

Vietnam Veterans Against the War-Winter Soldier Organization

NEWSLETTER

number 29



oct. 2, 74

General Information

Four Leavenworth Brothers Found Guilty

The first of the Leavenworth Brothers trials ended on September 24th with the four brothers, Odell Bennett, Jessie Lee Evans, Alf Hill Jr, and Alfred Jasper found guilty. The all-white jury found the four Black Brothers guilty of inciting to riot, assault with intent to murder, and assault with a dangerous weapon. Two Chicano Brothers, Jesse Lopez and Armando Miramon, were due to begin trial at the conclusion of the first trial; their trial is now set for the 15th of October.

The racism behind this trial has been obvious from the first when the only two people in the jury pool who were Black were quickly dismissed. Equally obvious has been the dedication of the government to using any tactic they felt necessary to insure a conviction in this case--basically a case in which six Brothers leading in the struggle for unity among the prisoners at Leavenworth were singled out after a rebellion to bear the full anger of a government which had lost control. (Whitey Hurst, the seventh Leavenworth Brother was found dead in his cell before the trials began.)

The typical government tactics included a racist and repressive judge, and an atmosphere of constant fear inside the courtroom to keep the jury constantly aware of the "dangerous" nature of the men they were trying. Details of the case have been appearing regularly in Winter Soldier, and further information can be obtained from the Leavenworth Brothers Offense/Defense Committee, 106 East Lincoln, Wichita, Kansas 67211.

Appeals are planned both for a new trial, and for dismissal of the charges on a number of different grounds. This does not change the fact that the forces of racism and repression, particularly in prisons, have scored a gain in this blatantly biased trial. Our job as an organization which supports the struggles of the Leavenworth Brothers is to keep getting out the word about the real nature of the trial, and the nature of US imperialism which makes such trials necessary to the US prison system. This trial is not over yet, the Brothers remain strong, and this setback only means that we all need to work that much harder around the remaining trial and the appeals.

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Lawton-Gardner Trial Date Set

October 8 is the most recent trial date for the Lawton-Gardner trial in Riverside, California. This is a change from the September 24th date and was asked for by the defense so that one of their motions, turned down by the judge, could be heard in higher court.

The prosecution has publically announced that they have trimmed all the fat from this trial; nevertheless, instead of the 80 witnesses who appeared in the last government attempt to convict the brothers on the trumped-up charges, the prosecution is planning somewhere over 120 witnesses this time. As a result, the "trimmed" trial could last well over the 6 months which earlier trials have lasted.



free lawton and gardner!

International Exiles Conference Calls For Boycott on Ford's Fraud -

The Second International Conference of Exiles was held in Toronto, Canada on September 21 and 22. Delegates and exiles from across Canada, Sweden, England, and France attended. Several members of VVAW/WSO, (including Fritz Efaw of the London VVAW/WSO), also attended in an observer capacity. The following statement was released by the exiles:

"The International Conference of US War Resister Exiles for Amnesty yesterday agreed overwhelmingly to boycott President Ford's punitive earned re-entry program and made plans to actively continue the campaign for Universal and Unconditional Amnesty, and to end US intervention in Indochina.

"The delegates from across Canada, and from England, Sweden and France joined with the US National Council for Universal and Unconditional Amnesty in planning a campaign of demonstrations and speaking tours in exile and the US for people who need amnesty and their families, and public meetings to inform Americans of our objections to President Ford's earned re-entry program....

... "The Conference emphasized that amnesty must not only be unconditional for draft resisters and deserters, but universal--applying to veterans with less-than-honorable discharges and those civilians who face prosecution or have 'criminal' records because of their active opposition to the war. "

It was clear to those of us from VVAW/ WSO that this organization has a very good working relationship with the exile groups in Canada and in Europe. Many of the delegates from the exile community expressed their great feelings of solidarity with the work that we have been doing in the US around universal and unconditional amnesty and the other three demands adopted at the last National Steering Committee. The exiles are unanimously in support of an amnesty that includes vets with less-than-honorable discharges and civilian resisters. They were encouraged by the reports of the work that the organization has been doing since (and including) the Washington demonstration.

The exile groups need support for getting the word out about their boycott. For more information write to AMEX-Canada, PO Box 189, Station P, Toronto, Ontario, Canada or to NCUUA, 339 Lafayette, NYC, NY 10012.

Vets' Rep Fraud

(This information comes from the Milwaukee Chapter of VVAW/WSO)

Beginning this fall on college campuses across the country, a new propaganda program has been initiated by the V. A. It's called the Vet Rep program.

Following our latest VA takeover on August 5, a cassette tape mysteriously appeared on our doorstep, which to our surprise contained a fourteen-way phone conversation from Washington, DC to various regional administrators around the country. Besides talking of Roudebush (the VFW's pin-up boy) and his future appointment as head of the VA, there was a long serious discussion about the Vet Rep program. From the beginning the talk took the form of subtle governmental strategy aimed mainly at pacification of Vietnam-era veterans.

Talking of the individual Vet representatives, a DC administrator revealed his position by saying "Assure him and reassure him that we're there with him, we're alongside him, we're behind him, we're available to him, uh, see that his philosophy stays along with ours, which in the other direction..." (He didn't finish the sentence.)

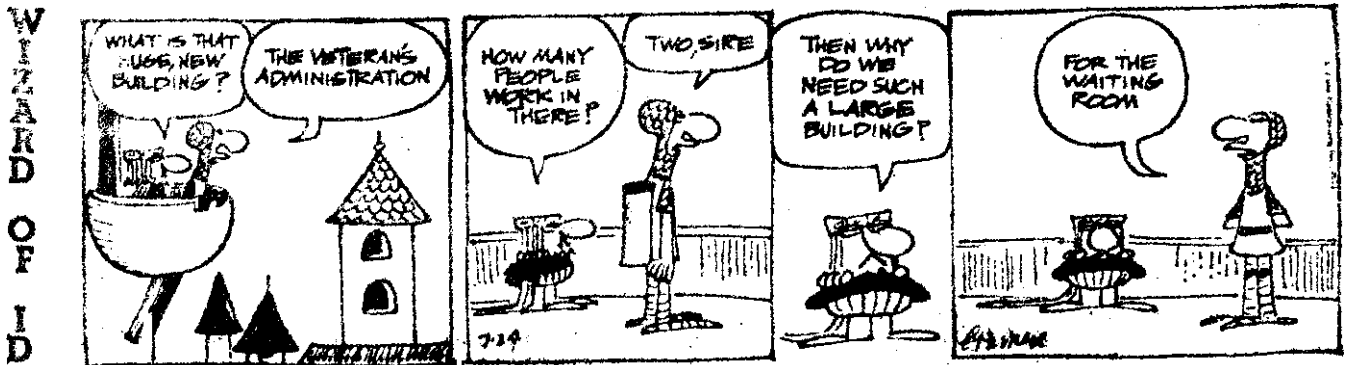
It was pointed out at various times that a huge amount of money has been pumped into this program. (The VA is only too obvious of its real intentions as seen by the recent installation of a \$3 million security system at the Woods VA Hospital in Milwaukee following the arrest and acquittal of 16 VVAW/WSO members there last spring during a takeover.) Over \$20,000 will be spent in Cleveland alone, and this is a national program. Their seriousness is summed up in this statement from the DC administrator: "What I'm getting at is this, we've got an awful lot of money piled into this program, a lot of time and a lot of people, a lot of eggs in baskets, we're depending on this thing to come through for us." While they work with their unlimited amount of funds, another VA ploy is having the Vet Rep personally hand out the measly advance checks on campus as a "hooker" tactic, described in this way: "We must start out doing special favors in order to promote the program."

At the same time, in Milwaukee vets were forced to wait days longer than usual for their checks, and then had to wait on a long line to receive them personally from their "reps."

Not once during the entire conversation did even a twinge of feeling for the good of Vietnam-era veterans occur. Not one time did the welfare of the vet come

before the self-interests of the bureaucracy and the big business interests that it serves.

In response to this program Milwaukee VVAW/WSO, in conjunction with the Revolutionary Student Brigade, has been working on campus around the fraud behind this new attempt to co-opt the veterans' struggle and pacify vets. Leafletting, actions around the vets rep office, forcing the student papers to print information about the real purpose of these veterans' pimps, have all been used as a way to show students as a whole how the government operates, to show the VA that we will not be fooled by their tricks, and to show vets the need to unify in demanding that the VA meet our real needs.



Bob Hood Trial Postponed; "Congestion" in the Courts

When the trial date was first set for the trial of Bob Hood back on June 17th, the Defense asked that the trial be postponed so that they could get the information they needed to prepare the defense. Only through a series of appeals did the Defense Committee finally get the trial postponed just to get the time needed. Since that time, however, the prosecution has refused to let the case come to trial; the latest date set was September 30, and the defense was prepared.

Suddenly, the courts discovered that they were "congested," and the administrative court (where judges and courtrooms are assigned) thought it quite possible that the courts might be congested still in December. At this point, then, the trial is scheduled for the 2nd of December.

The Defense will use the extra time to pursue their motion of discovery (the Oakland PD refuses to open the record of Officer Ted Burrows whose files contain at least 11 citizen complaints). The Court of Appeals refused to hear that defense motion, and it is now being taken to the California Supreme Court. To continue these efforts still costs money--contributions (as well as further information): Vietnam Veterans Against the War/Winter Soldier Organization Legal Defense Committee, 4919 Telegraph Avenue, Oakland, CA.

As in other sections of the country, defense efforts eat up the time and energy--as well as money--which is needed to build the struggle against imperialism. Defense committees, however, can also be used to build VVAW/WSO, and a strong organization is one of the best defenses we have against the repressive tactics of the government. As in the past, these destructive tactics by the US government will not succeed--repression breeds resistance.



Pigging Along with Roudebush

The following article comes from the Chicago Tribune, Sept 22, 1974.

"If Richard Roudebush has his way as the new VA chief, returning draft evaders and military deserters will not be welcome to perform alternative national service at any of his 130 hospitals.

"I could not tolerate any of those men being assigned to VA facilities," Roudebush told the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Thursday in a hearing on his appointment. Unanimous approval of the Indiana Republican is likely when the committee meets again this week.

"Roudebush's comments evidently pleased Sen Strom Thurmond (R., S. C.) who had asked if hiring them would not be like 'waving a red flag' in the face of honorably discharged veterans.

"It would be an utter affront," Roudebush agreed."

Roudebush's statements can and should be used in propaganda tying together the "Decent Benefits" and "Universal, Unconditional Amnesty" demands in our program. His remarks typify the VA treatment of hospitalized vets (no thought at all for the care of the vets, only for Roudebush's reactionary politics and policies) and, on a different level, the fear of having the patients in VA hospitals exposed to the politics of the people who resisted the Indochina War.



Ford's Fraud Loopholes Are Questionable -

Almost as soon as Ford's Fraud was announced word trickled out of the Pentagon that various sections of the provisions in the clemency program actually would benefit those seeking to return to the United States. For instance; a deserter could come home, pledge allegiance to the flag, promise to do alternative service, receive an undesirable discharge and once out of the military, refuse to do the service. If this person refused to do alternative service, he could possibly get away with a UD and no other punishment.

On looking at this so-called loophole a bit closer, there are certain pitfalls in it. If anyone who tries to take advantage of this 'loophole' has other charges against him (or her) then it is highly possible that this person could still be sent to the stockade. For instance, if someone deserted and was charged with AWOL, then he could possibly be able to receive a UD and do no alternative service. If this person was also charged with anything pertaining to anti-war activity, assault, going AWOL while being held in confinement, etc., then these charges are not covered by the 'clemency'; which only applies to the AWOL charge at the time of desertion. If a person deserted while in Vietnam, then this person could be charged with desertion in the face of combat, or whatever charge that entails. If anyone contacts you about turning himself in, make sure that this person knows if he has any other charges, or else certain jailing is in store for him.

The 'clemency' program is full of such contradictions. In addition, while these 'loopholes' may prove to be advantageous to the war resisters, at this time it is advised that war resisters be carefully counselled about the possible pitfalls, and also to be encouraged to adhere to the boycott called by the exile organizations at the Toronto Conference.

The government has claimed that many have begun to take advantage of the program. Recently, it was announced that 75 resisters turned themselves in en masse. Later it was disclosed that these 75 people had been held prior to the announcement by the military. The government is trying to sell their program in an effort to show that the majority of war resisters support this program. What was stressed at the exile conference by the exiles and by NCUUA, was that only in uniting to fight for universal and unconditional amnesty can we expect to win it.

More information on these 'loopholes' will be sent as soon as they are compiled. In the meantime, check with reliable counselling groups before advising anyone calling you for information on the 'clemency' program. It is also important when counselling to stress the need for unity and for universal and unconditional amnesty; not just for exiles but for ALL war resisters.



"What if we gave an amnesty and nobody came?"

How Many Less Than Honorable Discharges Have Been Given?

Recently, we have seen in the newspapers various figures citing the number of less-than-honorable discharges. The latest tactic of the government has been to say that the Vietnam-era began in August of 1964, when the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution was passed in Congress. Therefore, they cite 450,000 (some odd) lthds. In our organizational position paper on amnesty we quote a figure of 580,000. Naturally our organization is correct!

The first American killed in Vietnam was in September of 1961. At that time the imperialists were sending troops into Vietnam at a steady rate. The US was committed to supporting the Diem regime with both financial and military aid. The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution was just a PR stunt to popularize the war. Therefore, in using the DOD figures, (for lack of a better source), we say that the total number of less than honorable discharges from Fiscal Year 1962-1973 (December) are:

| | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Honorable | - 9,469,634 |
| General | - 325,606 |
| Undesireable | - 218,122 |
| Bad Conduct | - 39,869 |
| Dishonorable | - 4,724 |
| <u>Total lthd</u> | <u>- 588,321</u> |
| Total disch. | -10,057,955 |

Amnesty Conference To Be Held -

The second conference of the National Council for Universal and Unconditional Amnesty will be held in November. At this time the dates and sites are up in the air, but the conference will be held in either Atlanta, Georgia or Louisville, Kentucky on the weekend of November 9-10 or 16-17. Although that information is a bit hazy, the conference will be an important one in that it will center around actions to take place, rather than hammer out a position, which has already been adopted. Workshops on organizing, etc. will be featured.

The conference will not charge a registration fee and it is possible that sleeping and eating will be taken care of so as not to financially burden those who attend. At the first conference approximately 30 members of VVAW/WSO from around the country attended. We hope that we can top that this time. All those chapters wishing to send delegates should contact the National Office soon, so that we can give you further details. Chapters should be reminded that at the St. Louis NSCM held last August (1973), that representatives of VVAW/WSO at national and international conferences should be coordinated either by the NSCM or the National Office.

National Office Reports

FBI Update

There has been another upsurge of FBI contacts involving VVAW/WSO over the past two months. The majority of the contacts follow the same general pattern: the individuals approached are 1.) new VVAW/WSO members, 2.) 'fringe' members or 3.) recently departed, ex-VVAW/WSO members. The rationale behind concentrating on these types of people should be obvious. These are the categories of people having some involvement with VVAW/WSO that the FBI feels are most vulnerable to their approaches. The gist of the message that the feds have is quite blunt and to the point: "Hire on as a paid informant for the FBI and spy on VVAW/WSO." Given the number of such contacts we've had in the past weeks, it seems as though the feebies are on some sort of "recruiting drive" for informants and that regional FBI offices have to make some sort of a "quota"

of contacts per month where they try to cultivate likely informants in or around VVAW/WSO. All regions and chapters should make note of this situation and insure that all VVAW/WSO members are given the necessary information on how to handle a contact from the FBI; i. e. don't talk to them without a lawyer present. If people drop out of the organization, they should be advised that there is a good possibility of their being approached by the FBI and that they should at least notify the organization of any such occurrence, if and when it happens.

New Security Report Forms

The NO has drawn up a new security report form that is being sent out with this newsletter. Basically, it's the same as the original form sent out by the NO a few months back. As before, we are requesting that all regions and chapters fill these out in the event of some type of security incident and send them to the NO. Given the fact that the FBI or other police agency would naturally be aware of any contact or harassment of VVAW/WSO that they were involved in, it stands to reason that the organization should have similar knowledge of the situation. Filing the security report form with the NO is one way we can do this.



National GI Project Offices Merge-

Recently a meeting was held between the National Office and the National GI Project office in Dayton, Ohio. The result of that meeting was that it was agreed that the merging of the two offices would help the project do more effective, coordinated work. Many problems with double-work and a lack of a tight communications system were reasons for the moving of the office to Chicago. Another reason was that the NSCM voted that the political direction for the GI Project would come from the Chicago office and this move would facilitate that work.

The GI project office will remain in Dayton until after the National GI Conference is held in the middle of October. At that time there will be a closely coordinated shift of the Dayton office to Chicago, so that the work of the project will not be impeded.

Therefore, starting with the end of October all GI project correspondence should be sent to the National Office. The Dayton office will continue to coordinate work with the Military Detention Barracks at Ft. Leavenworth.

Jeannie Dolly Declines Nomination to National Office

Jeannie Dolly of the Oakland Chapter of VVAW/WSO was nominated as a national coordinator at the Buffalo NSCM. As this newsletter was being printed, Jeannie called and asked that her declination of the nomination be carried in this newsletter. Her reasons for declining are two: health problems, both hers and her daughters; and the difficulties presented by taking her daughter away from her father for the period of a year's time.

National Defense Committee Workshop--Milwaukee, November 2-3

Since the Antioch NSCM in December 1973, the National Defense Committee workshop has been involved in an ongoing project to draw up general policy guidelines for VVAW/WSO to follow in doing defense committee work and at the same time prepare a general manual on how to do defense committee work. This manual was to have been completed at the Buffalo NSCM this August and sent to the NSC for approval. Due to the fact that numerous workpapers that are to be included in the manual were not completed, the NDC workshop could not finish its work at Buffalo. Thus it was decided to hold another weekend workshop in Milwaukee on Nov 2-3 to finish preparing the draft NDC manual for submission for the upcoming NSCM in St Louis on December 27th.

It should be pointed out that this will not be an open meeting. People who attend the weekend workshop in Milwaukee should have either been involved in the ongoing work of the NDC workshop or have specific skills or experience in doing defense work.

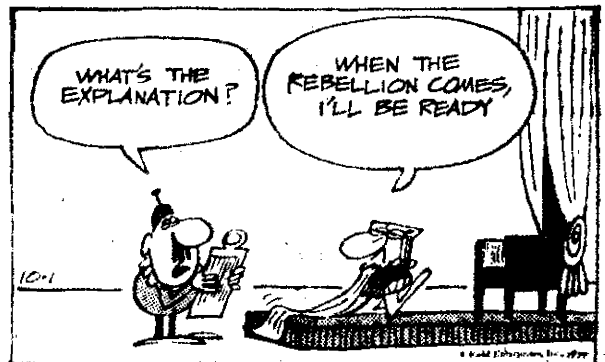
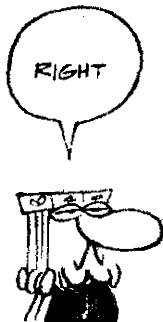
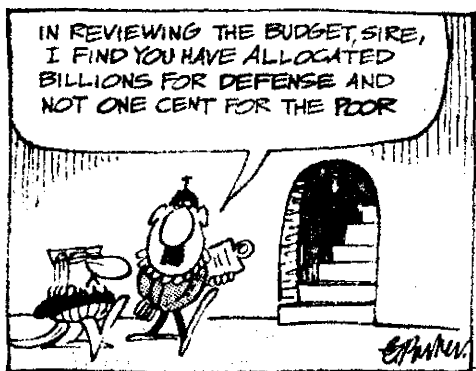
If regions have no involvement with the NDC workshop, or if they have nobody actually doing defense committee work, they need not worry about getting representatives to the Milwaukee NDC workshop. It is imperative, however, that those regions and individuals responsible for getting papers completed have them written and sent out prior to the November 2-3 meeting. If they don't, there will be no way of completing the draft manual at the Milwaukee NDC workshop meeting in time to present to the NSC at St Louis.

Papers must be completed as soon as possible and sent (at least 20 copies each) to the NO by October 15th for distribution to the members of the NDC workshop. If the papers don't arrive here by October 15th, there will be no time to get them to the NDC workshop members for study prior to the Milwaukee meeting.

In addition to papers that are to be written by the NO, the following papers were assigned by the NDC workshop some months ago and are yet to be written:

1. Relationship of VVAW/WSO defense work to lawyers and legal system: Jeanne Friedman.
2. Agitprop: LBODC
3. Internal Political Education: LBODC, Oakland VVAW/WSO, RPPDC
4. Synopsis of Don Kemp trial and defense committee work: Milwaukee VVAW/WSO.
5. Synopsis of Lawton Gardner Trials and defense committee work: RPPDC
6. Synopsis of Bob Hood trial and defense committee work: Oakland VVAW/WSO.

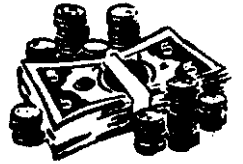
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Information Requests

We need to know how many copies of GI News and Winter Soldier regions or chapters want. GI News, the all-new 8-page newsprint version is being printed around the 1st of each month; Winter Soldier (when we can afford it) is printed around the 15th of each month. In order to know how many copies of each we need to get printed, we have to know what you want in time to get word to the printer. Let us know.

SUBSCRIBE WINTER SOLDIER
SUBSCRIBE (GET THOSE SUBS—WE NEED 'EM!)
SUBSCRIBE



Address Changes

The following changes in address or phone numbers have come in since the new address list went out in the last newsletter.

ADD: VVAW/WSO
c/o Jack Gallagher
102 Bradley St
Syracuse, NY 13204

(315) 475-8382

VVAW/WSO
c/o Russ Scheidler
6016 Upton Ave South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55410

(612) 926-3498

DELETE: VVAW/WSO at Stone Ridge, NY

VVAW/WSO, c/o Don Abrams in Goshen,
New York

CHANGE: Phone number for Wisc/Minn
Regional Office, and for the Milwaukee
Chapter to: (414) 264-0882.

Phone for LBODC in Wichita: (316) 264-7264

Phone for Philadelphia Chapter:
(215) VIA-8756

Working Paper

Suggested Changes to the Working Paper should be in to the NO by the 15th of October.

Amnesty Buttons, "What Is VVAW/WSO"

We don't have any. As soon as enough people send us prepaid orders, we will get them reprinted and get them out to you. Until then, there isn't anything we can do about them.

Regional Reports

Cincinnati VVAW/WSO Members Attacked by Police

For the past several months the Cincinnati Chapter of VVAW/WSO has been playing a strong role in the Jimmy Hardy Defense Committee, a local group formed around the case of Black community leader being framed by the police for the second time in three years. On September 11, this coalition brought 50 people to a spirited demo at the Cincinnati city council meeting where they spoke and took control of the meeting for as long as they stayed. As a follow-up action on September 17, a small picket line was planned; a total of 21 people leafletted and picketed in front of the courthouse.

One woman was approached by two uniformed police officers, asked for her ID, and asked if she was the leader of the group--she refused to give them the ID and got back in the moving picket line. The only Black, who was leafletting, was approached by the police and asked for identification; he gave them the information they wanted though he did not have an identification card. The woman who had first been approached went over, took part of the leaflets, and tried to move on; the police told the Black man "You look like someone who's wanted; You're under arrest for refusing to identify yourself." When the woman protested, she was pushed and knocked to the ground. Another member of the picket got involved, and by this time, there were about 20 uniformed police as well as 12 plain clothes officers who had been in the vicinity all along. The woman was hit on the head, given a minor concussion; other members of the picket line used their bodies to keep the police from beating more of the people who were fighting back.

The results were seven people arrested: Terry Jones, the Black man who was originally hassled by the police; four VVAW/WSO members--Bob Moore, Laurie O'Gara, David Sell, and Beth Zastrow; and two women who work with the Peoples' Health Movement (which has been fighting for better healthcare in Cincinnati)--Nan Hauck and Debbie Sweet. The latter was 50 feet away with a four-year-old child when she was arrested for resisting arrest. The charges are, variously, assault and battery on a police officer, resisting arrest, and disorderly conduct. All seven are out on bond; at a preliminary hearing they requested a jury trial which is scheduled for October 30.

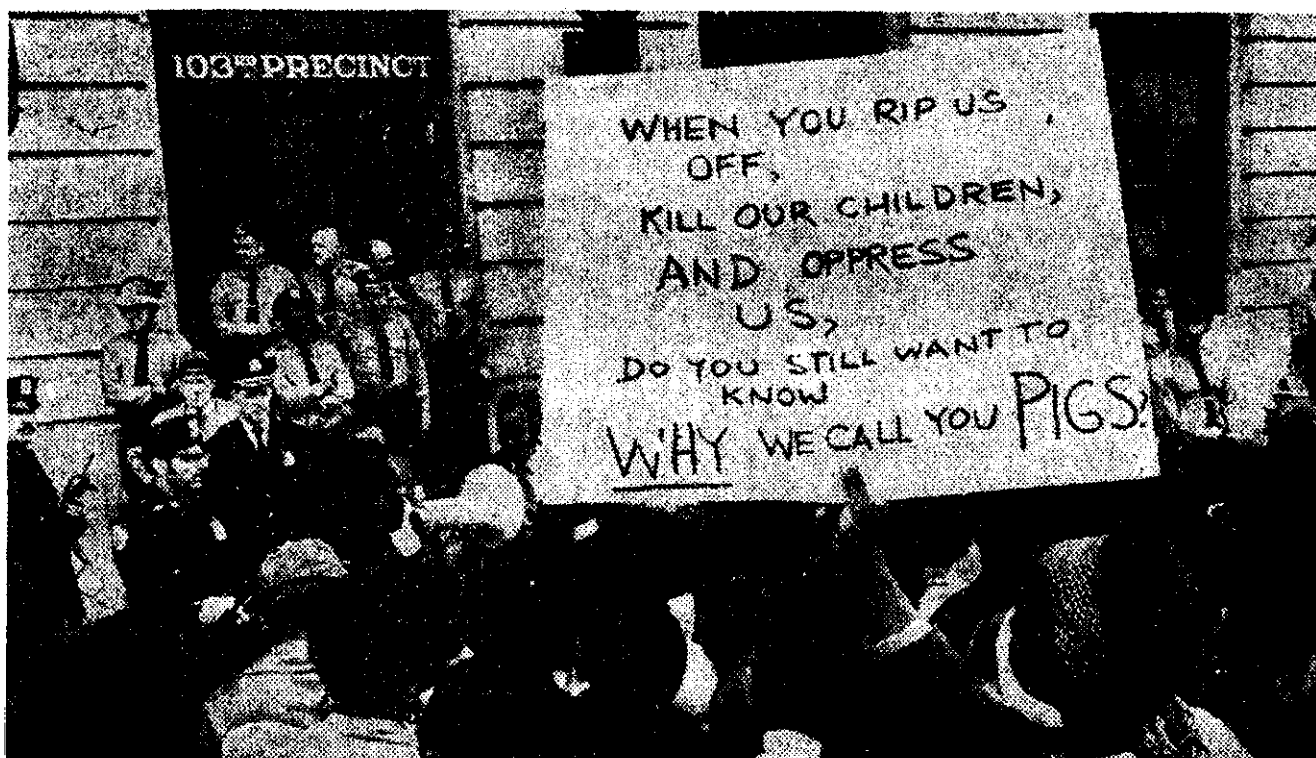
Details of this police attack are important because it is part of a pattern which we see happening around the country. First, this was a set-up--police appeared in large numbers within 60 seconds of the time the first two officers arrested Terry, and the plainclothesmen were around the area the whole time. Second, the tactic is to separate people so as to deal with a small number. Third, the police provoke the people to react in some way so they have some appearance of justification for their attack.

VVAW/WSO members in Cincinnati have added the following criticisms. First, the group was not prepared for the police actions. Second, and a part of the first, is that the various clues which were present were not seen--people talking on radios, for instance--and there was no serious attempt made to look around the area where the demo was being held.

By reacting to the police harassment as some people did, they played right into the hands of the police giving them the justification they needed. At the same time it is clear that the police had targeted certain individuals, and would probably have managed to provoke something in any case. The reaction of the people in working together to protect those people being assaulted by the police minimized the injuries.

One of the major lessons to be learned from this incident is that people must be prepared ahead of time, follow the tactical leadership, and react in unity. Clearly, the more people who are there the more effective they will be in dealing with this kind of attack. People with camera as well as news media are also effective in having a record of such an assault for later use.

What these tactics amount to is an attempt to intimidate the people who are fighting the imperialist system. All VVAW/WSO chapters who are doing their jobs by being out in the streets and visible are liable to similar attacks. Part of the answer is unity and discipline among those people in the action. Another part is planning--knowing how the enemy is likely to operate. Third is building a large, fighting organization which is not going to be intimidated by whatever tactics the police and their bosses, the imperialist ruling class, use against us, because, as we learned in Washington, power is finally on the side of the people.



Attica Memorial Rally

Around 2000 people took part in the Rally and march in Buffalo on the third anniversary of the Attica massacre when Rockefeller's goon squads killed 43 people in D-Yard at Attica prison. VVAW/WSO in Buffalo, which worked closely with ABLD (Attica Brothers Legal Defense) in building for the march and rally, brought VVAW/WSO members from Buffalo, Rochester, Ithaca, Oneonta, New York City, Northern New Jersey, Syracuse, Burlington, VT, Cincinnati and Columbus to march in the VVAW/WSO contingent. This contingent, about 100 people, was selected by the ABLD to be the first organization to march in the parade, immediately after the defendants and their families.

The Buffalo chapter made a 20 foot banner saying Free the Attica Brothers, Free All Political Prisoners, Jail Pig Rockefeller. Speakers at the Rally included Steve Hassett, the New York/Northern New Jersey regional coordinator who read a statement from the Leavenworth Brothers.

Chicago VA Picket

The Chicago chapter of VVAW/WSO held a picket line at the regional VA facility on the 30th of September. The action was supported by members of the RSB, RU, and Peoples Voice. The picket line was built by weeks of leafletting, and sales of Winter Soldier at the VA facility; leaflets included one which explained "Why We Tookover the VA" in reference to an earlier occupation of the regional director's office.

While the security police scurried around inside the facility, locking doors and checking passes, the picket moved from entrance to entrance, chanting and listening to speeches about the VA, decent benefits, Indochina, and amnesty. About 40 people, including a couple of people who joined the picket line, were present.

In their sum-up of the action, Chicago VVAW/WSO stated: "We accomplished our goals of continuing to build the campaign around the VA and continuing to work around our veterans and GI focus. We felt that overall the demo went smoothly and presented our demands clearly to the people inside the VA as well as those who came to the demo. The response from people we talked to was very good. We think that we have a great deal of support inside the VA from patients and workers, but they are not to the stage where they will take active part in the struggle we are waging. We must concentrate more on getting inside the VA and relating directly to, and building a base among the workers and patients. The VA administration was clearly terrified of another takeover, to the extent that they locked doors on entering employees and checked ID cards. We have got them on the run, and will keep them there."

Milwaukee in the VA

Almost as if to demonstrate the accuracy of the Chicago sum-up--that to get the VA patients and workers involved actively in the struggle against the VA takes consistent work--Milwaukee VVAW/WSO has begun a study group in the Milwaukee VA hospital around the Winter Soldier paper. This is the result of a long period of constant work in and around the VA, and the chapter is anticipating active support

from the hospitalized vets during their next action at the VA.

Cincinnati VA Demonstration

Despite work on local defense committees--now including their own--the Cincinnati chapter of VVAW/WSO organized a demonstration outside the Cincinnati VA hospital. The militant demonstrators, which included members of the RU, RSB, Cincinnati Peoples' Health Movement, and Movin' On Up (a workers paper in Cincinnati), chanted and listened to speeches around the four demands. The spokesperson for the group to the media was Michael Branch, ex-POW, and there was good media coverage of the demo which led to good response from people who later called the chapter.

Picket Line in Denver

On September 21 the Denver VVAW/WSO chapter sponsored a picket line outside the Denver unemployment office. Leafletting had gone on ahead of time at the Telephone Company, campuses, the postoffice, and some factories--there were about 80 people--some 60 of them people who have not been to demonstrations in the past, and some of whom joined the organization. There were three speakers: one from VVAW/WSO who talked about the struggle of vets and GIs, one from the Colorado Workers Unity Organization who spoke about inflation and tied in the struggles of vets and GIs, and one from the National Lawyers Guild who spoke on amnesty. A demonstration at the VA Hospital is planned for Vets Day.

In discussing the building for the Vets Day demo the Denver chapter said that rather than just call a demonstration, they will build support between now and then in the VA so that when we have a demo there it will involved the patients. For too long we have just been calling demos or supporting others, and we now feel that we will begin to organize people rather than events.

Amnesty petitions at a Joan Baez concert collected some 1000 signatures as VVAW/WSO members circulated around the crowd preceding the concert.

Syracuse Demonstration and Picket Line

Syracuse VVAW/WSO sponsored a demonstration in order to "Declare War on the VA" which brought out 60 spirited demonstrators. There were speakers from the RSB, from the ABLD in Syracuse, and from VVAW/WSO. The demonstration was followed by a picket at the VA.

Philadelphia Fund-raising/Action Weekend

Three days of VVAW/WSO activities are being planned by the Philadelphia Chapter of VVAW/WSO. It will begin with a Halloween Fund-raising party on October 26th in Philadelphia (other chapters and regions are invited--contact Philly VVAW/WSO for details), followed by the Eastern Pa/Delaware/S. NJ regional meeting on the 27th, and participation in the reactionary vets day parade on the 28th. The chapter is also planning to greet Ford when he comes to town on October 9th. Bake sales have been going on around the Philadelphia area as a way to get together the necessary funds for all these activities.

VVAW/WSO Participated in Prisoner John Yancey Demo in Portsmouth NH -

Approximately 75 people, including the local VVAW/WSO chapter marched in a demonstration in support of John Yancey, a black man being charged with assault in prison, when in fact he was assaulted by prison guards. The demonstration centered on three demands -- Drop the charges on Yancey, Fire the Captain who attacked Yancey and who has continually harrassed him, and unlimited access to the prison so that this harrassment will stop. The demonstrators also attacked Rockefeller for his ordering the massacre at Attica. Another point of the demonstration was to commemorate the death of George Jackson, another black man who was killed in prison.

Demonstration at Long Beach Hospital -

The VVAW/WSO Long Beach Organizing Committee, along with the Tyrone Guyton Defense Committee and the Inland Empire (San Bernardino-Riverside) Chapter of VVAW/WSO called a demonstration at the Long Beach Hospital where Tricky Dick is hiding out from the law. The demonstration, called in one day drew approximately 15 people who demanded "No Amnesty for Nixon", along with the four demands of the national program. In addition the demonstrators called for an end to police repression in Third World communities, citing the terror perpetrated by cops as in the cases of Gary Lawton, Zurebu Gardner, Tyrone Guyton and Tony Wilkens, a man killed by the cops recently in Los Angeles.

Demonstrating

Because of the number of demonstrations, picket lines, etc now going on at VA facilities, the NO is collecting the criticisms and suggestions from chapters on the strong and weak points of their actions. We are also putting out the material used at these demos--particularly the chants. Send us your contributions; these ideas are obviously useful for all kinds of VVAW/WSO actions.

1. Prior leafletting: unless there is some reason to keep the action a secret, there should be preparation so that the people in the VA (or wherever) know what the demonstration is about, what the demands are, why the action is going on.
2. Banners and signs, presenting the demands have to be large enough to be seen at a distance (this is particularly true where patients cannot join in the demonstration but can see it).
3. Speeches need to keep their audience in mind, not degenerate into rhetorical flourishes designed for the demonstrators solely. And, if at all possible, they should be amplified (a portable speaker system is a handy tool) so that people at a distance can at least get the major points of a speech.
4. Chants are an effective means of reaching people at a distance--if they are done in unison, and if they get across a political point. The following chants are from the Chicago VA picket:

Decent benefits are a must
VA machinery has turned to rust.

All resisters must be free
What we need is amnesty.

Prices are high, Wages are low
There's only one way for veterans to go;
Veterans Unite
Organize to Fight!

Ford, Roudebush
Puppets on a string,
The rulers give the orders,
All they do is sing.

1, 2, 3, 4,
Decent benefits, we want more;
4, 3, 2, 1,
Veterans fight has just begun.



Auth, Philadelphia Inquirer