

Vietnam Veterans Against the War-Winter Soldier Organization

NEWSLETTER



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general information

Bob Hood Arraignment Date Set -

It looks like the police of Oakland, California are out to nail Bob Hood, VVAW/WSO and the anti-imperialist movement. In the last newsletter, (#19), we described the brutal attack on Bob, completely unjustified by anything that Bob did. Besides being beaten, Bob has been charged with 'assault with a deadly weapon', (a pocket knife) and 'assault on a police officer'. Both these charges are felony offenses, carrying sentences of six months to life. On Friday, February 22, Bob was taken to a pre-trial hearing to determine if there is enough evidence to bring him to trial. Over 40 community people came to support Bob at the hearing.

It became apparent from the testimony of the police involved that the attack on Bob was part of a growing attempt to link VVAW/WSO with the actions of the SLA. During the hearing, it was determined that the policeman who beat Bob was a member of the Oakland 'red squad, (strange co-incidence!?) The police also stated that they were 'alerted' to be on the watch for members of VVAW/WSO because the organization was a violent group.

Again and again, the government and the police have tried to destroy VVAW/WSO primarily through frame-ups that have little relation to reality. In each case, they have used media propaganda to exhort on the theme that VVAW/WSO is violent and incites violence. By linking us with the SLA, they hope to remove us from any effective political work. This hasn't worked in the past, and will fail again.

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Bob goes up for arraignment March 3rd in Superior Court where it is presumed a trial date will be set. The Bay area chapters are mobilizing a VVAW/WSO Defense Committee and building support among the community and other anti-imperialist groups. As one defense committee worker put it, "People are taking this case seriously because they see it as the first attempt to discredit movement groups by linking them up with the actions of the SLA. We will not allow Bob to go to jail nor allow the police to set-up the movement."

International Women's Day -- March 8th

March 8th is recognized around the world as International Women's Day. This holiday was instituted as an international day in 1910 and was set aside to honor working women and women involved in struggle everywhere. (A history of International Women's Day is contained in the March issue of Winter Soldier).

It seems reasonable to guess that educational and demonstrations regarding International Women's Day will be occurring on March 8th in cities across the country. VVAW/WSO should make every effort to plug into these activities or sponsor Women's Day events wherever possible. March 8th will be celebrated in countries around the world, and VVAW/WSO should make a point to also be involved in the celebrations. Reports on all Women's Day activities should be sent to the National Office.

At a time when women are taking leading roles in the struggles going on in this country, we must set aside March 8th to honor these sisters, as well as recognizing the progressive role played by women in struggles the world over.

!! THE RISING OF THE WOMEN MEANS THE RISING OF US ALL!!



Behavior Modification Programs Under Attack

By now, everyone should be familiar with the fact that the Federal Bureau of Prisons is conducting brutal and inhuman behavior modification projects in several federal and state prisons across the country. Knowledge as to the use of drugs and psycho-surgery in these programs, and prisoners' resistance to having their "behavior modified" has increased. Because of this, the Bureau of Prisons has come under severe pressure and this pressure has recently begun to take its toll.

On February 6th, the prisoners of this country gained a significant victory in their struggle as the Bureau of Prisons announced their decision to dismantle the behavior modification project in the Springfield, Missouri Federal Prison. The project START (Special Treatment and Rehabilitative Treatment) had become a target of hatred and resistance for federal prisoners across the country. The Bureau said that the decision to phase out the START program did not mean that the bureau was giving up on the concept of behavior modification, but that the decision was based on "economic" reasons. (Few inmates were involved in the program and the ratio of staff to inmates was so high as to make it not "feasible" to continue).

A week later, the government announced a ban on any further use of Federal anti-crime money for behavior modification, calling a halt of the programs it has funded for the systematic manipulation of the behavior of prisoners. It also banned the use of anti-crime money for psychosurgery, medical research and chemotherapy. The ban, effective immediately, was announced by Donald E. Santarelli, administrator of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. The decision means that prisons and other institutions now using LEAA funds for such things as drug experimentation and research will have to either cease operations or find other funding.

Though these two announcements may be seen as victories in the struggle for human and legal rights going on in our prisons, these decisions do not mean that behavior modification programs will come to a halt. For example, state prison systems will still have the freedom to establish behavior modification programs because they do not receive LEAA funds. Also, HEW is in the process of setting aside money for programs similar to START. Many questions regarding continued B. M. programs go unanswered. For example, the fate of the Butner, North Carolina special behavior modification facility has not been clarified. Millions of dollars have been spent on the project (including LEAA funds) and it is doubtful that the program will now be ceased as a result of these decisions. At the same time, future behavior modification facilities are in the works. A prison similar to the one in Butner is being designed for Portsmouth, New Hampshire. This facility will be constructed under the direction of six New England states and will house the so-called "troublemakers" of the prisons in the New England area. Though funds from LEAA have been stopped and though START is being phased out, we must view the cessation of future programs with a great deal of scepticism, and do everything we can to get the word on these "Pavlovian" projects to the American people.

Meeting on National Defense Committee Held in Chicago -

At the Yellow Springs NSCM, the workshop on the National Defense Committee decided that a meeting would be held in Chicago on February 23-25 to draw up 1) an analysis of past and current trials involving VVAW/WSO, 2) the criteria for future involvement in political defense efforts, and 3) the development of a training program to teach local members the political and mechanical process of establishing a local defense committee.

This meeting was held with over 13 people attending from Wisconsin, N. Illinois, Kansas, Colorado and the National Office. Overall it was very productive and resulted in the drafting of a working paper on these specific issues to be presented at the next NSCM in Milwaukee. As soon as all the various reports have been completed, the National Office will be sending them out for analysis and discussion by regions and chapters.

regional report

Milwaukee Student Committee -

The Milwaukee chapter of VVAW/WSO recently began a counter-recruiting drive in the area's high schools. A committee was set up to find high schools that were on the list of those to be the victims of military recruiting. The committee obtained several speaking engagements at various schools and have met with a tremendous amount of success. At one school, the members of the committee were asked to come back the next day, after they had shown the film "Army", to continue the discussions that soon led from the military to general conditions in the city and country.

The chapter began coordinating and working with the Wisconsin Youth for Democratic Education, (WYDE), a group of students who are organizing in their schools. This group publishes a monthly newspaper, The Red Pencil, which in the January issue had a story on the aims of VVAW/WSO.

On March 1st, the Student Committee of VVAW/WSO was invited to lead a school-wide seminar at Shorewood HS. The chapter plans to show "Army" and "Only the Beginning", in addition to discussing the war, various boycotts and the military recruiting. For more information on how to set up these kind of speaking gigs in schools contact: Student Committee, VVAW/WSO, 2439 N. Fratney, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53212.

VVAW/WSO Oneonta Proposal for Hospital -

Homer Folks Hospital in Oneonta is owned by the State of New York and was used as a tuberculosis facility up until one year ago, when it was closed. Now the state is deciding what to do with this 200 acre hospital. Local people want the area used for veterans. Some veteran organizations, like the VFW, and American Legion want the hospital turned into a nursing home for older veterans.

The Oneonta Chapter of VVAW/WSO prepared a proposal that was presented at hearings held by a state assemblyman. The VVAW/WSO proposal would call for low-rent housing for single and married veterans; a drug-free rehabilitation center for veterans; subsidization for veterans attending school who hold less-than-honorable discharges, who are in many cases unable to receive assistance; and special facilities for those veterans who are amputees, deaf, blind or otherwise disable.

The proposal also calls for the State of New York to turn the property over to Oneonta State University, who would advertise the facility to veterans interested in continuing their education. This proposal would allow for veterans to receive benefits presently denied them by the government; benefits that ask for no more and no less than the right to live a decent life. For more information on this proposal contact: VVAW/WSO, 10 Forest Avenue, Oneonta, NY 13820.

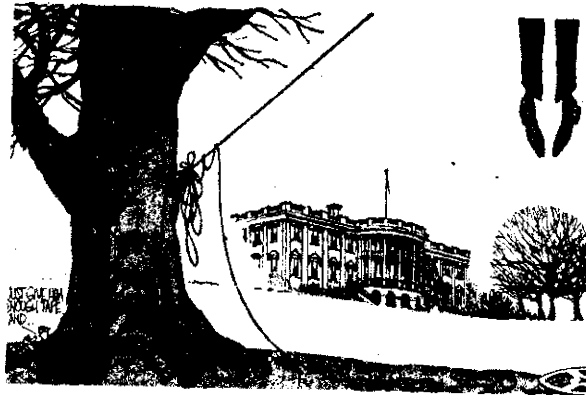
Demonstration at Prison in Support of Leavenworth Brothers

On February 18th, over 200 supporters of the Leavenworth Brothers held a silent march and vigil at the U. S. Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas. This demonstration was sponsored by the Leavenworth Brothers Offense/Defense Comm. Car Caravans approached the town of Leavenworth and contained people from Kansas, Missouri and Iowa. A rally was held and speakers included Phillip Berrigan and a VVAW/WSO member. (Berrigan had previously been barred by a federal parole board and prison Warden Daggett from participating in the march.) Following the rally, the demonstrators then silently marched in single file to the prison, with the first 26 people wearing the name and number of one of the brothers and with chains around their ankles. At the prison, a petition was presented to one of Daggett's assistants while the supporters stood in silent tribute to the brothers for 10 minutes. They then marched away singing. At the prison, the demonstrators were greeted with shouts and cheers coming from the cell blocks that could see the march. The petition to the warden demanded: 1. Release the Leavenworth Brothers from solitary confinement; 2. drop the charges against all the Leavenworth brothers; and 3. comply with the July 31st list of 13 prisoner grievances. The demonstration came off without a hitch and remained peaceful and free from police harassment.

Anti-Nixon Demonstration in Huntsville, Alabama

On February 18th, the Bogue Chitto chapter of VVAW/WSO, along with the Selma Coalition to Impeach Nixon demonstrated to Kick Nixon Out in Huntsville, Alabama. Nixon was in Huntsville to appear with George Wallace in the "Honor America" celebration which was conducted on Washington's Birthday.

Approximately 75 anti-Nixon people attended the speech and made themselves extremely evident as they stood directly in front of the speaker's podium and held up signs reading: "Kick Nixon Out" and "Impeachment." The demonstrators received little harassment from the crowd and several people approached the anti-Nixon forces, asking if they too could carry a picket sign.



Olyphant, Denver Post

"Just give him enough tape and..."

Cincinnati Groups Demonstrate Against Ford -

On Wednesday, February 20th, Vice-president Gerald Ford went to Cincinnati to speak in support of a local politician. His visit prompted a demonstration sponsored by the Throw the Bum Out Committee. The Cincinnati chapter of VVAW/WSO as well as the Columbus chapter participated. The demonstration focused on the energy freeze and the removal of Nixon from office.

About 250 people showed up and forced the VP to use the back entrance at the Cincinnati Convention Center, where he spoke. The demonstrators were spirited and made their presence felt by the numerous chants and songs.

Wherever Nixon and Ford go, they receive the same kind of reception. These demonstrations are a true reflection of the sentiment of the American people to get rid of all these crooks and to warn big business that we are tired of their exploitation of us and all the people of the world.

KICK NIXON OUT!!

national report

Amnesty Demonstration Outline -

Enclosed with this newsletter is an outline for the regional and national amnesty demonstrations that were voted on at the Antioch Steering Committee Meeting. With the exception of one slogan, all of the items covered in the outline are in accordance with the SC workshop and proposal passed at that meeting. We would like the regions to read this and give us feedback. The one proposal that must still be voted on is the inclusion of "Kick Nixon Out". Please let us know about this ASAP.

Lawton/Gardner Trial Report

The third trial of Gary Lawton and Zurebu Gardner is tentatively scheduled to begin on May 20, 1974. Pre-trial motions for a dismissal of the case are now being prepared and should be submitted and decided upon in the near future. For those of us who have been concerned about the lack of an attorney to defend Gary, our worries are over. A lawyer has been found. Chief Counsel for Gary will be Franklin (Skip) Glenn of San Jose, California. Skip worked on the San Quentin trials and will soon be moving to San Bernardino (his home town) to work on the case. Skip has been appointed by the court upon Gary's request, which means that his fees and expenses will be paid by the state. William Kuntsler will be assisting Skip with pre-trial motions for dismissal of the charges, and may also be working on some of the actual trial proceedings.

Enclosed is a four-page hand-out which was recently printed and is available for chapters and regions. We have approximately 4,500 of these hand-outs on hand, and we can order more if regions can use them. Regions should let us know how many of these leaflets they will be needing. If large orders are desired, (such as 1000), we would request that the regions pay for them so that we will have the money to order more copies in the future. The price for 1000 leaflets is \$15. Let us know as soon as possible how many hand-outs your region will be needing.

Gary will be available to do speaking gigs for regions prior to the starting of the trial. Several regions have expressed an interest in bringing Gary into their communities for the purpose of raising money and educating the public as to the severe racism and oppression involved in this trial. If chapters or regions can get colleges (or similar institutions) to finance expenses and honorariums for Gary, you should contact the Riverside Political Prisoners Defense Committee and fill them in on the details, so that scheduling and arrangements can be worked out.

Objective Changes

At the Yellow Springs NSCM, it was decided that the National Office would be given the responsibility of re-writing the 10 objectives in a more condensed and concise form. Regions are to have discussed their preferred changes in the objectives and have them sent to the N. O. by March 1st where the changes are to be compiled and sent back out to the regions by March 15th. In order to compile the regional suggestions, the N. O. must have received the suggestions and thus far, we have only heard from Colorado. One region has asked for an extension to March 8th and this extended deadline is acceptable. Other regions who wish to have their suggestions considered in the re-writing of the objectives must send the changes (or a note suggesting there be no change) as soon as possible. For more details on the objective re-writing, check the NSCM minutes from Yellow Springs. We hope to have a lot of in-put from the regions in this re-writing, so get your suggestions in the mail today!

Operation County Fair

In late January more than a dozen homes in Bogue Chitto received bags of groceries, Winter Soldier newspapers and other information along with personal visits from Linda and George. A lot of time is spent fixing up the Mall and visiting the community. The Mall is taking in money from clothing sales and is open on a regular basis with the help of community members. The Mall is a concrete block building located on the land on which the VVAW/WSO people live.

Linda has made contact with the Federation of Southern Cooperatives which has cooperatives in farming, small business, day care centers and health centers throughout the South. They provide research and training for its members, classes on conducting meetings and how to operate a board of directors, as well as the obvious value of cooperative ventures. The possibility of them assisting the Martin Luther King Jr. Clinic is being explored. More details will follow as we learn more about the FSC.

The lease on the building which will serve as the Martin Luther King Jr. Clinic was signed recently and will begin on April 15, 1974, the tentative opening day for the Clinic.

The Collective needs people who are willing to come down and do some physical labor. Even if it's for only two weeks, they can use the help. Look around your chapter and see if anyone is available.

information requests

Amnesty and Prison Reports

At the Yellow Springs NSCM, it was voted that regions and chapters would send in a monthly report to the National Office detailing the amnesty work that they are involved in. A few regions have sent such reports in, but we suspect that there is a lot more amnesty activity going on than we are hearing about. It is important that these reports be sent in if we are to get a comprehensive view of amnesty work and be able to coordinate amnesty efforts. Along these same lines, it was also decided at Yellow Springs that regions would provide reports on the prison work that they are involved in for the Prison Project Office. As with the amnesty reports, few prison reports have been received. These reports should include the type of work that is being done around prisons, as well as items for the prison newsletter (which will only come out if there is NEWS). In line with these NSCM decisions, we hope that regions will make a more conscientious effort to get these reports in to the N.O. on a more regular basis so that our project work can be better understood, analyzed, and coordinated.