



VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR, INC

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"With the approach of the fortieth anniversary of the Gulf of Tonkin "incidents," we should remember the facts behind those lies—lies that drew many of us into an orgy of death, destruction, and dislocation for more than ten years. We must remember how easy it was to lie us into that war, while we are in the midst of a great controversy over the lies that took us to war in Iraq in March 2003."

- Joe Miller, "Tonkin Gulf to WMD: Lies, Anniversaries and More Lies," The Veteran, Spring 2004

Dear Friends,

This past August marked the fifty-second anniversary of the Gulf of Tonkin "incidents." The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, passed almost unanimously by Congress, caused nearly three million of our brothers and sisters to be sent into a war that ended with nearly 60,000 Americans dead, along with the usually-forgotten millions of dead Vietnamese, Laotians, and Cambodians. I was a crew member on the USS Ticonderoga (CVA-14). I knew people on board the Maddox, who I had served with in the Naval Security Group. I knew from their accounts the lies that led us into the Vietnam War and the life altering, devastating consequences. **With your continued support of VVAW, we can continue to carry out this legacy to prevent and fight against unjust wars like the one in Vietnam.**

After 9/11, we saw the cycle of lies repeat. There were the unfounded stories of weapons of mass destruction that led us into Iraq. Yet no weapons were found. We saw the fear mongering against Muslims. Fifteen years after we invaded Afghanistan and thirteen years after we invaded Iraq, we still have troops on the ground. We are also bombing ISIS in eight different countries.

At the same time that we have been fighting unjust wars based on lies, we are creating another generation of veterans. They are coming home to a VA system that cannot handle the demand of both aging Vietnam vets and a new generation of vets needing care, especially those seeking mental health services. While the VA has added mental health providers and established a VA crisis support line, we know that veterans were turned away from the mental health services they sought out. We know that calls and texts to this hotline went unanswered. This



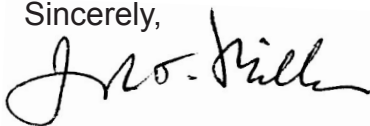
resulted in veterans' deaths. During this same time, the VA spent more than \$20 million on expensive art for its facilities. Let's call on the VA to use this money and energy to bolster much needed mental health services at its clinics and instead use affordable art by vets for vets.

Vets are now in the position of having to fight to keep the VA institution that is so in need of reform. We cannot allow the greedy jackals of for-profit medicine to use the public's and vets' righteous outrage over the VA's failings to undermine and destroy this institution. It is up to us Vets to keep fighting against privatization and keep informing the public about why a functional VA is necessary for our survival.

As we approach November's presidential elections, we must call out the amped up racist, xenophobic and anti-Muslim rhetoric that we've seen, especially since the Conventions. We cannot go down another road of lies into war. As a non-profit organization, VVAW does not endorse political candidates. But, as war veterans, we certainly have an interest in preventing the exploitation of yet another generation of veterans who will be shoved aside and ignored in all their basic needs when they come home. VVAW calls on you to get out and vote in the November elections. Our collective votes can ensure whether or not veterans' rights are a priority in our country, whether or not the VA will get the support it needs, and whether or not our country will wage another unjust war. And no matter who wins the election, our voices need to be heard. We need your support.

We understand the demands on everyone's limited resources. **We are deeply thankful when our members and supporters make tax-deductible donations to VVAW's work, at whatever level.** Your donation enables us to carry on VVAW's legacy, whether it is through our free semi-annual newspaper, *The Veteran*, or fighting back against unjust wars waged in our name. **We thank all of you for your continued support.**

Sincerely,



Joe Miller
VVAW Board member

I am sending Vietnam Veterans Against the War \$35 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other to support its work for peace, justice, and for decent benefits for all veterans. Donations to VVAW are tax deductible. You can also donate online at www.vvaw.org.

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