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THE WHITE HOUSE
Washington

November 3, 1981

MEETING WITH VIETNAM VETERANS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

DATE: November 10, 1981

LOCATION: Cabinet Room

TIME: 11:45 A.M.

FROM: Elizabeth Dole

I. PURPOSE

To stimulate public notice of the emerging leadership role of the nation's Vietnam veterans.

II. BACKGROUND

The vast majority of the veterans of the country's most recent war have re-adjusted well and now are assuming leadership roles throughout the society. These successful veterans are stepping forward as volunteers to help their fellow veterans who still face lingering problems associated with their service in the Vietnam war. Administered by ACTION, the program is an important new thread in the fabric of veterans services — but it is only one thread in the fabric and this administration is committed to maintaining and improving the services Vietnam veterans earned by serving their nation in most dangerous and difficult circumstances.

III. PARTICIPANTS

31 prominent Vietnam veterans and others associated with the program.
(List attached.)

IV. PRESS PLAN

To generate nationwide coverage of the program on Veterans Day with full White House press coverage. Expect follow-on stories will be generated for coverage in cities where programs have already been established.

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

President and Tom Pauken briefly address the White House press. Photos taken; President separately with local chairmen; group shots. Press exits. President exchanges remarks with participants. As President exits he again briefly addresses the press outside. (see Talking Points.)

III. PARTICIPANTS

All are Vietnam combat veterans.

Sam Bartholomew: Chairman, Tennessee VVLP; attorney, former Legislative Assistant to Senator Howard Baker, West Point Distinguished cadet, patrolled Cambodian border with 4th Calvary.

Francis Guest: Volunteer, Tennessee VVLP; Administrator, Tennessee GSA, Air Force in-country veteran.

John Baines: Chairman, San Antonio VVLP; international commercial real estate developer, U.S. Navy Seabee built the longest bridge in Vietnam at the time.

Bill Stensland: Program Director, San Antonio VVLP; highly decorated, wounded twice while serving two tours as Marine officer.

Mark Treanor: Chairman, Baltimore VVLP; attorney, Annapolis graduate, Marine rifle platoon commander with 1st Marine Division.

David DeChant: Program Director, Baltimore VVLP; restaurant manager, Marine scout, spent a total of 31 months in Vietnam.

Kip Becker, Ph.D.: Chairman, Wilmington VVLP; Assistant Dean, Wilmington College, U.S. Army gunship pilot.

Wayne Hanby: Program Director, Wilmington VVLP; former Justice of the Peace, Marine rifleman retired from wounds received.

David Huffman: Program Advisor, Wilmington VVLP; blinded in Vietnam as Marine rifleman, first blind graduate of Delaware Law School.

Chuck O'Brien: Chairman, Philadelphia VVLP; attorney, first of group of disabled persons to top Mt. Rainier last summer, Army platoon leader wounded on Cambodian border and lost part of his leg.

Jim McCloskey: Program Director, Philadelphia VVLP; economist, was U.S. Army advisor to South Vietnamese.

Jim Webb: Advisor to VVLP; author of the best-selling FIELDS OF FIRE and A SENSE OF HONOR, Marine platoon commander, Navy cross.

Luis Sanz, M.D.: Advisor to VVLP; Georgetown University faculty member, was Army combat medic.

Jock Nash: Volunteer, VVLP; Chief Counsel and Staff Director, Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Senate Committee on Judiciary Committee, infantry platoon commander in Vietnam.

Bob Searby: Volunteer, VVLP; Deputy Undersecretary of Labor, International Affairs, was with 101st Airborne in Vietnam.

Max Patterson: Volunteer, WVLP; Chief of Police, Windsor, Ct.

Tom Pauken: Director, ACTION; enlisted in Army, served one tour in-country as Intelligence Officer.

Jack Wheeler: Director, WVLP; co-founder Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, attorney, author of THE WOUNDED GENERATION, West Point graduate, Captain in Vietnam

Ed Timperlake: Deputy Director, WVLP; Naval Academy graduate, Marine F-4 pilot, *based in Nam Phong Thailand "The Rose Crusader"*

Bill Jayne: Deputy Director, WVLP; Marine rifleman, wounded at Khe Sanh during Tet offensive of 1968, author of "Immigrants from the Combat Zone" appearing in THE WOUNDED GENERATION.

Hon. John P. Murtha: Congressman, Korean veteran who reenlisted to serve in Vietnam.

Charles Hagel: Deputy Administrator Designate, Veterans Administration; squad leader in Vietnam, was wounded twice, served with his brother in the same squad, his brother was wounded three times.

John McCain: Advisor, WVLP; prisoner of war 1967-73, now V.P. of Hensley Company, Phoenix

Dick Kolb: Volunteer, WVLP; *Petroleum Exploration Analyst* ~~Oil Scout~~ for Tenneco Corp.; *radio operator with 101st* *Abn. Div. in Vietnam.* ^

Rick Eilert: Volunteer, Chicago WVLP; Marine rifleman, retired by reason of wounds, author of two unpublished novels.

~~Pat Hagerty:~~

~~George Skypack:~~

Jim Har^{td}gan: *Arizona state legislator; Vietnam combat veteran.*

~~add states~~

Special Guests

Hon. Thomas Loeffler: Congressman, strong supporter of WVLP, responsible for San Antonio WVLP.

Hon. Robert P. Nimmo: Administrator, Veterans Administration

Winnie Pizzano: Deputy Director, ACTION

Marcia Landau: Communications Director, WVLP

SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS FOR MEETING WITH
VIETNAM VETERANS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

I. To VWLP Participants

- Appreciation for your service to the nation.
- Appreciation for your voluntary support of the program.
- Your sense of responsibility is admirable and indicative of the best American traditions of community spirit.
- How can I help you?

II. To the Press

- Vietnam veterans deserve high praise and the support of their communities for having served in a difficult and divisive war.
- The country and the administration support efforts to solve the lingering problems facing Vietnam veterans.
- While these problems are real, it must be recognized that the stereotype of the Vietnam veteran as a loser is wrong, and indeed, most harms those who do face real problems.
- IT IS APPROPRIATE THAT ON THE EVE OF VETERANS DAY 1981 WE MEET TO DISCUSS UTILIZING THE LEADERSHIP SKILLS OF VIETNAM VETERANS.
- VIETNAM VETERANS ARE WINNERS AND THESE PEOPLE ARE OUTSTANDING EXAMPLES OF THAT FACT!

8 Vietnam Vets Who Came Out Winners

They've succeeded despite great adversity—blindness, crippling wounds, deep public hostility. Now they help less fortunate war buddies make it.

No other veterans in U.S. history have endured the kind of hostility that confronted the GI's who came home from Vietnam, yet most have slipped into the mainstream of American society and today lead productive lives.

The passage has not been easy, and thousands more are still struggling to find their way. But the picture is changing significantly. What is happening is that large numbers of successful vets, those who have found their niche, are assisting in a widening effort to help others do the same.

All across the country these Vietnam veterans are banding together in a variety of groups to give aid and comfort to one another. At least 24 such organizations have sprung up, including one—the Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program—launched by the federal government.

In many of the programs, vets offer practical advice about how to get jobs and start businesses. In some, disabled ex-servicemen work with others handicapped by war wounds. All are equally intent on blasting the stereotype of the Vietnam veteran as a person with deep emotional problems.

"The time has come for the public to be made aware that many of us are much more successful socially, politically and economically than the derelict so often stereotyped by the media," comments William C. Stensland, a former marine who heads a veterans' program in Texas.

"It is very important to recognize that more than 80 percent of the Vietnam veterans, even with enormous difficulties, have come home and made the successful transition to civilian life," asserts Thomas W. Pauken, an Army veteran who heads the federal ACTION program. "I have

been distressed to see veterans portrayed as losers, fools or dope addicts."

Among the hundreds of thousands of successful veterans are these eight who now are working to help their less fortunate Vietnam War comrades find their place in America—

Helping Others "Good for Me"

John D. Baines was at loose ends when he arrived home after two tours in Vietnam as an officer in the Navy Seabees. Today he is a pillar of the San Antonio establishment, owner of a real-estate-development firm with an annual business volume of more than 25 million dollars.

"People were very rude to us, very antimilitary," says Baines of his unsettling return to Texas in 1970. "There was no one to talk to about it. I was bitter. My reaction to those long-haired hippies was abrasive."

Baines, who played football at the University of Texas until sidelined by injuries, returned to college after his discharge from the Navy. He did not stay long. "I just couldn't concentrate on my studies," he says.

After picking up the pieces of his life, Vietnam veteran John D. Baines found success as a real-estate developer.



"After four years it was hard to get back in the groove again."

Baines, now 36, quit college, then worked for construction and real-estate-brokerage interests in Texas. Ten years ago he opened his own business.

He feels that the image of the Vietnam veteran as a drug addict and criminal has made it difficult for many to win acceptance in civilian life. Especially harmful, says Baines, were reports that 60,000 or more veterans wound up in state prisons.

"They are talking about Vietnam-era veterans," says Baines. "Era is the key word. Only 13,000 are Vietnam War veterans, out of 2½ million who served in Vietnam. That is less than half of 1 percent. Not much."

Baines recently began helping out in the Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program, a federal project that got under way in six cities last year and is being financed for three years with a modest 6 million dollars in federal funds. The goal is for the program to expand to 50 cities by 1984, when it is to become privately operated and financed.

So far, says Baines, his value to other veterans has been mainly as a sounding board. "We get together, and it does a lot of good for guys to get things off their chests," says the ex-Navy man. "I can immediately relate to them. It's going to do a lot of good for me, too."

"I'm Glad I Served"

John F. Nash, Jr., 35, doubts that he would have wound up as a key congressional aide if the war had not intervened in his life.

"I turned over a new leaf in the Marine Corps," says the former platoon commander. "I hadn't been living up to my family's expectations, and life had been easy—sort of Camelot. It wasn't until the Marines that I realized we have a meritocracy society. A glib tongue isn't enough. I went back to school with a vengeance."

Nash, chief counsel of the Senate's Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, went to Vietnam with reservations about the war but came back convinced he had done the right thing. "I'm so glad I served," he says. "I came back, and my conscience is clean."

But his stint in Vietnam earned him heavy criticism from some quarters. At one school where Nash tried to enroll, he recalls, "an assistant dean of admissions told me, 'We are not really partial to hired killers here.'"

Nash graduated from another school, the University of California, and then entered Georgetown University's Law School. While studying in Washington, he was offered a part-time job with Senator Paul Laxalt (R-Nev.), who later



Capitol Hill staffer John F. Nash, a former Marine lieutenant, now listens to troubles of other vets.

arranged for the subcommittee job.

In his spare time, Nash counsels Washington-area veterans on their troubles. He is hopeful that enough successful veterans will catch the spirit to make a difference. "Anybody who waits for the federal government to improve his lot is going to have a long wait," says Nash.

"We Feel Estranged"

Richard Eilert, director of a veterans' project in Chicago, knows what it is to need a helping hand. Severely wounded in Vietnam, he has undergone 37 major operations in 13 years.

Eilert, 34, was a Marine enlisted man when a grenade blast ripped off most of his left leg, shattered his right one, broke both arms and caused other injuries. As he lay wounded, a North Vietnamese soldier shot him in the leg.

Once Eilert was up and about, he says, many people treated him with a puzzling indifference. "I found everything changed," says Eilert. "I couldn't get a date. Friends were not unfriendly—just cool."

He tried twice to return to college but quit because he felt out of place. "I always felt they were looking at me like I was John Wayne with cartridge belts hanging all over me," recalls Eilert. "There was no one to talk to."

Eilert eventually went to work for the Union Oil Company in California and wrote a book—soon to be published, he says—about his hospital experiences. He took over last year as director of the Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program in Chicago.

The program, he says, is vital to Vietnam vets because, for the first time, it

gives them a place where they can discuss among themselves the feelings of alienation and disappointment that many have.

"Most Vietnam veterans don't belong to any organization," explains Eilert. "We feel estranged. I got tired of going to an American Legion club, for example, and getting bawled out at the bar for losing the war and for not knowing what combat really is."

Scaling the Heights

Charles O'Brien, who lost a leg in Vietnam, was once cautioned not to try college because amputees have trouble climbing stairs. Last summer, the former Army Ranger was among eight handicapped persons who scaled the heights of Mount Rainier.

The Philadelphia lawyer's aim in the climb, hard enough for someone with both legs, was to demonstrate the worth of injured veterans and other disabled persons. It would, he

thought, help build confidence and self-esteem.

O'Brien, 35, accepts no limitations as a result of his own injury. He has even learned to ski again. "I'm an amputee, and often that troubles me," he says. "It is hard to walk on an artificial leg, and yet I had to because I couldn't ask for sympathy. I couldn't allow my disability to interfere."

O'Brien, who says his younger broth-



Loss of a leg in Vietnam did not keep Charles O'Brien from a career in law—or from climbing Mount Rainier.



er performed alternative service as a conscientious objector during the war, feels too many who served in Vietnam have wasted time feeling sorry for themselves. "They nurtured each other's bitterness," he says. "I hate to call it self-pity, but that's what it was."

He concedes, however, that the public failed to give Vietnam veterans the measure of understanding and gratitude they had a right to expect from their countrymen.

In his own case, says O'Brien, some friends and acquaintances ended up feeling threatened by his war experience. "There was a degree of hostility because I hadn't taken the easy way out," he recalls. "So it was kind of an embarrassment to them."

O'Brien now does volunteer counseling in a veterans' program in Philadelphia. Through such efforts, he says, "we hope to help get jobs, help them start small businesses. That's what is needed."

Straight Talk About Veterans

Street-level experience has taught Max Patterson that his fellow Vietnam veterans are no likelier to end up in jail than anyone else.

Patterson, 37, is police chief in Windsor, Conn., the only black ever to hold the post. Before that he was chief in Albion, Mich., and a campus policeman at Michigan State University.

The Vietnam veteran, says Patterson, is no special threat to society. But what is a problem, he argues, are public attitudes toward those who fought in the conflict. "People think veterans carry the guilt for the war rather than the government," says the former Army intelligence officer.

"I would be very hesitant to say the war, the year's experience in Vietnam, did anyone in," commented Patterson. "They would have been on that track before they ever went over there."

"Twelve months' negative experience in Vietnam was the final thrust that pushed them over."

In this, Patterson is supported by major studies that show little basis for the perception of Vietnam vets as troubled individuals unable to fit into society. One federal survey finds fewer than 5 percent of all state-prison inmates ever served in Indo-China. Still another survey indicates that 90 percent of vets 25 and older are employed. What's more, those who went to Vietnam are making more use of federal education benefits than have the veterans of earlier wars.



MAGGIE STEBER



Police Chief Max Patterson feels fellow vets have been wrongly stigmatized.

Patterson himself came out of Vietnam determined to improve himself. A college dropout before joining the Army, the Detroit native worked his way through Michigan State after his discharge, earning a degree in political science.

Now that he has settled into the job in Windsor, he is helping out in Vietnam veterans' groups. "I look at it from the standpoint of receiving a request to help someone like an old fraternity brother," says Patterson. "If there's something I can do, I am willing to make the effort."

Dropout With a Doctorate

There was a time, says Kip Becker, when he tried to hide from potential employers that he had piloted an Army combat helicopter in Vietnam.

Becker, 34, believes that most employers do not identify with the veterans of Vietnam the way they did with soldiers who fought in other wars. Thus, he reports, "I kept Vietnam off my résumé at first, and it kind of hurt to do that."

Now marketing-and-development director at Wilmington College in Delaware, Becker wants to see the day when all Vietnam veterans can do as he did and "get out of the closet." That is one of his goals as a volunteer worker in a veterans' group in Wilmington.

"I am not a joiner, but what I like about this program is that the people involved are able to get along," reports Becker.

He makes the point that "this organization cares about the ideas of veterans, what they have to say and what they need."

Becker, a college dropout before joining the Army, earned two master's degrees and a doctorate after his discharge from the service.

"In flight school and then Vietnam, I learned discipline," says Becker. "I learned that anyone has the intelligence to get where they want to go. I learned to persevere, and Vietnam fo-

cused me in a direction. It gave me the feeling that I could do it."

Winning Over Blindness

Blinded by a booby trap and with little formal education, David L. Huffman found life especially hard after his tour in Vietnam as a Marine rifleman.

"When I first came back I was kind of wild," relates Huffman, 33, whose youth included eight years in an orphanage. "In 1970 I was in a car accident and broke both shoulders and my spine. I was two months flat on my back and another two months in a brace. I floundered for a couple of years, looking for unskilled employment, but I couldn't nail things down."

Huffman's salvation turned out to be the source of much of his childhood misery—school. After learning Braille, he completed high school, then earned two undergraduate degrees and a law degree from the Delaware Law School. He would like to carve out a career in international law.

Once the bar examinations are behind Huffman, he intends to devote most of his spare time to helping other disabled vets—and to working toward a black belt in judo.

"I Want to Help Others"

Luis Sanz, a Cuban refugee, paid for his U.S. citizenship the hard way—with an 11-month stint as an Army combat medic in Vietnam.

Sanz, now 37, returned from Vietnam proud of what he had done for his adopted homeland. That's why he was shocked to find not all Americans were as pleased.

"Those were the years of antiwar demonstrations," says Sanz, who is today a faculty member at Georgetown University's Medical School.

"It was very frustrating for me. I kept very quiet about my service in Vietnam," he admits.

Although Sanz knew only a smattering of English when he returned to America, he zipped through college in three years, graduating at the top of his class, and then earned a medical degree at Georgetown University.

The unrelenting grind of medical school, says Sanz, plus his determination to do well, kept him from feeling the isolation that has troubled other Vietnam vets. "All I did was read and study," he says. "I put all my energies into my books."

"I'm not in the dumps," asserts Sanz. "I never was. I need no help, but I want to help others. That is the main point, getting people together, making contact with other veterans and helping them." □

By WENDELL S. MERICK



Luis Sanz, now a medical professor, wants to help other veterans achieve their goals.



Blackwell

*Bill
Jayne
254-8270*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON
November 9, 1981

file

MEETING WITH VIETNAM VETERANS
LEADERSHIP PROGRAM REPRESENTATIVES

DATE: NOVEMBER 10, 1981
LOCATION: ROSE GARDEN
TIME: 11:45 a.m. - 12:00 noon

FROM: ELIZABETH H. DOLE *EHD*

I. PURPOSE

To increase public awareness of the emerging leadership role of the nation's Vietnam veterans through recognition of the new Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program (VVLP).

II. BACKGROUND

The vast majority of Vietnam veterans have readjusted into the mainstream and are now moving into leadership roles throughout society. The leaders before you are successful veterans who are stepping forward as volunteers to help their fellow veterans who still face lingering problems associated with their service in Vietnam. Administered by ACTION, this new Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program is an important new thread in the support fabric of the veterans' services. In June, you approved the unanimous recommendation of the Human Resources Cabinet Council and instituted the VVLP. Following your remarks, Tom Pauken will introduce you to each of the Vietnam veteran volunteers (31), who will be assembled in the Rose Garden. The veterans plan to use photos of these handshakes to promote the program at the community level.

III. PARTICIPANTS: Elizabeth H. Dole; Tom Pauken, Morton Blackwell; and a group of 31 prominent Vietnam veterans and others associated with the program (list attached).

IV. PRESS PLAN: Full press coverage.

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS:

- 11:44 a.m. Welcoming remarks by Elizabeth Dole.
- 11:45 a.m. Upon announcement, you depart Oval Office and proceed directly to Rose Garden podium for remarks.
- 11:48 a.m. On conclusion of your remarks, you will remain at the podium while Tom Pauken, ACTION Director, thanks you on behalf of the Vietnam veterans and invites you to greet assembled Veterans.
- 12:00 noon You depart Rose Garden and return to Oval Office.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

JOHN BAINES: Chairman, San Antonio VVLP; international commercial real estate developer; U.S. Navy Seabee--built the longest bridge in Vietnam at the time.

SAM BARTHOLOMEW: Chairman, Tennessee VVLP; attorney; former legislative assistant to Senator Howard Baker; West Point Distinguished Cadet; patrolled Cambodian border with 4th Calvary.

KIP BECKER: Chairman, Wilmington VVLP; Ph.D.; Assistant Dean, Wilmington College; U.S. Army gunship pilot.

DAVID DECHANT: Program Director, Baltimore VVLP; restaurant manager; Marine scout; spent a total of 31 months in Vietnam.

RICK EILERT: Volunteer, Chicago VVLP; Marine rifleman; retired by reason of wounds; author of two novels which he plans to publish.

JOHN FALES, JR.: Advisor, VVLP; Employment Director, Blinded Veterans Association; Marine forward observer; wounded in Vietnam in 1967.

FRANCIS GUEST: Volunteer, Tennessee VVLP; Administrator, Tennessee GSA; Air Force in-country veteran.

WAYNE HANBY: Program Director, Wilmington VVLP; former Justice of the Peace; Marine rifleman; retired from wounds received.

JIM HARTDEGEN: Volunteer, VVLP; Arizona State Legislator; Vietnam combat veteran.

DAVID HUFFMAN: Program Advisor, Wilmington VVLP; blinded in Vietnam as Marine rifleman; first blind graduate of Delaware Law School.

BILL JAYNE: Deputy Director, VVLP; Marine rifleman; wounded at Khe Sanh during Tet offensive of 1968; author of "Immigrants from the Combat Zone" appearing in THE WOUNDED GENERATION.

DICK KOLB: Volunteer, VVLP; Oil Scout for Tenneco Corp.

JOHN MCCAIN: Advisor, VVLP; prisoner-of-war 1967-73; now Vice President of Hensley Company, Phoenix.

JOCK NASH: Volunteer, VVLP; Chief Counsel and Staff Director, Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Senate Committee on the Judiciary; infantry platoon commander in Vietnam.

WALLACE NUNN: Volunteer, Philadelphia VVLP; graduate of Villanova University; is an investment banker in Philadelphia; served in Vietnam as a helicopter door gunner with the 101st Airborne Division.

CHUCK O'BRIEN: Chairman, Philadelphia VVLP; attorney; first of group of disabled persons to top Mt. Rainier last summer; Army platoon leader; wounded on Cambodian border and lost part of his leg.

MAX PATTERSON: Volunteer, VVLP; Chief of Police, Windsor, Connecticut.

TOM PAUKEN: Director, ACTION; enlisted in Army; served one tour in-country as Intelligence Officer.

LUIZ SANZ: Medical Doctor; advisor to VVLP; Georgetown University faculty member; was Army combat medic.

BOB SEARBY: Volunteer, VVLP; Deputy Undersecretary of Labor, International Affairs; was with 101st Airborne in Vietnam.

BILL STENSLAND: Program Director, San Antonio VVLP; highly decorated; wounded twice while serving two tours as Marine officer.

ED TIMPERLAKE: Deputy Director, VVLP; Naval Academy graduate; Marine F-4 pilot.

MARK TREANOR: Chairman, Baltimore VVLP; attorney; Annapolis graduate; Marine rifle platoon commander with 1st Marine Division.

JIM WEBB: Advisor to VVLP; author of the best-selling *FIELDS OF FIRE* and *A SENSE OF HONOR*; Marine platoon commander; Navy Cross.

JACK WHEELER: Director, VVLP; co-founder of Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund; attorney; co-author of *THE WOUNDED GENERATION*; West Point graduate; Captain in Vietnam.

SPECIAL GUESTS:

CHARLES HAGEL: Deputy Administrator-designate, Veterans Administration; squad leader in Vietnam - was wounded twice; served with his brother in the same squad; his brother was wounded three times.

SPECIAL GUESTS (cont.)

MARCIA LANDAU: Media Director, WVLP.

HONORABLE THOMAS LOEFFLER: Congressman; strong supporter of WVLP;
responsible for San Antonio WVLP.

HONORABLE JOHN P. MURTHA: Congressman; Korean veteran who reenlisted
to serve in Vietnam.

JIM McCLOSKEY: Program Director, Philadelphia WVLP; economist; was
U.S. Army adviser to South Vietnamese.

(Rohrabacher/TD)
November 9, 1981

VIETNAM VETERANS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM, NOVEMBER 10, 1981

- It is appropriate that on the eve of Veterans Day 1981 we meet to inaugurate a program aimed at helping a group of veterans that never received the thanks they deserved for their extraordinary courage and dedication.

- There is no need to reiterate the tragedy of Vietnam. This long, dragged out Southeast Asian conflict divided our Nation and damaged America's self image.

- Yet when called upon, there were millions of young Americans who did their duty and demonstrated courage and dedication in the finest tradition of the American military.

- I want to express my appreciation to these veterans with us today for their service during the war and for their continued voluntary service to the Nation.

- It is important to recognize that the vast majority of Vietnam veterans readjusted quickly after returning from Southeast Asia. Contrary to the stereotype, many of these fine young people have excelled in their endeavors. Those of you with us today are outstanding examples of this fact.

-- Nevertheless, there are those who have found it difficult to come to grips with problems that can be traced to their military service. The Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program is designed to draw volunteers from the pool of successful vets in order to provide guidance for those with lingering problems.

-- This volunteer self-help program is within the spirit of brotherhood that has characterized American veterans of every war. Such comradery is even more important for those who fought in Vietnam.

-- Those of you who will be doing your part to make this program a success deserve a special thanks. In these times of budget restrictions all of us must be aware that showing our gratitude to Vietnam veterans, and helping those still in need, will require more than Government tax dollars can provide. I hope that every American will follow your example and reach out individually to extend a hand of appreciation, and, where needed, a hand of assistance to all our fine Vietnam veterans.

-- Americans should always remember that in a hostile world a nation's future is only as certain as the devotion of its soldiers -- and soldiers will be as loyal to the nation as the nation is loyal to them. This program

is one way of expressing our commitment not only to Vietnam vets but all those who now serve their country. So thanks to all of you for participating in this fine effort.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 10, 1981

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
ANNOUNCEMENT OF VIETNAM VETERANS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

File

The Rose Garden

11:48 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: On this eve of Veterans Day of 1981 we need to inaugurate a program that's aimed at helping a group of Veterans who have never received the thanks they deserved for their extraordinary courage and dedication. A long dragged-out tragedy, Vietnam, divided our nation and damaged America's self-image, and part of that tragedy, a major part, was the sacrifice by men who fought as bravely as any American fighting men have ever fought. Millions of young Americans, when they were called upon, did their duty and demonstrated courage and dedication in the finest tradition of the American Military in a war they were not allowed to win.

I want to express appreciation on behalf of all Americans to these Veterans who are here today, not only for their service during the war but for their continued voluntary service to their comrades in arms and to the nation. Contrary to an unjust stereotype, the vast majority of Vietnam Veterans readjusted quickly after returning from Southeast Asia. And many of these fine young people here succeeded and excelled in their post-war endeavors. Those here with us today are outstanding examples of this fact.

At the same time, however, there are those who found it difficult to come to grips with problems that can be traced to their war-time experiences. The Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program is designed to draw volunteers from the pool of successful Vietnam Veterans in order to provide guidance for those with lingering problems. This volunteer, self-help program is within the spirit of camaraderie that has characterized American Veterans of every war. And it's even more important for those who have fought in Vietnam.

Those of you who will be doing their part to make this program a success deserve a special thanks. I hope that every American will follow your example and reach out individually to extend a helping hand where needed to all our fine Vietnam Veterans. Recognition and appreciation for all they went through is long overdue.

We should always remember that in a hostile world a nation's future is only as certain as the devotion of its defenders, and the nation must be as loyal to them as they are to the nation.

This program is one way of expressing our commitment not only to Vietnam Veterans but to all those who now serve our country in the Military. So, thanks to all of you for participating in this fine effort. I think you're going to find your fellow citizens will want to help.

Now, Tom Pauken.

END

11:51 A.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

PRESS BRIEFING
VIETNAM VETERANS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM
BY

MR. TOM PAUKEN, DIRECTOR

Room 450, Old Executive Office Building

November 10, 1981

12:02 P.M. EST

MR. PAUKEN: Hello, I'm Tom Pauken, Director of Action. I'd like to first introduce the men that are on the platform at this time. John Baines is from San Antonio, Texas, a veteran of Vietnam. John was in the Navy, successful businessman, he's our chairman in San Antonio, Texas. Ed Timperlake is a Naval pilot, graduate of Annapolis, Deputy Director of the Vietnam Veteran Leadership Program; Bill Jayne, who those of you who were outside met earlier, Deputy Director of the Vietnam Veteran Leadership Program, a Marine who served Kaesong. Next to Mr. Jayne is a man who really has helped put this together. He's the Director of the Vietnam Veteran Leadership Program, Jack Wheeler. Jack's a co-author of a new book on Vietnam, "The Wounded Generation". He's been very active and very vocal, really, in talking about the concept of leadership that emanates from those who served in Vietnam. Jack's the Director of our Program.

Next to Jack is someone whom you met earlier, Sam Bartholomew. Sam is from Tennessee. Has served as Legislative Assistant to Senator Howard Baker a number of years ago. He was a West Point distinguished cadet. He was on the Cambodian border with the Fourth Cavalry. Next is Chuck O'Brien, who was introduced earlier, from Philadelphia. He's in private practice of law, was one of the, as I mentioned, the first up Mountain Rainier in the group of handicapped climbers, July 4th, that very special occasion and Chuck is the Chairman of our program in Philadelphia.

Next to Chuck is Mark Treanor. Mark was a Marine platoon leader in Vietnam, is in the private practice of law in Baltimore. Next to Mark is Kip Becker, Chairman of the Wilmington Vietnam Veterans Leadership Project. He was a U.S. Army gunship pilot. He's Assistant Dean of Wilmington College and is the Chairman of the program in Wilmington.

What I thought I would do is just give a very brief overview of the program. The concept of the Vietnam Veteran Leadership Program is very simple. Just a couple of years ago I remember an occasion in which a group of people were invited by the Mayor of Dallas, my home town, to come together in a day honoring Vietnam Veterans. And I got down there, I'd had an invitation, as I guess many others had, and I got down there and looked around the room and I saw a lot of people that I knew and a lot of people that were doing well in business, labor, public policy areas, and in many instances I didn't even know that they were Vietnam veterans. And I thought to myself if you could ever marshall that kind of talent and resource in an effort, it would be an enormous amount of talent and leadership that was in that room. And really the concept of the Vietnam Veteran Leadership Program is very simple. It's the idea of Vietnam veterans who share a common view, whatever differences may be with respect to the war, the way it was conducted, there's that common value of pride and service and I think a common willingness of people to step forward to help some of their fellow veterans that are still having problems. The idea is to recruit other Vietnam veterans who are successful, who are doing well, and that's more than 80 percent of the Vietnam veterans -- to help some of our fellow veterans who are still having problems associated with the Vietnam experience as the

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President mentioned.

Now, the primary problems are those of unemployment and under-employment and we'll be organizing in hopefully some 50 cities during the course of this year to help complement and add another dimension to already existing programs.

I think it will help in two ways. It will directly help the Vietnam veterans who have some needs. It will help some of the already existing vet outreach programs by adding that extra dimension of volunteers who served in Vietnam to the program. And hopefully, also, it will begin to do something about the image of Vietnam veterans and it will begin to indicate as people and employees, in particular, see throughout the country the success stories of a lot of Vietnam veterans who had made it, so that hopefully they will be encouraged to recognize that hiring a Vietnam veteran or bringing a Vietnam veteran into a particular company is a good idea and a good concept and that perhaps the stereotype that's out there so often is really a very false characterization of the Vietnam vets.

I think of, the other day, an article in the local newspaper and the writer, in a very, I thought, insightful way, and somewhat humorous, and yet there was a touch of seriousness there -- he made the comment with regard to a new film showing Vietnam veterans in less than favorable like -- he said, "Psycho on the loose. Round up all the usual suspects, Vietnam veterans." And I think we've seen too much of that and it really is not representative of those who served and there are a lot of guys that need some help and they don't need to wallow in self-pity. They need a helping hand and that's what this program is all about from guys that have, if you will, had a little helping hand along the way.

So, with that, I'll open it to questions and I think it probably is more appropriate, other than the technical questions, which could be directed at our staff, to perhaps if you want pursue some of the thoughts of the individual chairman who are with us today.

Q Mr. Pauken, we had thousands of women serving in Vietnam in the Army, Air Force, the Nurse Corps. Why don't you have a woman here today?

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MR. PAUKEN: That's a good question, Ms. McClendon. We were just talking about that this morning and someone said that we do want to and will be involving women in the program and that we're just starting to kick the program off right now. Now 98 percent of those, I think, who did serve and sustain injuries were men, but we do want to involve women in the program and there are already some who are helping as volunteers. In fact, on one occasion, a woman who was a nurse.

But we do need to do more in that area and I would look forward to hearing and really identifying the possible chairman or project director who is a woman.

Q Mr. Pauken, you talked about the problem of unemployment and underemployment. How do you plan to go about specifically trying to attack this problem of unemployment on the part of Vietnam Veterans?

MR. PAUKEN: Well, I think in each individual city our chairmen, for example -- and I'll let them speak to that if you'd like to look at an individual case -- They are going to be putting together a network of individuals who are Vietnam Veterans and also those who are interested in helping Vietnam Veterans from a number of companies, involving them in a volunteer effort to hire Vietnam Vets and working with the VA outreach centers which have a lot of veterans who come in who are looking for employment.

So, the concept is a relatively simple one and it's going to be hard to execute, but I think the key is the caliber of people that have signed on as chairmen and as directors in the respective communities. And what they will be doing is putting together a group of Vietnam Veterans in a variety of companies in business and in labor who will take it upon themselves, directly and indirectly to find jobs and encourage the hiring of Vietnam Veterans.

And, secondly, I think symbolically, when an employer sees a show that may be totally negative with regard to a Vietnam Veteran as someone who might view a show that's going to be on tomorrow evening on PBS, "Frank: A Vietnam Veteran", coming out of looking at that show, I wonder how many employers would want to hire a Vietnam Vet if they thought, "That is your typical Vietnam Veteran." And I think we can be helpful in the regard by showing people that there are a lot of Vietnam Veterans that are successful and that are doing fine and it makes sense to hire a Vietnam Veteran or makes sense to move them up the ladder because a lot of guys lost some time with our peer group by that service. And I think that --

Q Well, on this image problem, though, which is another problem I'm sure. How do you plan to attack that? Are you going to buy newspaper ads? How are you going to try to influence public opinion which, as you say, is pretty well formed on this matter?

MR. PAUKEN: Well, I think it's changing and I think it's going to change more.

MR. O'BRIEN: Can I answer that?

MR. PAUKEN: Yes, sure, Chuck.

MR. O'BRIEN: I think that probably the best way of resolving that kind of a question is just to point out to each community the leaders in the community who are, in fact, Vietnam Veterans. We kind of disappeared. We kept a low profile, not

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deliberately. We are very, very busy in catching up. I lost four years of a profession, practicing the law. I now have an opportunity to resurface. I have resurfaced. I hope that the fact that I am a Vietnam Veteran will inspire some more confidence, at least in the Philadelphia area, in Vietnam Veterans because we're a mighty special lot. I mean, a very, very courageous crew I'd say. Without patting myself on the back, I think Vietnam Veterans are the finest that this country has to offer, men and women and they certainly deserve the support of the country at large right now. Thank you.

Q But how will you get that information out about yourself and other --

MR. O'BRIEN: Well, this helps and this is a case in point. I think that as we move along -- Let me say our experience in Philadelphia has been we have no difficulty in marshalling resources. Every Vietnam Veteran -- and it is amazing the number who are in upper and middle executive positions -- every one is willing to assist in whatever way they can. Our greatest difficulty now is organizing those resources so that we can launch an effective program.

And once that program surfaces, and it will, I think that, at least in Philadelphia, the number and the interest of Vietnam Veterans will be impressive.

MR. PAUKEN: Let me ask Sam Bartholomew from Nashville to describe some of the things that they're doing now and have done recently.

MR. BARTHOLOMEW: We're just getting started in Tennessee and we haven't formalized a total program yet, but I think the answer to the question is going to be best described by the people that you're going to see involved in these programs around the country. In our case, in Tennessee our intention is, and so far we haven't had anyone turn us down, is try to get the Vietnam Veteran out of the closet. We've got a lot of people who have felt like being a Vietnam Veteran was not something they wanted to talk about or be proud of. It did not necessarily help them in their given career or profession. And, in fact, if you'll bear with me, on the way up here we were told we might have a couple of minutes to address the President. It turned out to be a couple of seconds. I just wrote out some thoughts that I had. They go like this:

Many of us Vietnam Veterans were told before we left for Southeast Asia and even after we returned by our peers and others that the real heroes and the true patriots would be not those who served and wore the uniform of the United States, but those independent and intellectual individuals who were bright enough to evade the draft and avoid any kind of military service even, if necessary, by leaving the country or deserting. Because these individuals understood that they knew more than those elected government servants who began and carried on this unpopular war.

Now I sincerely hope that it's obvious that it is just this

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sort of thought process that can destroy a nation and the ability of any people to successfully accomplish any goal or carry out any national mission.

Hopefully, this program, the Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program, will be a beginning, a beginning to restore some needed recognition and pride to those three million who served their country in Vietnam at great personal sacrifice, who were not bright enough to evade in some manner doing what their fathers and their grandfathers had done before.

Getting the Vietnam Veterans out of the closet will, I believe, improve the self-esteem and pride of those who served during Vietnam and our other wars, as well as those who now serve and defend our country. And that's a very needed commodity, some pride in our current military serviceman.

You know, here's the case that the Vietnam Veterans were not treated like Veterans of other wars. Both subjectively and objectively, they've been penalized.

One example, and I bet this has happened to some of you in this room and I bet it happened to the President. I bet the President was told, and many told their sons, "Now, when you get out of the military, remember to keep that good cheap GI insurance policy. It's the best buy I have ever made."

The Vietnam Veteran was the first Veteran, first Veteran not to receive the GI insurance. Yes, some guaranteed insurability, but not what the Veteran predecessors received.

There are many, many examples, but the basic stigma of serving one's country is, in my opinion, the paramount problem. And this program will go a long way toward alleviating that attitude.

And as I said to the President, the military service may be the single most cohesive experience that Americans enjoy. It's the glue that in many ways holds this great melting pot together.

We are thankful that this President recognizes the importance of this background of American leadership.

And in Tennessee, we're going to make this program a major success. Our goal is to try to do it across the state. In Nashville, we plan to get an advisory group of approximately 100 Vietnam Veterans from various professions and backgrounds and use their talents, their connections, their involvement to help those who are really needy.

Part of it is the esteem problem and the respect. The other part of it is getting something tangible done, getting some recognition that they do deserve jobs and that they ought to get a job, perhaps some preferential treatment.

The Vietnam Veteran is now a classified minority in many of the federal regulations and yet you don't see a lot of attention being given to that minority.

I think we can do something about it in Tennessee. I think we'll do something about it across the country. And I believe the volunteerism initiative that this President has begun is going to be carried on by an awful lot of Veterans.

MR. TREANOR: May I add something to that?

I find that in Baltimore one of the ideas that I keep running across is that the concept of Vietnam Veterans now doing something for each other and for themselves is an idea whose time has really come.

There are a tremendous number of us who are very proud of having served in the military, having served in Vietnam. And -- it has been something, however, that in the last 10 or 12 years we really haven't had very much of an occasion to think about or talk to people about. There has been no really central rallying point and I'm continually amazed to have lunch with someone or to be talking with someone at a meeting or something and find out that he, too, served in Vietnam and yet within the last 10 years he has gone on to finish school or become some success in his chosen field or endeavor. And I think that one of the things, to answer the question that was asked earlier about how we can help to free up some jobs to help people that are underemployed and unemployed to increase the image of the Vietnam Veteran is simply to let us talk about it.

It is important now, I think, that when I meet someone and find out that he is a Vietnam Veteran, we have that in common. And it's the kind of thing that didn't generally come up, I think, across the map between people before.

It's time to do it. It's time to think about the people that haven't been as successful and as lucky as some of us who have gone on to good jobs, good careers have been. And I think it's time for us to get together and try and help those people, too.

DR. BECKER: I have one additional thing to add to that. And I guess this is what particularly interests me in the program. And I hope that I could reach out a little bit to everyone in the press to be as interested in these aspects as I am. And that had to do with the whole concept of an issue larger than the Vietnam Veteran.

When I came back from Vietnam in 1968, I was met with a lot of confusion and a national feeling that we couldn't do -- that the United States couldn't do. Economically we couldn't do, politically we couldn't do and militarily we couldn't do.

And I think that for probably 15 years that pervasive attitude has permeated our industry and our government and certainly our individuals.

One other thing that I have felt in the last five years is that we can do, that I can do, that these gentlemen can do and that as a country, we can do.

I'm greatly impressed with the President. I think he shares that attitude, has been able to hold together a lot of cogent ideas in the face of many people who would like to tear him apart. The idea that he's sticking with what he feels he can do and we will stick with what we feel we can do and that it will be a volunteer movement. No one here amongst the directors are paid for this. We're donating our time and some of our resources and will be asking other people in the states and throughout the country to donate their time and resources, so that as a country we once again can assume an attitude that we can do and that we're proud to be here.

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MR. PAUKEN: You had a question?

Q Are there any other specific services you plan to provide with the job planning services?

MR. WHEELER: In one city we've already helped with a "vetathon" program for Vietnam vets, coordinating with the local media and the local businesses, in a city out towards the West. There are a number of other efforts similar to that that will be undertaken. This activity is not a bureaucratic solution being administered from Washington. Tom's job and my job has been to find men like these gentlemen.

One of their first activities has been to conduct what we call a needs assessment within their community, if you will, to draw a map of the terrain of their community as it relates to the Vietnam veteran. From that needs assessment, then, to proceed to what we call the leadership program. That is a plan, a selection of several key objectives that each one of these chairmen tailor for themselves in each one of their communities. And they're in the process of doing that now, and they could speak to that.

One small aspect of that is the type of activity that leads to Op-Ed pieces or articles that are written, or media events. But the real meat and potatoes is underemployment, unemployment, the type of day-to-day problems that are crucial to the men that have the most serious problems, that have come back from Vietnam. I know Sam has one example of an activity that has been completed in Nashville.

MR. BARTHOLOMEW: The question was, in what towns were you doing it? The one thing that was done in Nashville that had already been done, had a Vietnam Veterans' Appreciation Day, and they had 10,000 to 15,000 people come out to have a full day celebration. Charlie Daniels' band, and the paratroopers from the 101st Airborne, and it was a very fine event. It was an emotional event. We had Jan Howard, the country music singer get up and perform and talk about what she gave up, which was her son, and wounded veterans -- I mean it was a very emotional event that affected, I think, the whole community, and it had a great impact on a number of veterans there and a number of POWs that had got up and talked and thanked the Mayor of Nashville, who happened to be the first person, officially, they've had a chance to thank for doing something to honor them.

The one objective thing that we hope to do, and I think we'll do it, in Tennessee we happen to have a War Memorial Building, a big plaza with memorials to wars. There's not one there for Vietnam. And when we finish there's going to be.

One thing I would say that a lot of you in the Washington press corps -- I happened to have the chance to work up here about a decade ago -- and one thing that is very apparent to me, those of you that have watched the governments come and go, when I met the people that are running ACTION and running this program, it's sure different than it was ten years ago. If you want to see where this President's had an impact on the Executive Branch of government, meet Tom Pauken, Jack Wheeler, Ed Timperlake, and Bill Jayne. They're a different kind of folks. They've got different backgrounds and they've got some sincere interests and feelings about government that I didn't see up here a decade ago, and I think maybe it demonstrates the Reagan Presidency better than anything else I've seen.

Q I hear you talking about two different things up there, one, the problem of underemployment and unemployment, but it seems like the thrust of the thing from what Mr. Bartholomew has said, and others, that the image problem is more important for this point.

MR. PAUKEN: It goes hand in hand.

Q On the underemployment, the second part of the question, the Vietnam war has been over for a long time now, and most of the men who fought in it are in their thirties, or above. Isn't that a point reached where they have already put themselves back in civilian life? How big a pool out there is still struggling?

MR. PAUKEN: I think, the figures I've seen show that more than 80 percent of the Vietnam veterans have made it back successfully. But there is still a pool. I don't know whether you want to say it's ten percent or a little bit higher. I'd put it in that range. And there are a lot of guys that need a hand, if you would. And I think it's a combination of things. I think the hardest hit were the young high-school-age groundpounders who went over there, they didn't have a skill, they didn't have a trade. They came back in the late '60s or early '70s, they were called everything from a dope addict to a psycho to a war-crazed criminal, and they were confused, because so many of them had pride in their service, and that's why I mentioned earlier, Jim Webb's book of "Fields of Fire," which I think really laid the groundwork for this concept of Vietnam veterans as leaders, as people proud of their service.

They get back and they hear themselves described in a completely different way, and it's confusing, particularly to that young soldier. And I think, as he's grown older, a lot of them just haven't done much since Vietnam. And yet the capability is there. They went through a lot, the experience is enormous. And I think that as one of the people who is here told me, you know, a lot of men went off; some were made stronger, some were made weaker. But there were a lot who were made stronger. And hopefully those that were made stronger will help some of those guys that need a hand. So I think it's both, I really do. And I think the image is a critical factor because there's that notion of self-esteem. And I've been amazed at the caliber of people that are coming forward to get involved and who are interested and want to participate in this program from around the country. It's a little bit like we're saying something that they felt, and there's a common set of values here, out there across the country, and they're saying, hey, finally, someone is speaking from a different perspective in terms of an attitude towards service in Vietnam.

Q Are we opening some old wounds here that perhaps would be better left

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closed? I heard some comments up there about the people who did not serve. I'm just, you know --

DR. BECKER: I feel very strongly about that question. And the reason I feel strongly about it is that in the last ten years what we've received from the press weekly, if not more than weekly, has been an extremely negative attitude toward Vietnam and the Vietnam Veteran. The last three years has produced four movies. On public television tomorrow, Veterans Day -- and I was informed by our Channel 12 public television that this was just a coincidence that this television show just happened to show up on Veterans Day. It's a show about a Vietnam Veteran who has had all of the combined readjustment problems.

So, when we're talking about who is opening the wounds, I think that what we're trying to do is present a different attitude, a different viewpoint in response to a lot of the things that the media has presented.

Q Don't blame the press for what the film industry did.
(Laughter.)

DR. BECKER: No, that's a fair deal, fair statement.

Q Mr. Pauken, how much money is ACTION committing to this project?

MR. PAUKEN: We're committing approximately \$2 million per year for a three-year period, \$50,000 per project.

Q How many projects do you actually anticipate getting started by the end of this year?

MR. PAUKEN: By the end of this year -- we're just kicking it off. And so we would hope by the end of this year to have between seven or ten under way, and by the end of this coming fiscal year it will be in some fifty cities throughout the country.

Q Could I just ask Mr. O'Brien to talk about what he plans to do in Philadelphia --

MR. O'BRIEN: Oh, sure, I'd be happy to speak to that.

There are some fine Veterans programs that are in existence in Philadelphia that are peculiar to Philadelphia. In other words, they exist only in Philadelphia, have been formed by Veterans in the Philadelphia area. They're not designed specifically to aid only Vietnam Veterans. They're are designed to aid all Veterans. And they compliment the VFW programs, the Disabled American Veterans Programs, the American Legion programs, other programs, which in turn are designed to compliment the Veterans Administration programs.

We don't intend to duplicate anything that those programs are being -- that those programs are conducting or accomplishing right now.

What we hope to do and what we will do is form a network of leaders who are former Vietnam Veterans who will open doors, as it were, who will provide assistance to those programs. We're not programmatic. We will not be programmatic, but we will be a network and we will muster resources. We will receive commitments from the major employers in the Philadelphia area to provide employment opportunities. We already have a commitment from Charlie Lieverth of Governor Dick Thornburgh's staff to assist us. And Charlie is a, not surprisingly to me, was a highly-decorated paratrooper during World War II and he was a former Secretary of Labor and Industry until recently and has now taken over the role of Chief of Human Resources to the Governor's staff. Is that responsive?

MR. PAUKEN: No, but it will be available up here if anybody has any individual questions of any of the members.

Q Private corporations?

MR. PAUKEN: Well, we'll be focusing on private corporations.

Q You've got doubts?

MR. PAUKEN: Yes, we have -- we've spoken to a number.

Q Can you name some?

MR. PAUKEN: At this point I would rather not. I mean, I -- because I can't develop an exhaustive list off the top my head. It would be unfair to those whom I neglected to include.

Well, we will be issuing a statement very shortly.

END

11:27 A.M. EST



OFFICE OF
THE DIRECTOR

ACTION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20525

November 3, 1981

Mr. Morton C. Blackwell
Special Assistant to the President
Office of Public Liaison
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Morton:

We are proud and honored that on November 10, 1981, the President is announcing the Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program and calling attention to the emerging leadership role of the Nation's Vietnam veterans. It is appropriate that this meeting will occur on the eve of Veterans Day.

We invite you to attend a reception to celebrate from 4:30-6:30 p.m., Tuesday, November 10th at ACTION Headquarters, 806 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Room 522.

It will be an opportunity to meet some of the outstanding people who are part of a most exciting and inspiring project.

I look forward to having you join us.

Sincerely,

Thomas W. Pauken
Director