, they constitute the logical outcome of almost two decades of bureaucratic ineptitude and of casual denigration of the Vietnam veteran's potential and desire to become a productive member of America's work force. What we all must remember is that the nation has been paying dearly for this oversight by wasting a valuable human resource.

Somewhat belatedly, Congress and the Reagan administration have begun to focus on the need to do something about Vietnam veterans' unemployment. The problem is, at least, on the agenda now.

One effort involves transferring the authority and moneys appropriated to operate the Veterans Employment Service (VES) from the Department of Labor to the Veterans Administration. Another involves an attempt to get the Small Business Administration (SBA) to begin enforcing the law, passed in 1974,

that calls for special efforts to help Vietnam veterans to go into business for themselves. Both the VES and the SBA experiences are shameful reminders of the positive discrimination that Vietnam veterans have faced.

Some very serious issues are involved in the problem of Vietnam veterans' unemployment besides that of equity and fairness. They include coming to grips with the fact that the ever burgeoning flow of illegal aliens into the U.S. has exacerbated our overall national un-

employment problem. The inescapable conclusion is that the one problem can't be solved without solving the other. Today, although the government refuses to confirm the numbers, it is estimated by officials that there are at least 12 million illegal aliens in the United States; and owing to the worsening political situation in Central America and to Mexico's shaky economic situation, the number is growing at an alarming rate.

Maybe things will change, but we'll continue watching and reporting in later columns whether these most recent actions are anything more than sound and fury signifying nothing. Much can be done to alleviate the problem of Vietnam veterans' unemployment. Yet it's far from certain that the Congress and the White House are genuinely committed to that end.

William R. Corson O+

Splashy job programs for Vietnam veterans have been announced by successive administrations. But after two years of Reaganomics, this issue is more than a problem—it is a national tragedy.



VIETNAM VETERANS FOUNDATION

May 25, 1983

Ms. Mary Wieseman, Inspector
General
1441 L St., N.W.
Room 1018
SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
Washington, D.C. 20416

Dear Ms. Wieseman:

I am writing you at the direction of the Board of Directors of the Vietnam Veterans Foundation. The VVF is a current member of the SBA Veterans Task Force.

The VVF wishes to inform you of two situations that are surely unethical of which one is clearly illegal.

Both of these violations have occurred under the direction of the Director of the Office of Veterans Affairs, Mr. Stephen Mollett.

The first allegation embodies a proposal put forth by Mr. Mollett at the most recent SBA Veterans Task Force meeting held on May 10, 1983. Attached you will find a copy of that proposal. Please note that this written outline calls for development of veterans organization cash awards to SBA employees outside the civil service merit award system.

At that meeting, VVF brought this clear violation of Government ethics and law to the attention of the Task Force but was rebuffed by Mr. Mollett when he attempted to remove the VVF representative who raised the issue from the Task Force. Mr. Marshall Parker, Associate Administrator for Special Programs witnessed this proposal and Mollett's response. Apparently he condones this award system which is now "under further study."

A cash award constitutes "unlawful supplement of Federal salary", as well as a clear violation of the U.S. Government's Code of Ethics which states: "Each employee shall avoid situations in which his private interest conflict or raise a reasonable question of conflict with his public duties and responsibilities. An employee shall avoid any action, whether or not specifically prohibited, which might result in or create the appearance of using public office for private gain, giving preferential treatment to any person, impeding Government efficiency or economy, losing complete independence or impartiality or affecting the confidence of the public in the integrity of the government."

Because the VVF was the only veterans organization to oppose this act which is clearly illegal, we believe that such a plan may continue to be put forth by the agency through Mr. Mollett's actions and actually approved by the Task Force in spite of our objection. We call for a complete investigation that will intervene on the SBA Director of Veterans Affairs' apparent desire to continue to violate the law. His actions, if successful, would result in politicizing the agency's merit award systems.

Our second complaint in need of investigation is the process utilized by the Office of Advocacy and the Office of Veterans Affairs in selecting its Veterans Small Business Advocate of the year.

The Veterans Advocate is one of eight categories of Small Business Advocates selected by SBA. The Veterans Advocate for this year was the first one ever. SBA Brochure No. SBA-475 published in August 1982 clearly sets out the nomination procedures that state eight advocates will be recognized in each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Nomination packages from each state would then be submitted to the SBA Regional Office and then forwarded to the Office of Advocacy of SBA for final determination by a selection committee for each of the eight categories.

While the Veterans Advocate is a new addition to SBA's Small Business Advocates Program, it is clear to us that once again the Director of Veterans Affairs circumvented the process.

As members of the SBA Veterans Task Force, we are aware that no competition took place for the Veteran Advocate at the state level. It is our understanding that two SBA National Veteran Task Force members, Mr. Kim Graham, of the VFW and Mr. Rick Wideman, of the Vietnam Veterans of America were the only determiners of this years selection, Mr. James Pechim. We are not questioning the qualifications of Mr. Pechim to be selected for such an award, only the process of nomination and selection utilized by the Agency officials responsible.

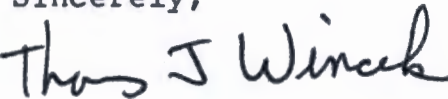
Further, it disturbs us that Mr. Pechim is currently under contract with the VVA and was most recently under contract to SBA's Office of Veterans Affairs headed by Mr. Mollett at the time of his nomination. The VVF, as a Task Force member, has never received any written communication on any information in reference to either a state or regional competition. It is absurd that the final selection committee contained certain SBA Veteran Task Force members while completely excluding other Task Force members from participation in the selection of a veterans award.

Having attended or been represented at each and every Task Force meeting, I know that this issue was raised by Mr. Frank Swain, Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the SBA only verbally on one occasion. Further information on nominations was to be developed and given to the Task Force members.

This award is an honorable one to create, but we charge that this year's award was not awarded under the publicly stated nomination and selection criteria and should be retracted on this basis. Further, next year's procedures should be one that is acceptable to the concepts of fair competition and a democratic open society. Selection of any award behind closed doors in violation of stated procedures is not acceptable to us as citizens.

Accordingly, the VVF implores your office to fully investigate our charges and to rectify the unethical or even illegal actions of the Office of Veteran Affairs who are charged with implementing the law rather than violating the laws.

Please contact me for further information and to inform me of your response to these serious matters.

Sincerely,


Thomas J. Wincek

cc: J. Thomas Burch, Jr./General Counsel
Robert A. Sniffen/Executive Vice Chairman

AGENDA ACTION ITEM

TO: National Task Force on Veterans and Small Business

SUBJECT: National Award(s) For Outstanding Service on Behalf
of Veteran Entrepreneurs

May 10, 1983
meeting

We have previously discussed the need to provide additional incentives and recognition for those individuals in government service who go well beyond their assigned responsibilities and duties to actively advocate, promote or develop veteran entrepreneurship.

We have developed some preliminary thoughts on this --

- These should be national level award(s).
- A "coalition" of the national vet. organization should possibly present it as a joint award(s) in the name of veterans.
- Award made annually at an appropriate ceremony.
- The award(s) should be accompanied by a cash award incentive or reward - made up from cash donations by the vet organizations.
- The award could be named for some prominent American - i.e., "General Westmoreland" (just a thought!)
- These awards would be recognized by government agencies as a prestigious award and widely competed for by a strong nomination and evaluation process.
- The "Coalition of Veterans Organizations" would choose the winners. The nomination process left to the agencies following criteria/guidelines of the "Coalition."

- Some arrangement should be considered to distinguish categories of awards -
 - National level/ Policymaking
 - Regional/State level
 - Supporting Activities -
 - Administrative abilities
 - Outreach
- A series of awards might be given like the "Top 10 in America", etc.

NOTE: SBA has already begun work to include performance measurements in employees annual ratings which relate to their duties as VAO's. This is for regular performance evaluation and is not a substitute for outstanding or Incentive Awards which may be given by Agency supervisors by internal management decisions where the work /performance has been truly exceptional. The "Veterans Entrepreneurship Award" would be a very respected and prestigious award "for outstanding public service on behalf of veterans entrepreneurship and business development."

As we mentioned, these are only preliminary thoughts on this and we would like to present this matter for your consideration at this time. If some award system is to be established outside the regular civil service reward methods now would be a good time to get the planning underway so it could be announced during the VAO Training Programs this Summer.

We propose to establish a working group, led by one of the national veterans organization representatives on behalf of the proposed vets. coalition. All the appropriate participating organizations would be represented as they saw fit. We will assign Bill Black of our office and _____ of the Office of Personnel to provide general guidance on establishing this kind of personnel related system.

- ACTION:
- (1) Decide if the Task Force wants to pursue this idea.
 - (2) Choose representatives to draw up the awards, criteria, and guidelines.
 - (3) Establish a date for reporting back to TF members.

LAW OFFICES

BURCH, WILHELM & McDONALD, P.C.

J THOMAS BURCH, JR
DAVID W. McDONALD
JULIAN A. WILHELM*
ROBIN LUKETINA

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TELEX: TWX 710-822-1168
*NOT ADMITTED IN D.C.

July 20, 1983

Mr. Ron Mann
Associate Director
Presidential Personnel
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.
Washington, D.C.

Dear Ron:

Pursuant to our recent conversation, I am enclosing letters sent to Senator Paul Laxalt, Ken Duberstein and Congressman Robert Michel by Vietnam veteran leaders seeking meetings. While no letter was sent to Mr. Blackwell, numerous telephone calls were placed to obtain a meeting which were not returned.

The only meeting that the leadership was able to get was with Jock Nash of Senator Laxalt's staff. The meeting was attended by the leadership of the United Vietnam Veterans Organization and the Vietnam Veterans Foundation. Mr. Nash, a Vietnam veteran, seemed to feel the Republican Party was adequately covered through the Vietnam Veterans Leadership Project of ACTION and did not follow up on the leadership's willingness to pledge themselves to the Republican Party. Out of frustration some of the leadership is turning to the Democratic Party. While it may be too late to reverse the course, I think the Republican Party should make more effort to ensure the support of Vietnam veterans for the Party.

Your good offices in helping arrange a meeting with Mr. Blackwell at the White House would be appreciated to determine if the perception that this administration doesn't care about Vietnam veterans can be changed. Attendees would be spokesmen of the Vietnam Veterans Foundation and the United Vietnam Veterans Organization. The veterans would like the opportunity to review with Mr. Blackwell what they view as a lack of sensitivity to the concerns of Vietnam veterans.

BURCH, WILHELM & McDONALD, P.C.

Page 2

July 20, 1983

Mr. Ron Mann

Your thoughts and good offices in regard to this matter would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

BURCH, WILHELM & MCDONALD, P.C.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "JTB", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

J. Thomas Burch, Jr.

Enclosure

JTB/crj

LAW OFFICES

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Associate Director
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The White House
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Page 2


July 20, 1983

Mr. Ron Mann

Your thoughts and good offices in regard to this matter would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

BURCH, WILHELM & MCDONALD, P.C.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "JTB", written in dark ink.

J. Thomas Burch, Jr.

Enclosure

JTB/crj



VIETNAM VETERANS FOUNDATION

January 25, 1983

Mr. Kenneth M. Duberstein
Assistant to the President for
Legislative Affairs
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Duberstein:

I am writing on behalf of the Vietnam Veterans Foundation. My purpose in contacting you is to provide your office information concerning an important issue to the Vietnam veteran constituency.

That issue is the lack of political appointments of Vietnam veterans in highly visible positions within the Reagan Administration. In particular, the VVF and other Vietnam veterans who are in leadership roles are extremely concerned over the instant case of J. Thomas Burch, Jr.

As you can see from the enclosed credentials, Tom Burch has the strongest support of all the credible major Vietnam veterans groups; many of the traditional veterans organizations as well as a unique array of Republican Congressional backing.

This Congressional support is phenomenal in the respect that the many Senators and Congressman supporting Mr. Burch usually do not endorse candidates who are not residents of their respective states. Certainly, the level and content of their support is a rare event.

While much of the veteran and congressional support is based on the superior qualifications of Mr. Burch, we are keenly aware that this support is based on the belief that it is time for the Administration to appoint a highly visible constituent acceptable Vietnam veteran to this proper post.

We have written President Reagan on this one specific appointment. His response or that of his Personnel Office is that this position has been designated for a minority (See attached White House letter of January 10, 1983.)

In a political sense, we can be supportive of both the women and minority constituencies to any Administration. Yet, as the 1984 elections approach, it is our belief that one party will make an investment in the newest voting block, the Vietnam veteran. There are approximately ten million veterans who served during the Vietnam Era. With their families, the number influenced by this group raises to some thirty million people.

Additionally, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, The American Legion and Disabled American Veterans have recently begun to put their full impact behind Vietnam veterans because they are seeking this group's membership for their organizations' future well being.

While Vietnam veterans are not yet quite organized into their own voting block, they are organizing and much of the networking is already in place. This is evidenced by the networking already taking place within the scope of the Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program currently underway to reach and assist Vietnam veterans.

Mr. Duberstein, plain and simple, Tom Burch is a man who will be able to harness such a voting block and has already begun to do so by receiving such enthusiastic support from these groups.

We bring this information to your attention because of your position as Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs. As you can see from the enclosed letters, Congressional Republicans recognize the significance of such an appointment. We hope someone in the White House and the Republican Party will be able to see the positive aspects of such a step.

I will be contacting you to discuss this matter further and to seek your advice on the best manner in which to present our concepts to your administration.

Your attention to this matter is appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas J. Wincek

Thomas J. Wincek
Chairman

Enclosures

TJW/njb



VIETNAM VETERANS FOUNDATION

January 18, 1983

Senator Paul Laxalt
Room 315
Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Senator Laxalt:

I am writing you on behalf of the Vietnam Veterans Foundation. The VVF was incorporated in 1979 in Washington, D.C. as a national non profit organization. Over the past four years our objectives and activities have been designed to assist disabled and Vietnam veterans in the area of small business and economic development programs:

The foundation has been in the forefront of ensuring implementation of SBA programs for this group. We played a large role in bringing about twenty-eight million dollars in funding for Public Law 97-72 and P.L. 93-237. Enclosed you will find a background sheet on the VVF and its activities.

Senator Laxalt, I am contacting you in reference to your up coming role as Chairman of the Republican Party. In 1979 and early 1980, the VVF approached your party for help on the above referenced issue. Meetings were held with Bill Ayeres and in fact, the VVF provided testimony before the Republican Platform Committee in the Spring of 1980 in Springfield, Missouri. We felt then, that a Republican Administration would address the needs of Vietnam veterans in all issue areas including the issue of political appointments.

However, to date, the Reagan Administration has not supported many of the issue areas nor have they considered the leadership potential of this vital and strong group of citizens in their political appointment selections.

Now, in 1983, we find that the Reagan administration does not have a much better record in appointing Vietnam veterans to policy making posts than did the Carter administration. We had hoped that the Reagan administration would recognize that those of us who answered our country's call have a tremendous amount to offer and would take the lead in allowing all Vietnam veterans to finally take their rightful place in society and the leadership of our country.

Many of us believed that those who served in leadership positions in Vietnam constituted among the best in terms of leadership potential, patriotism, dedication and public mindedness that our generation has to offer. We believed that the Executive Department of our government could only benefit by having amalgamated into its system the leaders that were developed through the Vietnam experience.

One current case is symbolic of Vietnam veterans organizations' disappointment in this Administration's handling of political appointments vis a vis this group.

Recently, in a strong display of unity, Vietnam veterans groups, several leaders of the traditional veterans, and former military organizations all joined to get behind one Vietnam veteran whom we felt could collectively be put forward, as not only an exemplary candidate for appointment, but an individual that we could all relate to as typifying Vietnam veterans in general. That individual is Mr. J. Thomas Burch, Jr.

Attached are Tom Burch's credentials. While Tom is a loyal republican and most qualified for defense related positions, it appears this Administration may overlook the strong cry of our groups for this one appointment.

Mr. Burch has received previous consideration from the Reagan Administration as a finalist for the positions of Secretary of the Army and Under-secretary of the Army. While Burch did not receive either appointment, we still held hope because the White House then informed Mr. Burch to hold on and that he (Mr. Burch) would be considered for future defense related positions.

When a Vietnam veteran was not selected as the new V.A. Administrator, Vietnam veterans were extremely disappointed. Many of the veterans groups then eyed the position of Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs as a natural position to go to a veteran. In fact, we feel this specific position is vital to the interest of Vietnam veterans.

The responsibilities of the position include being in charge of all personnel matters, including the Military Board of Corrections, promotions and assignments, manpower levels, establishment of priorities between combat and support troops, all matters affecting their pay and benefits, and such specific considerations as the decision on whether the empty tomb of the Unknown Vietnam veteran at Arlington National Cemetery can be filled.

In spite of wide and varied support from the veterans groups and strong congressional support, Ron Mann, Deputy Director of the White House Personnel office informed the WF in a January 10, 1983 letter that "We have designated the position of Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs for a minority. Should we fail to find a qualified minority candidate, you can be assured that J. Thomas Burch will be given serious consideration."

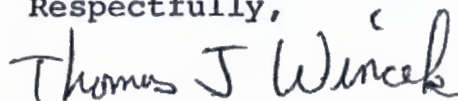
Mr. Chairman, once again, Vietnam veterans are ignored in favor of other groups. We seek your intervention on this and other qualified Vietnam veteran candidates who should be considered for appointments at the White House level.

We suggest that this one request for a Vietnam veteran to be appointed in a highly visible position such as the one Tom Burch is seeking would demonstrate the Administration's concern for the many Vietnam veterans who feel they have been neglected by the Republican Party.

Thus, I and other representatives of the Vietnam veteran leadership of this country desire to meet with you in reference to this appointment but also on the broader issue of Vietnam veterans in relation to an early favorable position by your party on their needs and their possible votes as your party looks forward to the 1984 elections.

Please contact me to discuss this crucial matter further.

Respectfully,



Thomas J. Wincek



VIETNAM VETERANS FOUNDATION

January 24, 1983

Congressman Robert Michel
Minority Leadership Office
H228 U.S. Capital
Attention: David Kehl

Dear Congressman Michel:

I am writing on behalf of the Vietnam Veterans Foundation. My purpose in contacting you is to provide your office with information concerning an important issue to the Vietnam veteran constituency.

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As you can see from the enclosed credentials, Tom Burch has the strongest support of all the credible major Vietnam veterans groups; many of the traditional veterans organizations as well as a unique array of Republican Congressional backing.

This Congressional support is phenomenal in the respect that the many Senators and Congressmen supporting Mr. Burch usually do not endorse candidates who are not residents of their respective states. Certainly, the level and content of their support is a rare event.

While much of the veteran and congressional support is based on the superior qualifications of Mr. Burch, we are keenly aware that this support is based on the belief that it is time for the Administration to appoint a highly visible constituent acceptable Vietnam veteran to a proper post.

We have written President Reagan on this one specific appointment. His response or that of his Personnel Office is that this position has been designated for a minority (See attached White House letter of January 10, 1983.)

In a political sense, we can be supportive of both the women and minority constituencies to any Administration. Yet, as the 1984 elections approach, it is our belief that one party will make an investment in the newest voting block, the Vietnam veteran. There are approximately ten million veterans who served during the Vietnam Era. With their families, the number influenced by this group raises to some thirty million people.

Additionally, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, The American Legion and Disabled American Veterans have recently begun to put their full impact behind Vietnam veterans because they are seeking this group's membership for their organizations future well being.

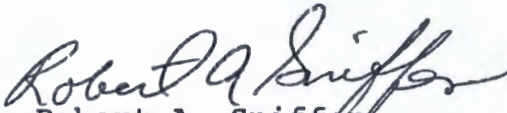
Congressman Michel, plain and simple, Tom Burch is a man who will be able to harness such a voting block and has already begun to do so by receiving such enthusiastic support from these groups.

We bring this information to your attention because of your position as Minority Leader for the Republican Party. As you can see from the enclosed letters, many Congressional Republicans recognize the significance of such an appointment. We hope someone in the White House as well as the Party will be able to see the positive aspects of such a step.

We believe that this single appointment is symbolic of the Administration's move in that direction, but more importantly we feel that Tom Burch is the most qualified candidate in the running for this slot.

I will be contacting you to discuss this matter further. Any assistance, intervention, or advise on this matter would be appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,


Robert A. Sniffen
Executive Vice Chairman



file
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VIETNAM VETERANS FOUNDATION

July 28, 1983

President Ronald Reagan
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing you by direction of the Board of Directors of the Vietnam Veterans Foundation. Incorporated in 1979, the VVF is a national non profit organization dedicated to providing small business opportunities and economic development programs to this nation's Vietnam veterans. I was a member of the SBA's Task Force on Special Consideration for Veterans and co-chair the SBA's Task Force Subcommittee on loans and other financial assistance.

My purpose in writing you is to inform you that the Small Business Administration's Office of Veteran's Affairs and its Director, Mr. Steven Mollett are failing to carry out the mandates of Congress. He is resistant to create any meaningful program to assist disabled and Vietnam veterans in spite of Public Laws calling for such aid.

The current Director of Veterans Affairs is both incompetent and attitudinally inept. Mr. Mollett is not qualified nor experienced to head up a multi-million dollar program nor has he done so in the past. He has not only failed to carry out Congressional mandates but has taken actions that we believe to be otherwise improper. Mr. Mollett's lack of leadership and programatic experience over the past year now causes this organization to ask you to remove this individual from this vital post. Further, we request the appointment of a qualified and sensitive Director of Veteran's Affairs in the SBA.

The Director of Veteran's Affairs, Mr. Mollett, has been responsible for the following failures and improprieties:

- Failure to design a program of outreach and technical services for Vietnam veterans that would result in the full expenditure of \$3 million dollars allocated by the Congress

under P.L. 93-237. Though on the books since 1974, P.L. 93-237 was allocated these first time funds on December 21, 1982 and are due to expire on September 30, 1983. Once again, SBA publicly committed before Congress to fully expend these funds. Yet, Mr. Mollett immediately took actions that will result in actual spending amounting to less than half of the allocated funds before the close of FY 1983. Mr. Mollett's attitude is that SBA could not properly spend these funds eventhough ten months were left in FY 1983 to design and fund a program as called for by Congress and committed to by SBA. This one individual has caused Vietnam veteran business aid funds to be cut in half in spite of the legislative process and Congressional will. His actions have hindered rather than helped Vietnam veterans.

● Foregoing an SBA policy that has brought about the failure of P.L. 97-72 (signed by you on November 3, 1981) which created a Small Business Act for Vietnam and disabled veterans. As President, you signed appropriation legislation for this program on December 2, 1982. The law calls for the spending of 25 million in direct loans. Congressman Sonny (G.V.) Montgomery insisted that this 25 million be above and beyond direct loan levels received by this group in preceeding fiscal years. In FY 1981 Vietnam veterans received \$24.8 million in direct loan funding. It was and is Congressional intent that approximately \$50 million in direct loan funds be expended in FY 1983 for Vietnam veterans. On March 23, 1983 SBA officials agreed to this mandate before the House Veterans Affairs Subcommittee on Investigation and Oversight. Yet, Mr. Mollett has implemented a program that circumvents Congressional intent. Mr. Mollett's actions in reference to P.L. 97-72 represents a total failure to implement this act of Congress..

● Providing misleading information to Maryland state officials on the implementation of Public Law 97-72. In a meeting with a staff member of the Maryland Community Economic Development Program. Mr. Mollett labled P.L. 97-72 "a phantom program" that would be eliminated by an OMB deferral request when he knew the Congress would override OMB's request for deferral. He also told this state official that any Maryland state effort to provide business aid would be a "duplication of effort". Fortunately, Maryland did not heed Mr. Mollett's discouraging and disparaging remarks. On May 10, 1983, the Governor of Maryland signed legislation that makes Maryland the first state to create a Counsel appointed by the Governor to assist disabled and Vietnam veteran owned businesses. Mr. Mollett's attitude and reluctance to cooperate almost destroyed a program for Maryland's 177,000 Vietnam Veterans. Documentation of Mollett's actions in this matter is available.

● Attempted to create an illegal "cash" award system for SBA Veterans Affairs Officers outside of the normal civil service merit systems. This action has been reported to the Inspector General of the SBA for investigation.

● Circumvention of the competition for the Veterans Business Advocate Award. The Office of Veterans Affairs under Mr. Mollett failed to conduct state competitions in the 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. In spite of nomination and selection procedures, the SBA Office of Veteran's Affairs selected its own illegal method for this activity. This action has also been reported to the Inspector General of the SBA for investigation.

● Statements threatening to withhold Federal funds from certain cities where the VVF is involved. These statements can be verified by individuals in Dallas, Texas.

● Conducting a personal vendetta against a non governmental organization based on philosophical and/or policy differences. Mr. Mollett has sought to illegally remove the VVF from the SBA Veterans Task Force and has personally slandered the VVF and its leadership on many occasions.

● Politicalization of the Office of Veterans Affairs. While the Director of Veterans Affairs position is held by a career employee, Mr. Mollett is conducting his affairs as if he were a Schedule C appointed by the President to forge Administration policy.

Mr. President, this one man is rapidly becoming a "lightning rod" for all that is wrong in Government. He is another potential embarrassment to you and your Administration. In an effort to resolve this matter, we have met with senior SBA officials who have taken a defensive posture. We have also briefed V.A. Administrator Harry Walters on the above matters and other compelling problems surrounding this individual who is neither acceptable nor worthy of holding this challenging post.

Now, our organization is attempting to bring this situation to your attention. We are most interested in meeting with you or your appointed representative in an effort to resolve this matter on behalf of those Vietnam veterans who earned their small business entitlements by way of military service.

Mr. President, I implore you to look very closely into this request for removal of the current Director of Veterans Affairs and to replace him with a competent and sensitive Director.

The current situation is similar in nature to the causes and effects of the resignation of former V.A. Administrator Robert Nimmo.

Please contact me as to when our organization's representatives can meet with you or other White House officials to discuss this explosive problem further. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,
Thomas J. Wincek
Thomas Wincek,
Chairman.

cc: J. Thomas Burch, Jr. VVF General Counsel
Robert Sniffen, VVF Executive Vice Chairman

LAW OFFICES

BURCH, WILHELM & McDONALD, P.C.

J. THOMAS BURCH, JR.
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51 MONROE STREET
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LOUIS D. BEER*
1400 NORTH WOODWARD
SUITE 100
BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN 48075

TELEX: TWX 710-822-1168
*NOT ADMITTED IN D.C.

July 20, 1983

Mr. Ron Mann
Associate Director
Presidential Personnel
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.
Washington, D.C.

Dear Ron:

Pursuant to our recent conversation, I am enclosing letters sent to Senator Paul Laxalt, Ken Duberstein and Congressman Robert Michel by Vietnam veteran leaders seeking meetings. While no letter was sent to Mr. Blackwell, numerous telephone calls were placed to obtain a meeting which were not returned.

The only meeting that the leadership was able to get was with Jock Nash of Senator Laxalt's staff. The meeting was attended by the leadership of the United Vietnam Veterans Organization and the Vietnam Veterans Foundation. Mr. Nash, a Vietnam veteran, seemed to feel the Republican Party was adequately covered through the Vietnam Veterans Leadership Project of ACTION and did not follow up on the leadership's willingness to pledge themselves to the Republican Party. Out of frustration some of the leadership is turning to the Democratic Party. While it may be too late to reverse the course, I think the Republican Party should make more effort to ensure the support of Vietnam veterans for the Party.

Your good offices in helping arrange a meeting with Mr. Blackwell at the White House would be appreciated to determine if the perception that this administration doesn't care about Vietnam veterans can be changed. Attendees would be spokesmen of the Vietnam Veterans Foundation and the United Vietnam Veterans Organization. The veterans would like the opportunity to review with Mr. Blackwell what they view as a lack of sensitivity to the concerns of Vietnam veterans.

BURCH, WILHELM & McDONALD, P.C.

Page 2

July 20, 1983

Mr. Ron Mann

Your thoughts and good offices in regard to this matter would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

BURCH, WILHELM & MCDONALD, P.C.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "JTB", written in dark ink.

J. Thomas Burch, Jr.

Enclosure

JTB/crj



VIETNAM VETERANS FOUNDATION

May 25, 1983

Ms. Mary Wieseman, Inspector
General
1441 L St., N.W.
Room 1018
SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
Washington, D.C. 20416

Dear Ms. Wieseman:

I am writing you at the direction of the Board of Directors of the Vietnam Veterans Foundation. The VVF is a current member of the SBA Veterans Task Force.

The VVF wishes to inform you of two situations that are surely unethical of which one is clearly illegal.

Both of these violations have occurred under the direction of the Director of the Office of Veterans Affairs, Mr. Stephen Mollett.

The first allegation embodies a proposal put forth by Mr. Mollett at the most recent SBA Veterans Task Force meeting held on May 10, 1983. Attached you will find a copy of that proposal. Please note that this written outline calls for development of veterans organization cash awards to SBA employees outside the civil service merit award system.

At that meeting, VVF brought this clear violation of Government ethics and law to the attention of the Task Force but was rebuffed by Mr. Mollett when he attempted to remove the VVF representative who raised the issue from the Task Force. Mr. Marshall Parker, Associate Administrator for Special Programs witnessed this proposal and Mollett's response. Apparently he condones this award system which is now "under further study."

A cash award constitutes "unlawful supplement of Federal salary", as well as a clear violation of the U.S. Government's Code of Ethics which states: "Each employee shall avoid situations in which his private interest conflict or raise a reasonable question of conflict with his public duties and responsibilities. An employee shall avoid any action, whether or not specifically prohibited, which might result in or create the appearance of using public office for private gain, giving preferential treatment to any person, impeding Government efficiency or economy, losing complete independence or impartiality or affecting the confidence of the public in the integrity of the government."

Because the VVF was the only veterans organization to oppose this act which is clearly illegal, we believe that such a plan may continue to be put forth by the agency through Mr. Mollett's actions and actually approved by the Task Force in spite of our objection. We call for a complete investigation that will intervene on the SBA Director of Veterans Affairs' apparent desire to continue to violate the law. His actions, if successful, would result in politicizing the agency's merit award systems.

Our second complaint in need of investigation is the process utilized by the Office of Advocacy and the Office of Veterans Affairs in selecting its Veterans Small Business Advocate of the year.

The Veterans Advocate is one of eight categories of Small Business Advocates selected by SBA. The Veterans Advocate for this year was the first one ever. SBA Brochure No. SBA-475 published in August 1982 clearly sets out the nomination procedures that state eight advocates will be recognized in each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Nomination packages from each state would then be submitted to the SBA Regional Office and then forwarded to the Office of Advocacy of SBA for final determination by a selection committee for each of the eight categories.

While the Veterans Advocate is a new addition to SBA's Small Business Advocates Program, it is clear to us that once again the Director of Veterans Affairs circumvented the process.

As members of the SBA Veterans Task Force, we are aware that no competition took place for the Veteran Advocate at the state level. It is our understanding that two SBA National Veteran Task Force members, Mr. Kim Graham, of the VFW and Mr. Rick Wideman, of the Vietnam Veterans of America were the only determiners of this years selection, Mr. James Pechim. We are not questioning the qualifications of Mr. Pechim to be selected for such an award, only the process of nomination and selection utilized by the Agency officials responsible.

Further, it disturbs us that Mr. Pechim is currently under contract with the VVA and was most recently under contract to SBA's Office of Veterans Affairs headed by Mr. Mollett at the time of his nomination. The VVF, as a Task Force member, has never received any written communication on any information in reference to either a state or regional competition. It is absurd that the final selection committee contained certain SBA Veteran Task Force members while completely excluding other Task Force members from participation in the selection of a veterans award.

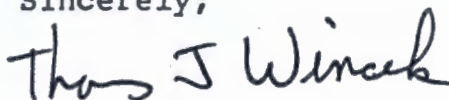
Having attended or been represented at each and every Task Force meeting, I know that this issue was raised by Mr. Frank Swain, Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the SBA only verbally on one occasion. Further information on nominations was to be developed and given to the Task Force members.

This award is an honorable one to create, but we charge that this year's award was not awarded under the publicly stated nomination and selection criteria and should be retracted on this basis. Further, next year's procedures should be one that is acceptable to the concepts of fair competition and a democratic open society. Selection of any award behind closed doors in violation of stated procedures is not acceptable to us as citizens.

Accordingly, the VVF implores your office to fully investigate our charges and to rectify the unethical or even illegal actions of the Office of Veteran Affairs who are charged with implementing the law rather than violating the laws.

Please contact me for further information and to inform me of your response to these serious matters.

Sincerely,



Thomas J. Wincek

cc: J. Thomas Burch, Jr./General Counsel
Robert A. Sniffen/Executive Vice Chairman

AGENDA ACTION ITEM

May 10, 1983
SBA Task Force Meeting

TO: National Task Force on Veterans and Small Business

SUBJECT: National Award(s) For Outstanding Service on Behalf
of Veteran Entrepreneurs

We have previously discussed the need to provide additional incentives and recognition for those individuals in government service who go well beyond their assigned responsibilities and duties to actively advocate, promote or develop veteran entrepreneurship.

We have developed some preliminary thoughts on this --

- These should be national level award(s).
- A "coalition" of the national vet. organization should possibly present it as a joint award(s) in the name of veterans.
- Award made annually at an appropriate ceremony.
- The award(s) should accompanied by a cash award incentive or reward - made up from cash donations by the vet organizations.
- The award could be named for some prominent American - i.e., "General Westmoreland" (just a thought!)
- These awards would be recognized by government agencies as a prestigious award and widely competed for by a strong nomination and evaluation process.
- The "Coalition of Veterans Organizations" would choose the winners. The nomination process left to the agencies following criteria/guidelines of the "Coalition."

- Some arrangement should be considered to distinguish categories of awards -
 - National level/ Policymaking
 - Regional/State level
 - Supporting Activities -
 - Administrative abilities
 - Outreach
- A series of awards might be given like the "Top 10 in America", etc.

NOTE: SBA has already begun work to include performance measurements in employees annual ratings which relate to their duties as VAO's. This is for regular performance evaluation and is not a substitute for outstanding or Incentive Awards which may be given by Agency supervisors by internal management decisions where the work /performance has been truly exceptional. The "Veterans Entrepreneurship Award" would be a very respected and prestigious award "for outstanding public service on behalf of veterans entrepreneurship and business development."

As we mentioned, these are only preliminary thoughts on this and we would like to present this matter for your consideration at this time. If some award system is to be established outside the regular civil service reward methods now would be a good time to get the planning underway so it could be announced during the VAO Training Programs this Summer.

We propose to establish a working group, led by one of the national veterans organization representatives on behalf of the proposed vets. coalition. All the appropriate participating organizations would be represented as they saw fit. We will assign Bill Black of our office and _____ of the Office of Personnel to provide general guidance on establishing this kind of personnel related system.

-
- ACTION: (1) Decide if the Task Force wants to pursue this idea.
- (2) Choose representatives to draw up the awards, criteria, and guidelines.
- (3) Establish a date for reporting back to TF members.



THE VIETNAM VETERANS ADVISER

Though the majority of Vietnam veterans have successfully made the transition to productive civilian life, there are far too many who suffer from unresolved problems. For those who were deeply wounded in body or spirit, readjustment to civilian life has been painful and incomplete.

There has been much public confusion as to the nature of these problems. But the government also misunderstands and invariably asks the question: What do these veterans want? It would be much more to the point to ask them what they need.

Ever since Vietnam veterans began returning to the U.S., they have been plagued by the lack of an adequate GI Bill for education and a workplace that says, "No machine gunners need apply." Splashy job programs for Vietnam veterans have been announced by successive administrations from Nixon's on, but all that these produced was publicity for the celebrity figures who lent their names to the effort. Today, after two years of Reaganomics, the issue of jobs for Vietnam veterans is more than a problem—it is a national tragedy.

According to Stanley E. Zwalk, national commander of the Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A., "One thing we already know about Vietnam era veterans is that they are over-represented in unemployment statistics." In speaking before the Joint House-Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs on March 17, 1983, Zwalk noted:

"The Department of Labor's January 1983 figures say 883,000 Vietnam era veterans are unemployed and looking for work; among twenty-five-to-twenty-nine-year-olds, 21.8 percent of Vietnam era veterans are unemployed, compared with 13.7 percent of their nonveteran peers. As many as 217,000 Vietnam era veterans between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-four have been unemployed for four months or longer." Even more disturbing is a Labor Department estimate that in December 1982, an *additional* 513,000 Vietnam era veterans were neither employed nor seeking employment—they were just too discouraged to look for work. The number of unemployed Vietnam veterans is close to 1.4 million, out of a total of 8.7 million who served during that era.

These statistics have shown little change in the first half of

1983. As such, they constitute the logical outcome of almost two decades of bureaucratic ineptitude and of casual denigration of the Vietnam veteran's potential and desire to become a productive member of America's work force. What we all must remember is that the nation has been paying dearly for this oversight by wasting a valuable human resource.

Somewhat belatedly, Congress and the Reagan administration have begun to focus on the need to do something about Vietnam veterans' unemployment. The problem is, at least, on the agenda now.

One effort involves transferring the authority and moneys appropriated to operate the Veterans Employment Service (VES) from the Department of Labor to the Veterans Administration.

Another involves an attempt to get the Small Business Administration (SBA) to begin enforcing the law, passed in 1974, that calls for special efforts to help Vietnam veterans to go into business for themselves. Both the VES and the SBA experiences are shameful reminders of the positive discrimination that Vietnam veterans have faced.

Some very serious issues are involved in the problem of Vietnam veterans' unemployment besides that of equity and fairness. They include coming to grips with the fact that the ever burgeoning flow of illegal aliens into the U.S. has exacerbated our overall national un-

employment problem. The inescapable conclusion is that the one problem can't be solved without solving the other. Today, although the government refuses to confirm the numbers, it is estimated by officials that there are at least 12 million illegal aliens in the United States; and owing to the worsening political situation in Central America and to Mexico's shaky economic situation, the number is growing at an alarming rate.

Maybe things will change, but we'll continue watching and reporting in later columns whether these most recent actions are anything more than sound and fury signifying nothing. Much can be done to alleviate the problem of Vietnam veterans' unemployment. Yet it's far from certain that the Congress and the White House are genuinely committed to that end.

William R. Carson O—

Splashy job programs for Vietnam veterans have been announced by successive administrations. But after two years of Reaganomics, this issue is more than a problem—it is a national tragedy.

August 12, 1983

Dear Mr. Wincek:

On behalf of the President, I wish to acknowledge and thank you for your letter requesting the opportunity to meet with the President.

Although the President would enjoy meeting with you and appreciates your interest in expressing your concerns, unfortunately, due to the many heavy demands on his schedule during the coming weeks and months, the time is not foreseen when he might be able to do so.

Nonetheless, the President appreciates your thoughtfulness in writing and asked that I extend to you his warm best wishes.

Sincerely,

FREDERICK J. RYAN, JR.
Director, Presidential
Appointments and Scheduling

Mr. Thomas Wincek
Chairman
Vietnam Veterans Foundation
Post Office Box 1544
Washington, D.C. 20013

cc: Craig Fuller w/incoming for further handling

FJR:vm1--

June 11, 1951

file
Vietnam
Veterans
Foundation

Dear Mr. Yates:

Mr. Blackwell has recently brought to my attention your interest in meeting with the President on behalf of the Vietnam Veterans Foundation.

Very regrettably, the heavy demands on his schedule preclude his acceptance. It has been suggested, however, that possibly a briefing can be arranged and I am forwarding the suggestion to Mrs. Dole's office for consideration.

In the meantime, please know of the President's appreciation for the work you are doing on behalf of the VVF and that he sends you his very best wishes.

Sincerely,

Gregory J. Newell
Special Assistant
to the President

Mr. Jerry E. Yates
Director, Communication
and Public Relations
Vietnam Veterans Foundation
c/o The National Press Club
Washington, D.C. 20045

cc & inc: Morton Blackwell (191 EOB)
GJN:emb-45a

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

REGRET

Date

6/6/81

GJN

June 8, 1981

TO: GREGORY NEWELL
FROM: MORTON BLACKWELL

The Vietnam Veterans Foundation wants to meet with the President. It is our suggestion that you write a letter declining such a meeting and suggest that possibly a briefing can be arranged, and that you are forwarding the idea of a briefing to our office.

We have not been able to get a Presidential Proclamation as of yet, but if they have an annual meeting, we have been informed by the Greetings Office that they can get a Proclamation for the group.

Thank you.



VIETNAM VETERANS FOUNDATION

April 29, 1981

Mr. Morton Blackwell
Special Assistant to
The Public Liaison
Room 134
Old Executive Office Building
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Blackwell:

We at the Vietnam Veterans Foundation will appreciate your assistance in obtaining an audience with President Reagan. It is our understanding that, to date, the President has not had an opportunity to meet with a Vietnam Veterans organization.

Veterans in general turned out in great numbers to support President Reagan in his Landslide Victory; the members of the Vietnam Veterans Foundation were very active in the Veterans for Reagan movement.

On behalf of the 9.5 million veterans of the Vietnam era, we wish to discuss two issues with the President:

1. The Vietnam Veterans Recognition Weekend schedule for June 6 and 7, 1981 at Summit Point Raceway, in Summit Point West Virginia (near Harpers Ferry).
2. H.R. 1139, The Veterans Business Loan Act of 1981.

I sent a letter to the President concerning Vietnam Veterans Recognition Weekend on March 27, 1981, (copy enclosed) but have received no response to date.

The Recognition Weekend is however, gaining momentum, to date Senator Robert Byrd has agreed to appear on Sunday June 7 and Governor Rockefeller is providing support at the State level to help give this program the focus it deserves.

As I stated in my letter of March 27, we would appreciate a Presidential Proclamation and some assistance in obtaining a military band. In light of the lack of organization concerning the activity on April 25, we feel an even greater impetus to make the recognition weekend a point of national focus.

2.

Mr. Morton Blackwell
Special Assistant to
The Public Liaison

In the first session of the 97th Congress, Congressman G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery, Chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee introduced H.R. 1139, The Veterans Business Loan Act of 1981.

The Bill was referred to both the Veterans Affairs and the Small Business Committees of the House. The act would provide guaranteed and participation loans up to \$200,000 for eligible businesses owned and operated by disabled and veterans of the Vietnam era. The newly created loan program would be administered by the Veterans Administration with financial institutions providing the funds.

Much of the groundwork for formulating this legislation came about through a series of hearings held last year before the U.S. Senate Committee on small business and the House Veterans Affairs subcommittee on investigations and oversight. The hearings showed that the small business administration was not implementing the provisions of P.L. 92-237 which grants "Special Consideration" to Vietnam veterans in all SBA programs.

As a matter of fact, at a hearing chaired by Congressman Montgomery on March 31, 1981 the SBA disclosed that 85% of all SBA resources had gone for minority and women's programs and that veterans programs were covered in the 15% of SBA resources labeled "Others". When Chairman Montgomery asked for a breakout in terms of numbers of veterans the SBA had provided loans to, SBA said they did not have those statistics.

We at the Vietnam Veterans Foundation think it is a gross injustice that the Vietnam veterans of this nation are being denied their entitlements under PL 92-237.

It is a curious paradox that the SBA has been permitted to ignore PL 92-237 since 1976 when, historically, SBA was created in the post Korean war era to administer business loan programs for veterans.

Mr. Tom Wincek, Chairman of VVF and myself are looking forward to your assistance in arranging a meeting with President Reagan to discuss these issues.

Please join with the Vietnam Veterans Foundation to assure that the Vietnam veterans of this nation do not become forgotten relics of an unpopular war.

Sincerely,

Please send response to:

Jerry E. Yates
c/o The National Press Club
Washington, D.C. 20045

JERRY E. YATES
Director, Communication and
Public Relations

DEMOCRATS

G. V. (SONNY) MONTGOMERY, MISS.
 DON EDWARDS, CALIF.
 GEORGE E. DANIELSON, CALIF.
 JACK BRINKLEY, GA.
 RONALD M. MOTT, OHIO
 ROBERT W. EDGAR, PA.
 SAM B. HALL, JR., TEX.
 DOUGLAS APPELATE, OHIO
 MARVIN LEATH, TEX.
 WILLIAM HILL BONER, TENN.
 RICHARD C. SHELBY, ALA.
 DAN MICA, FLA.
 THOMAS A. DASCHLE, S. DAK.
 BOB STUMP, ARIZ.
 PHIL GRAMM, TEX.
 AUSTIN J. MURPHY, PA.
 BYRON L. DORGAN, N. DAK.

NINETY-SEVENTH CONGRESS

G. V. (SONNY) MONTGOMERY
 CHAIRMAN

U.S. House of Representatives
 COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
 335 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
 Washington, D.C. 20515

REPUBLICANS

JOHN PAUL HAMMERSCHMIDT, ARK.
 MARGARET M. HECKLER, MASS.
 CHALMERS P. WYLIE, OHIO
 ELWOOD HILLIS, IND.
 TENNYSON GUYER, OHIO
 HAROLD E. SAWYER, MICH.
 GERALD B. SOLOMON, N.Y.
 JIM JEFFRIES, KANS.
 BOB MC EWEN, OHIO
 JIM DUNN, MICH.
 CHRIS SMITH, N.J.
 ALBERT LEE SMITH, ALA.
 DENNY SMITH, OREG.

MACK G. FLEMING
 STAFF DIRECTOR AND CHIEF COUNSEL

May 6, 1981

Mr. Morton Blackwell
 Special Assistant to
 The Public Liaison
 Room 134
 Old Executive Office Building
 Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Blackwell:

It is my understanding that Mr. Jerry E. Yates, Director of Communications and Public Relations of the Vietnam Veterans Foundation, has written you concerning the possibility of meeting with the President to discuss matters of concern to Vietnam Era veterans.

I am aware of the President's busy schedule and certainly understand that it would be asking too much to pursue such a meeting. Therefore, if your schedule would permit, I am sure the people involved would be grateful for a few minutes of your time.

Sincerely,

G. V. Montgomery
 G. V. (SONNY) MONTGOMERY
 Chairman

*If you don't have the time
 Don't worry about it.*



JAH

VIETNAM VETERANS FOUNDATION

The President
Ronald W. Reagan
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The Vietnam Veterans Foundation is coordinating a Vietnam Veterans Recognition Weekend on June 6 and 7, 1981 at Summit Point Racetrack in Charlestown, West Virginia.

We are coordinating this overlooked recognition for Vietnam vets through private sector sources and without any Federal funding. We do, however, want the participation of respected national figures such as yourself.

Therefore we are requesting that you issue a Proclamation, proclaiming June 6 and 7 as National Vietnam Veterans Recognition Weekend.

Recognition Weekend activities will include sports car racing, sponsored by the Sports Car Club of America, skydiving exhibitions, a marching band and Country Music, as well as appearances by guest celebrities.

It is our objective to develop this event into a weekend of National Recognition for the 9.5 million men and women who served their country honorably during a time of internal conflict, while others look away. Mr. President, it would be easy for me to make an emotional appeal for your support and participation, but from your record I know you have already articulated most of what we at the Vietnam Veterans Foundation believe in and are working for. I will, however, provide you with some background concerning the efforts of the Foundation.

The Foundation is a national non-profit, tax exempt Vietnam veterans organization dedicated to assisting disabled, and Vietnam era veterans in the area of small business and economic development. In the last two years its programs have helped thousands of Vietnam veterans get "start up" money for new businesses; reintegrated Vietnam veterans into the economic mainstream of our free enterprise system; and

2.

The President
Ronald W. Reagan:

expanded new businesses throughout the United States. The programs and counseling efforts have been sustained by donations from the general public, along with special grants from government agencies; individual donations, and private business.

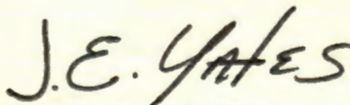
Historically members of the Foundation have testified before select Senate subcommittees concerning the SBA's lack of support for Vietnam veterans in business, served as advisors to the White House Conference on Small Business and were instrumental in getting support for and developing the First Small Business Fair for disabled and Vietnam vets, which ran concurrently with the National Vietnam Veterans week, proclaimed by the President in 1978.

Most recently the Foundation's members were instrumental in drafting H.R. 1139, The Veterans Business Loan Act of 1981, which was introduced in the first session of 97th Congress by Chairman C.V. (Sonny) Montgomery.

As a final note, we could also use your support in obtaining a military band for the event we are sponsoring June 6 and 7.

Mr. President, we look forward to your support and if possible your participation in this overlooked and much deserved recognition for our 9.5 million veterans of the Vietnam era.

Respectfully yours,



JERRY E. YATES
Director, Communication and
Public Relations

PS: Please send response to

Mr. J.E. Yates
c/o The National Press Club
Washington, D.C. 20045

DATE: 4/18/81

TO: Morton Blackwell's Office
128 EOB

-for your attention

FROM: Sharleen Volpe
~~Special Reply~~
Presidential Correspondence
Room 91, Ext. 2278

VIETNAM WAR MEMORIALS

Based on claims made by individuals associated with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF), millions of Americans mistakenly believe that the Washington, D.C. Vietnam Veterans Memorial (VVM) is the first Vietnam memorial. This statement will demonstrate that next of kin of Vietnam War dead long ago created memorials to Vietnam veterans. VVMF officials are aware of this, yet they have distorted the truth and have taken no meaningful steps to stem the tide of misinformation. I hope that this statement will convince members of the media that a grave injustice has occurred and that they have an obligation to correct the impression in the minds of millions of Americans that the VVM is the first Vietnam War memorial. As we approach the Veterans Day dedication of what is, at best, the twenty-fourth Vietnam memorial (see listing enclosed), truth and justice in regard to this matter should be a high media priority.

The VVMF was founded for the primary purpose of raising funds to construct a memorial in Washington, D.C., but, as is shown by the enclosed VVMF handout, it originally had other significant purposes. One of these was to provide moral and financial support for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Chapel (VVMC), which is described in the enclosed information sheet. Jan C. Scruggs, who was to become President of the VVMF, had several telephone conversations with my father, Dr. Victor Westphall, during the formative period of the VVMF. During these conversations, Mr. Scruggs expressed a strong interest in the VVMC and rather explicitly stated an intention to support the VVMC in every way possible. When the VVMF came into being in April of 1979, the goal of assisting the VVMC was incorporated into the VVMF's bylaws as a formally stated purpose. Further evidence of the explicitly stated intention of supporting the VVMC can be found in the enclosed "Stars and Stripes" article authored by Mr. Scruggs, and in the enclosed letter from Senator Charles McC. Mathias to one of the VVMC's supporters. Based upon this and other evidence, we assumed that Mr. Scruggs and his associates had made a sincere and enduring commitment to the VVMC. My parents and I, as founders of the VVMC, soon had the sad and disillusioning experience of realizing our assumptions were not valid.

As the brother of USMC 1/Lt. Victor David Westphall, who was killed in action in Vietnam on 22 May 1968, and as one of few individuals who attained Vietnam veteran status while in possession of a humanitarian deferment based on sole surviving son status, I have been a keen observer of the Vietnam veteran scene. As Vietnam veterans have attempted to achieve respect, unity of purpose and progress in many problem areas, there have been several unfortunate and controversial incidents. No incident commonly known to the public can compare in terms of its callousness, irresponsibility and indefensibility to the abandonment by the VVMF of its formalized purpose of supporting the VVMC and other Vietnam memorials. As a founder of the VVMC and as the brother of a deceased Vietnam veteran, I shall never find justification for forgiving their actions.

There can be no doubt that the VVMF did abandon its original support for the VVMC. We have a file with many examples of misinformed articles and inaccurate advertisements which create the impression that a Vietnam War memorial is finally

being created, that Vietnam veterans are finally being recognized and that a reconciliation can finally begin. The VVMF's goal of reconciliation is a bitter irony given not only the controversy over the VVM design but also considering the facts detailed in this statement. Beyond that, one would get the impression from the VVMF's hype that little has been attempted, that little has been achieved and that some kind of grand victory is at last at hand. The fact is that many hundreds of individuals and dozens of organizations have labored for years to achieve significant progress in many areas through many means (for example, memorials, ceremonies, movies, newspapers, documentaries, legislation, books and art). The VVMF's literature and much reporting about the VVMF tends to ignore this fact.

Some misinformation, such as that found in articles by James J. Kilpatrick and in advertisements by Mobil Oil Corporation, are not totally the responsibility of the VVMF. However, the officials of the VVMF must bear full responsibility for inaccuracies and distortions which emanated directly from them. One egregious example can be found in the enclosed copy of an article from the "San Diego Union." In that article, Mr. Scruggs is quoted as saying "there had been 'no monuments, no testaments, no memorials' to those Americans who had died in Vietnam." Mr. Scruggs was apparently quoting from a lament about Vietnam when he made that statement, but it is quite evident that he was attempting to create the impression that the VVM is the first and only Vietnam War memorial. Certainly he did nothing to acknowledge memorial projects which he is obviously aware of and which have been widely known and highly regarded for years. Such behavior brings shame upon Mr. Scruggs and does great harm to those memorials which were long ago created by the true "Winter Soldiers" of the memorialization movement.

By means of letters written to Mr. Scruggs, Mr. Robert Doubek and Col. Donald Schaet (USMC, retired), I attempted to dissuade them from putting out false information and from abandoning their stated intention of assisting the VVMC. The essence of the response from these gentlemen was that they were merely doing what was in the best interests of the VVMF. It does not take much imagination to realize that they could have protected the interests of the VVMF without abandoning plans for moral and financial support of the VVMC. One of the more absurd responses was that from Mr. Doubek when he claimed that there was no logical validity to my assertion that VVMF support for the VVMC was all the more vital because acceptance of the VVMF project by the government lessened the probability of government assistance to the VVMC. As it turns out, there is reason to believe that a reference in S.J. Res. 119 (the VVMF's enabling legislation) to the VVMC was dropped in the final version because it was assumed that the VVMF would support the VVMC.

Just as surely as any ultimate justice which may be granted to my dead brother and his fallen comrades will not be of this world, any justice which may be granted to those who were wronged by VVMF officials will be in small measure compared to the enormity of the wrong. I do, however, appeal for your assistance in achieving that small measure of justice. Please do not pretend that the VVMF is the first Vietnam memorial, that it is the only "national" Vietnam memorial or that it is somehow the only important Vietnam memorial. Your actions in support of truth and justice will be deeply appreciated.

A LIST OF VIETNAM WAR MEMORIALS

In most instances a specific name, if it exists, is not known, so most memorials on the list are by city and state. Dates of origin are shown for the four memorials which are known to have been started during the Vietnam War. This list is probably not exhaustive. Some memorials include other wars.

Concord, CA
Fresno, CA
La Crescenta, CA (1968)
Redlands, CA Whittier, CA
Oregon, IL
Valley Station, KY (Vietnam National Memorial-1970)
Billerica, MA
Cambridge, MA
Westfield, MA
Flint, MI
Eagle Nest/Angel Fire, NM (Vietnam Veterans Memorial Chapel-1968)
Buffalo, NY
Duncan, OK
Broken Arrow, OK
El Paso, TX
McClellan, TX
Cache County, UT
Montross, VA

Agana, Guam (dedicated to Guamanians who died in Vietnam-1972)

Richmond, VA (apparently State-supported)
District of Columbia (Vietnam Veterans Memorial-1982)
Andersonville, GA (Andersonville National Historic Site--POWs
from all American wars).
Honolulu, HI (Federal World War II memorial which also has a
plaque with names of Vietnam war MIAs on it).

There is also a "missing-man formation" memorial which was shown in conjunction with the "In Search of ..." episode which dealt with the MIA problem, but its location is unknown.

THE VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL HAS RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM PROMINENT AMERICANS

"No matter what we may have thought about the conflict itself, the sacrifice of these young Americans for their country cannot be forgotten. They served with dedication; many served with their lives."

Bob Hope

"I believe the nation has come to the point where the bitter experiences of Vietnam can be confronted, accepted and resolved. This special tribute would be a major contribution towards resolving those differences."

Senator Charles McC. Mathias, Jr.

"It is fitting that such a memorial be erected here in the nation's capital as a symbol of our country's gratitude for the heroic service of the brave men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice to preserve our country's honor and freedom."

Senator Edward Kennedy

"This is a meritorious project which deserves the cooperation of those who believe that those brave servicemen and women who answered the nation's call did it with pride and honor. It was an unpopular war but those who served should not be forgotten."

Baltasar Corrada, Resident
Commissioner, Puerto Rico

"A memorial . . . would commemorate those who gave their lives for this country in combat and it would focus attention on the readjustment problems . . . of many of the veterans who have returned from Vietnam."

Senator Larry Pressler

"The construction of this memorial will serve not only as a remembrance of these people who lost their lives; but also as a focal point for all the American people, regardless of their ideological persuasion regarding the war, for remembering the tragedies wrought by this conflict, the lessons taught us thereby."

Senator Dennis DeConcini



*Just as we were divided by the war,
let us now be united in
acknowledging those who made the
ultimate sacrifice and all who
served in the Vietnam Conflict.*



**VIETNAM VETERANS
MEMORIAL FUND, INC.®**

P.O. Box 37240, Washington, D.C. 20013



**VIETNAM VETERANS
MEMORIAL FUND, INC.®**

P.O. Box 37240, Washington, D.C. 20013

VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL FUND

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Inc. was incorporated as a nonprofit, charitable organization on April 27, 1979 in Washington, D.C. The organization was founded for the purpose of erecting a permanent national memorial to those Americans who served in Vietnam and particularly those who gave their lives. The memorial will be erected in the nation's capital through private donations. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Inc. does not plan a perpetual existence. Once the memorial itself has been built and its maintenance provided in perpetuity, the organization will cease to exist. The Internal Revenue Service has ruled that the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Inc. is tax exempt. All contributions may be deducted from the contributor's federal income tax.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Inc. welcomes contributions from any person or organization supporting our purposes. We cannot, however, authorize any organization to raise funds on our behalf without our express written consent. If your organization desires to raise funds on behalf of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, please provide us with details of your plan.

Receipt, deposit and accounting of all contributions to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund is the exclusive responsibility of the Riggs National Bank, Washington, D.C.

OUR PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES

- To erect a permanent national memorial in honor of the Americans who gave their lives in the Vietnam War and to all who served.
- To provide a symbol of national unity and reconciliation. Through support of the memorial, Americans of all political beliefs and opinions regarding U.S. policy in Vietnam can express their acknowledgment of the sacrifice of those who served there.
- To assist the Vietnam Veterans Peace and Brotherhood Chapel in Eagle Nest, New Mexico. (See box below for further details).
- To assist in the construction of other memorials to Vietnam veterans by acting as a clearinghouse for information on memorial efforts.

THE VIETNAM VETERANS PEACE AND BROTHERHOOD CHAPEL IN EAGLE NEST, NEW MEXICO

In 1968, an historian in New Mexico, Dr. Victor Westphall, began construction on the Vietnam Veterans Peace and Brotherhood Chapel after his son was killed while serving as a Marine lieutenant in Vietnam. The vast, wing-shaped structure rises to a height of nearly fifty feet and is dedicated to all who served, but especially to those who gave their lives in the war. Dr. Westphall has now spent over a decade and tens of thousands of dollars to construct this graceful memorial. Inside there is a pictorial display of American servicemen who were killed in

the war. Parents have driven across the country to deliver a photograph of their sons who died in Vietnam for display in the Chapel. Previous legislative attempts by Senator Pete Domenici of New Mexico to have the Chapel made a part of the National Park System have failed. Senators Domenici (R-N.M.), Hart (D-Colo.), and Warner (R-Va.) have sponsored legislation (S. 1431) to have the Chapel accepted as a national monument. We plan a substantial contribution to the completion of the Vietnam Veterans Peace and Brotherhood Chapel.

Just as the Vietnam war was unique in the way it was fought—so, too, has been our country's treatment of those who served in that war. The psychological pressures of Vietnam combat were enormous for our youngest-ever corps of veterans. Adding to that, many of us who served were scorned upon coming home.

Yet Vietnam was a war of both guns and butter, and although there was great domestic turmoil, our economy was booming, unemployment was low, and there were no scarcities of gasoline or food. Yet over 57,000 families lost a son in that struggle, and more than 300,000 Americans were wounded in a war with the highest rate of amputations and paralysis of any conflict in history.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund was formed for what may appear to be rather limited purposes. We intend to build a Vietnam veterans memorial here in Washington, and to aid the financially troubled Vietnam Veterans Peace and Brotherhood Chapel in Eagle Nest, N.M., and other Vietnam memorial efforts now going on across the country.

However, there is an issue here of perhaps greater significance—the reconciliation of our country after Vietnam. Thus far, anything associated with the war has tended only to resurface the bitter divisions inherent to that conflict. This memorial effort can be supported by everyone regardless of the ideological viewpoint on the war. The theme of the memorial planned for Washington is the simple one of recognition of the sacrifices made by those who fought in

Vietnam. It will make no political statement about the war.

I served in Vietnam with an Army infantry company in which half of the men were killed or wounded in the year that I was there. The vast majority of these men were draftees. During the taxi ride to the San Francisco airport on the way home, a group of people my age made obscene gestures at us. This was not an uncommon welcome home.

A couple of years ago, I presented testimony before a Senate committee on the psychological effects of Vietnam combat. My research found that the majority of those who saw heavy combat continue to dream of the war. These veterans had the highest divorce rates, were significantly more politically alienated and had low faith in man's nature. Anti-war veterans had significantly lower self-esteem. Veterans from

minority groups were especially badly affected. Only one black combat veteran in my sample felt that his service in the war did not cause him psychological difficulties.

What has been missing for the Vietnam veteran is a societal acknowledgment of those who served. The planned memorial to those who died and served in Vietnam will be built through private contributions from the American people. Thus the generations which follow us will have a permanent reminder of how much a nation, however belatedly, cared for its sons and daughters who served during a most difficult and dangerous time.

Jan Scruggs, President
Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund

CONCEPT OF THE MEMORIAL

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund will finance establishment of a tasteful, attractive and significant memorial. Architects, sculptors, landscape architects and others involved will prepare a final design of the memorial when a site is designated.

The concept for the memorial has eight basic elements that are intended to serve as guides for the artists in their creative work.

1. The display of the names of all 57,414 American war dead.
2. Sculpture intended to symbolize the experience of Americans who served in Vietnam.
3. Artistic integrity of design, components and material.
4. A landscaped memorial in harmony with its surroundings.
5. A spacious garden setting which is inviting to passersby.
6. Sufficient size to accommodate such a setting: about two acres.
7. A carillon or other system of bells or chimes to create an aural effect
8. Good taste.



VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL CHAPEL

- Location:** Between Eagle Nest and Angel Fire, New Mexico in the Moreno Valley at 8,700' elevation. U.S. Highway 64 is the major access route. Taos is 25 miles to the west, 13,161' high Wheeler Peak is 10 miles northwest.
- Founded:** September 1968, following the combat death of 1/Lt. Victor David Westphall, USMC on 22 May 1968. Founders were Dr. and Mrs. Victor Westphall and surviving son Walter D. Westphall.
- Purpose:** Commemoration of all Vietnam veterans--the living, the dead, and the maimed in body and spirit.
- Description:** The vast, gull-like structure rises above the hill on which it is perched to a height of nearly 50 feet, and has graceful, inward-curving walls sweeping down from twin center pinnacles. The west wall is slightly the larger, and is a quarter-circle arc formed from a circle with a radius of 99 feet. Both walls flow majestically down from their commanding height so that they recede into the earth. A third inward curving wall completes the structure. The exterior wall surfaces have an area of about 5,500 sq. ft. The interior surface of the rear wall serves as a display area for photographs of deceased Vietnam veterans. The relatively petite interior, which has a shape which is defined by the curvature of the exterior walls and the roof, will eventually house a Vietnam veteran sculpture to be created by Vietnam veteran Michael Boyett. A high quality stereo tape system provides interior and exterior music. Outside lighting for nighttime illumination consists of four 1,000 watt floodlights.
- Financial Data:** The Memorial structure and equipment cost approximately \$60,000. Additional expenditures for all other purposes over 14 years have totaled about \$160,000. If Westphall family members had not provided thousands of hours of volunteer labor, costs would have been at least double actual expenditures. Funds have come principally from public contributions, Westphall family donations and \$60,000 provided by the Disabled American Veterans.
- Publicity:** LIFE Magazine, Parade Magazine, NEA and AP feature stories, Los Angeles Times and numerous other publications. Real People (November 1981 and May 1982), Belgian National Broadcasting System, CBS Evening News (Charles Osgood and Jonathan Ward) and numerous other regional and national broadcasts. A feature story on PM Magazine is scheduled for November 11, 1982.*
- Activities:** Open for the public at all hours throughout the year. Commemorative ceremony and Volksmarch held on Memorial Days. New Mexico National Guard personnel and equipment are a regular feature of ceremonies.
- Address:** Box 377
Eagle Nest, NM 87718
- * optional feature; local station may use on 11/8, 9, 10, 11 or 12.*

← Pix

... Vietnam Veterans Peace and Brotherhood Chapel, Eagle Nest, N.M., will receive financial assistance for the next ten years as the result of a special \$100,000 fund established by national officers of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Cincinnati, Oh. The interdenominational chapel was built by Dr. Victor Westphal, Springer, N.J., with personal financial economy of his son, David, and all other U.S. servicemen killed in the Vietnam conflict.

By Jan Scruggs
[Special to The Stars and Stripes]

In August of 1968, a Marine Corps Lieutenant died alongside twelve other young American Marines when they were ambushed in Vietnam. The Victor Westphal, a historian and author, was the father of the young officer.

A few months later, this grieving parent alone began construction on what some call one of the most beautiful buildings in North America—the Vietnam Veterans Peace and Brotherhood Chapel in Eagle Nest, New Mexico. For over a decade Dr. Westphal invested tens of thousands of dollars and has put one quarter million miles on his cars in order to build a visible reminder of the most tragic consequence of war—the loss of loved ones. Presently the Disabled American Veterans provide most of the Chapel's support.

The vast wing-like structure rises to a height of nearly fifty feet. Inside, there is a display of pictures of American servicemen who made the ultimate sacrifice in our nation's most controversial war. About half of the photographs have been delivered by parents who have driven from all over the United States. Senator Domenici of New Mexico introduced a bill to have this historical monument made into part of the National Park System. Much to his dismay, as well as being considered as well by many to Vietnam veterans. The National Park Sys-

tem Advisory Board rigidly rejected Dr. Westphal's gift to America as they did not view it as being of historical significance.

On April 27, 1979, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Inc., a non-profit and non-partisan organization, was incorporated in Washington, D.C. The organization has three purposes: to create, through private contributions, a memorial in the nation's capital to those who died and who served in Vietnam, to provide funds to complete the Vietnam Veterans Peace and Brotherhood Chapel; and to contribute to other memorials to Vietnam War casualties and veterans in other locations. The Memorial Fund will dissolve at such time as a memorial to American's Vietnam War casualties and returnees is built in Washington, D.C. through private contributions.

Our success—building a memorial to American war casualties and veterans—will be a historical first. Yet there is something here of perhaps greater significance to our society as a whole. The Vietnam era was the most turbulent and divisive in recent American history. Thus far, there has been nothing associated with the war that has been able to achieve a sense of reconciliation among those who favored and those who opposed the U.S. involvement in Indochina.

We have created the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund to provide a project that can perhaps

ability of the U.S. These young people grow up attempting to find their place in a culture that is unable and unwilling to assimilate them. They live in poverty and are considered by most of their countrymen to exist outside the mainstream of that society."

The bill would allow them to apply for immigration as unaccompanied sons or daughters of U.S. citizens (first preference) or as married sons or daughters of U.S. citizens (fourth preference).

McKinney's bill would also provide a system to confirm U.S. parentage by establishing a board comprised of appropriate State Department and Immigration and Naturalization Service officials to review Amerasian applications.

In a speech on the House floor, McKinney said, "Children of this second class citizenry suffer emotionally due to the treatment in-

provide a focal point for the reconciliation and reunification of the country which is still needed after the divisive Vietnam Conflict. Further, this project will serve to increase the awareness of the present needs of Vietnam veterans.

We are hoping that all veterans organizations will assist us in our effort. We hope to raise at least \$1,000,000 for a memorial in Washington, with the name of each serviceman killed in Vietnam inscribed in gold leaf. We also intend to raise \$100,000 for the Vietnam Veterans Chapel. If only one-tenth of those who actually served in Vietnam contribute 15, we will have enough funds. We want any organization who assists us with soliciting funds to be involved in policy decisions and to serve on the Board of Directors, if desired. Further, we want the funds to be obtained solely through individual contributions. Having the American people finance this memorial will be ineffect, a delayed victory parade; a societal acknowledgement of Vietnam veterans.

as a laborer and val in the U.S. The most serious financial obligation would be equal to 17.5% of the U.S. Census Bureau's poverty threshold or \$4,237 per year.

In endeavoring to establish Amerasian status, McKinney suggested the board his bill authorizes be instructed to use every form of documentation available. In some cases, a birth certificate or baptismal record may exist but in most instances, photographs, letters, proof of past financial support from a U.S. father or other pertinent evidence may be utilized.

So Good

If you lose your Social Security card, contact any Social Security office. The people there will get you a new card.

There is presently a good deal of interest in Vietnam veterans because of Hollywood's recent epics. Yet this interest may be no different than the way a child feels after a visit to the circus—he is fascinated, but soon his interest is gone. Our intention is to use the interest in the Vietnam era constructively. This project has positive implications for Vietnam veterans, to our society, and, ultimately, to history. Just as our country was divided by the war, let us now be united to acknowledge those who made the ultimate sacrifice and to all who served in the Vietnam Conflict. Through the success of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, the generations that follow us shall have a permanent reminder of how much the people of America cared for its sons and daughters who served in difficult times.

Contributions may be sent to: Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Inc., P.O. Box 50926, Washington, DC 20094. Tax-exempt and tax-deductible status have been applied for.

STARS AND STRIPES
6-14-79

JOHN C. STENNIS, MISS.
ROBERT C. BYRD, W. VA.
WILLIAM PROXMIRE, WIS.
DANIEL K. INOUE, HAWAII
ERNEST F. HOLLINGS, S.C.
BRUCE BAYN, IND.
THOMAS F. BASSETT, MO.
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DALE BUMPERS, ARK.
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JAMES A. MC CLURE, IDAHO
PAUL LAXALT, NEV.
JAKE GARN, UTAH
HARRISON SCHMITT, N. MEX.

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

January 22, 1980

San Leandro, California 94577

Dear Mr. _____ :

Thank you for your recent letter regarding Memorials planned in honor of those who served in Vietnam. I appreciate your specific interest in the Memorial currently being erected in New Mexico.

The legislation which I introduced, S.J. Res. 119, authorizes the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund to construct a Memorial in Washington, D.C., in honor of those who served in the Vietnam War. The Memorial will be financed through public subscription.

The Vietnam Veterans Fund's main mission is to raise money for this memorial. This is not the only goal of the Fund, however. Another purpose is to assist the Vietnam Veterans Peace and Brotherhood Chapel in Eagle Nest, New Mexico. They plan a substantial contribution to the completion of this chapel. I, therefore, suggest that you contact Mr. Robert Doubek directly and convey your views to him. He can be reached at 202-659-1151.

Needless to say, any Memorial in honor of our Vietnam Veterans provides a long-overdue acknowledgement by the American people of the sacrifice and service of Vietnam Veterans. They will contribute greatly toward resolving the real and continuing divisions in our society as a result of the war.

I am enclosing a copy of the brochure on the Vietnam Veterans Fund, Inc., for your benefit.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

Charles McC. Mathias, Jr.
Charles McC. Mathias, Jr.
United States Senator

CM:mhc
Enclosure

Work Starts On Viet War Memorial

New York Times News Service

WASHINGTON — A group of Vietnam veterans, some of them weeping, turned shovelfuls of earth yesterday to start construction of a black granite memorial to honor those who died in the divisive war.

"Let this memorial begin the healing process and forever stand as a symbol" of national unity, Jan Scruggs, an infantryman in the war and founder of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, told a crowd of about 2,000 at the muddy site between the Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial.

His voice cracking, Scruggs said there had been "no monuments, no testaments, no memorials" to those Americans who had died in Vietnam.

Gov. Charles Robb of Virginia, a Marine officer in the war, recalled that 23 men in his company died, "two of them literally in my arms." He said the families of the men "have asked me the whys and hows" of their deaths.

"I'm not sure of the 'whys,'" Robb said slowly. "But this monument does say we care and we remember. And that's terribly important."

The memorial, which has stirred some controversy, will be erected on a two-acre site at the west end of the Mall. Consisting of two 200-foot-long walls that meet at an angle, the extraordinarily simple memorial will include the names of the 57,692 Americans killed in Vietnam from 1963 to 1973.

The memorial itself was designed by Maya Yang Lin, an architectural student at Yale.

In recent months, the memorial, which will cost \$7 million, has drawn criticism from some veterans and members of Congress who criticized the design as a "tombstone," that failed to take into account the valor and patriotism of the dead. A compromise was announced Wednesday by Scruggs and Sen. John Warner, R-Va. Warner was a key legislative backer of the memorial.

Warner said that a flag pole would be placed atop the apex of the two walls and will carry a plaque reading: "A gift from the veterans of Vietnam to the people of the United States of America." A statue, placed in front of the walls, will be "a strong, commanding figure symbolizing all who served in Vietnam," according to Warner and Scruggs.

In addition, the memorial will now have several inscriptions. One of them will read: "We are honored to have had the opportunity to serve our country under difficult circumstances ... God bless America!" These words were spoken by Jeremiah Denton, now a Republican senator from Alabama, when he returned to the United States after more than seven years as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam.

Walter D. Westphall
Cherokee Bldg., Suite 209
Box 25425
Oklahoma City, OK 73125



President Ronald W. Reagan
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

WHITE HOUSE MAIL

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