

VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR NEWSLETTER



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National Steering Committee Meeting

The 16th VVAW NSCM will begin at noon on the 14th of February in Chicago. This is almost five years to the day after the first VVAW NSCM and, like that first meeting, should mark some real forward steps for our organization.

As was talked about in the last newsletter, this will be a new type of steering committee meeting where everyone who is in VVAW is invited to come and participate in the planning and building of the fighting veterans movement, the demonstration on July 4th, and VVAW. Information about the meeting should go out to chapter mailing lists, to vets clubs, and to individual vets we have been in contact with in the recent past; in short we want to build the meeting among any people interested in building the vets movement and/or the demonstration and/or VVAW.

Our prospective agenda for the meeting follows. It's designed to provide for as much participation as possible from the people coming to the meeting and, at the same time, enough direction and discipline to keep the meeting on the track and get accomplished what needs to be done. The times in this agenda are tentative.

Registration: This will take place whenever people get into Chicago. On Saturday morning this will be done at the church where the meeting will take place. Prior to that, registration will take place at the National Office.

12 Noon, Saturday February 14th: Meeting begins. Welcoming talk by the VVAW National Office to lay out the purpose of the meeting, talk about the veterans movement, and particularly about the July 4th demonstration.

12:30-2:00: Talks from other organizations. While this has not yet all been worked out, it will probably include representatives from the Unemployed Workers Organizing Committee, from the Revolutionary Student Brigade, from the Revolutionary Communist Party and from the Iranian Student Association. Others may be added to this list.

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2:00-2:30: VVAW NC to speak briefly on the specifics of the meeting
Nomination of national coordinators including brief summaries of why these individuals should come to the NC. Elections will not be held until the following day so that people at the meeting will have a chance to see the prospective coordinators during the meeting and to talk with them.

3:00-6:00: Workshops. There should be five workshops going on at the same time. Unemployment, the GI Bill, the VA, the Danger of War, and the Bicentennial Demonstration. The workshops should be built on our practical work and bring out lessons from that, talk about how the work relates to building for the demonstration and to building beyond the demonstration toward the overall fighting vets movement. The workshops should keep their feet firmly on the ground of reality and provide a chance for everyone in the workshop to participate. Each workshop should begin with a clear statement from the workshop chair as to the scope of the workshop.

Saturday Evening: Social activity!

Sunday Morning: Workshop reports. These should be oral, not written, and be presented by the workshop leader. While they shouldn't go into all the details of the workshop, they should be full enough to give people who were not there a chance to understand what went on and why. There will be time after each report for questions from the floor, or for other people in the workshop to bring up points for discussion.

Election of coordinators.

Closing sum-up by the National Office. This will summarize what has gone on during the meeting, talk once again about the demonstration, and point the way forward to building VVAW, the demonstration, and the fighting veterans movement.

NSCM Logistics

There will be one more mailing which will include maps and specific registration directions, plus any changes or suggestions for the agenda.

Food & Money: Members of the Chicago chapter are planning on five meals from Saturday noon to Sunday evening. Preliminary planning sees these meals as costing approximately \$1.50 per person per meal. That means the registration fee will be \$7.50. IN ORDER TO PURCHASE THE FOOD, THIS MONEY MUST BE IN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. Checks should be made out to VVAW. We realize that not every chapter will know definitely in advance how many people will be coming, since we should be building for the NSCM up until the last moment. SEND MONEY TO COVER YOUR ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE; adjustments can be made later.

In order to buy food and make other plans and arrangements, we have to have a sense of how many people are coming to the NSCM. Give us your best guess as soon as possible.

As stated in the last Newsletter, some people may end up having to sleep on floors, either at the church where the meeting is held or in other places. If people are coming from your area who must have beds or special diets or childcare or any other kind of specialized treatment, we have to know in advance so that the necessary arrangements can be made.

Finally, we're looking forward to a new type of steering committee meeting, one which will help to accomplish the goals of building VVAW, building the Bicentennial demonstration, and building the fighting vets movement.

Demo Building

As stated in the previous newsletters, people should be getting out the word about the demonstration, making contacts with other groups, and pointing their propaganda toward the meaning of the Bicentennial for veterans.

According to the information we have received, most, if not all, UWOC chapters around the country have decided to build for the July 4th actions. If VVAW chapters are not already in contact with UWOC chapters in their areas, they should make those contacts in order to work on building together for the demonstration and around future unemployment work. In several cities, VVAW and UWOC are sponsoring joint demonstrations at which the Bicentennial will be raised and the demonstration announced and discussed.

VVAW chapters, in addition to working with UWOC, should be putting out propaganda concerning the Bicentennial and the demonstration and the reasons for it. Included with this newsletter is a copy of the most recent leaflet from the Chicago chapter pointing toward the demonstration and raising the VVAW demands around that demonstration. (The two unifying demands for the July 4th action are, as put forward in the last issue of The Veteran, Jobs or Income Now and We Won't Fight Another Rich Man's War; VVAW will also be raising our demand around Decent Benefits and, depending on the NSCM decisions, other demands such as Extend and Defend the GI Bill.) On the Chicago leaflet, after discussion in the chapter, it was decided to try out a different slogan around the rich man's war; after further discussion, the slogan has now been changed back to We Won't Fight Another Rich Man's War. Other chapters should be getting out leaflets, posters, and whatever other propaganda they can as soon as possible to build for the demonstration. Copies of this material should be sent to the NO.

The Veteran

Before the next issue of the paper can be produced we need two things: MONEY & ARTICLES. Once again, chapters will have to pay in advance for the paper, because we don't have the money to print it. Second, we have to know

what kind of actions or activities are going on. Most of our work particularly the work around specific cases or events, has a potential story for the paper inside it but chapters have to get that information in to the NO. We should have in each issue of the paper at least something from as many chapters as possible--even a photo of people selling the paper or collecting names on a petition is better than nothing. Despite what the paper usually looks like, there are more chapters than New York, Milwaukee, and Detroit. If you give us a call the moment you read this newsletter and tell us about a story in your area, it won't be too soon.

We expect to have the paper written by the time of the NSCM, leaving some space to report on that meeting so that the paper can be taken to the printer in the week following the NSCM--if we have the money and the articles.

Dues

A few chapters have paid dues, but most chapters haven't. The money is needed for things like supplies to put together the paper, postage, office supplies, and similar necessities. \$1 per member per month. Please.



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