



VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR, INC

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"My generation, the people who lived through the Vietnam War, learned a great deal from our miserable and tragic experience. I wonder whether the lessons we absorbed at such tremendous cost are being passed on to future generations? If they are not understood, or if they are forgotten, are we doomed to repeat the same mistakes, commit the same crimes, repeat the same disasters, spread the same sorrows?"

- Bao Ninh, NVA Veteran, author of "The Sorrow of War"

Dear Friends,

As Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) wraps up our 50th anniversary commemorations, we continue to be reminded of why we came into existence and why we are still here. For fifty years, VVAW has had continuing priorities: *agitating* to end our war and stop wars like it; *fighting* for decent benefits, including VA medical care, treatment for Agent Orange, PTSD and a decent GI Bill; and *teaching* the public about what we experienced - trying to make sense out of the senselessness of our war - and how to be on guard against future wars. VVAW has continued those priorities since our earliest days. **Please consider supporting VVAW and our legacy with a tax-deductible end-of-the-year contribution.**

In the early 1970s, while the war was still being fought, VVAW members traveled to northern Vietnam as part of peace delegations. Barry Romo, who served in combat during the 1968 Tet Offensive, joined peace activist Joan Baez and former Nuremberg Prosecutor Telford Taylor on a trip to Hanoi in December 1972, during the so-called "Christmas bombing." They witnessed firsthand the destruction of schools and hospitals. Barry returned to the US to speak publicly about these acts and to give witness to the atrocities being committed against the Vietnamese people. We fought against the onslaught of revisionist history in the 80s when Reagan was describing Vietnam as an "honorable war." With mainstream movies that challenged the official narrative about the war, we found new interest in VVAW and its history. There was a clear rise in discussions about the role VVAW played during the war. This has continued well into the current era.

Now, 50 years later, while there are many who view the Vietnam war as ancient history and know little about it. There are also those who thought they knew what the war was about who are now challenged by the new documentary series by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick for PBS, "The Vietnam War." The documentary was by no means all-inclusive. The documentary left unanswered questions, left out important details, and reiterated some of the usual myths. While the documentary can be criticized and nit-picked, we in VVAW should see this as a tool to continue our efforts at organizing for veterans and their families who still suffer as well as fighting for ALL victims of Agent Orange exposure, in the US and in Vietnam. There is still much healing to be done, and a huge part of that healing is recognition of the central responsibility of the US government and successive policymakers in the American war against Vietnam and its people.

This is why VVAW is just as important today as we have been for the last 50 years. VVAW was the first veteran's group organized to oppose its war while it was still happening. VVAW is the only anti-war veteran's organization still around from the time of our war. We still publish the very finest anti-war Veterans newspaper, *The Veteran*, twice a year. Our website, [vvaw.org](http://www.vvaw.org), has a collection of EVERY VVAW newspaper, since the beginning. Our FaceBook site (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/vvawinc>) is active with relevant news and discussion.

We lost many of our brothers and sisters along the way. Many died from direct after-effects of the war, like Agent Orange exposure and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), others from the perils of being in the working class and some from getting older. **But, we are still here and our role is just as important as ever.**

There is still time to participate in VVAW's 50th anniversary commemorations. Check out our latest publication, "VVAW: 50 Years of Struggle." You can also show your support for VVAW with a purchase of a t-shirt, button, bumper sticker and more. All are available for purchase at our online store, www.vvaw.org/store/. You can also leave your memories of VVAW, and how we have impacted your lives using our online guestbook: www.vvaw.org/50thguestbook/.

Please join us. We hope that the lessons of VVAW will ring out to current and future generations. We must resist. We must persevere. We must fight for a better world and not give in to the calls for self-interest and greed that are out there. Please take action on the issues most important to you. We know the importance of persistent collective action. You can share your experiences by writing articles for *The Veteran*, VVAW's free semi-annual newspaper. Send your submissions to vvaw@vvaw.org. Write letters to the editor to your local newspaper. Call your legislators (Congressional switchboard is 202-224-3121). Participate and march in local and national events. We need all of us, all of you, to take action, in whatever ways you are able.

In these difficult times, we understand the demands on everyone's limited resources. **So, we are deeply thankful when our members and supporters make tax-deductible donations to VVAW's work, at whatever level.** Your donations to VVAW help us keep distributing our newspaper, *The Veteran*, to our members, friends, and supporters. Please pass out copies to your family and friends, your local library, or your local VA. Your donations also keep our website going, where we have every issue of VVAW's newspaper online, a 50th Anniversary Guestbook, as well as archives of many other articles, photos, and videos. Your donations allow us to make VVAW's legacy not only accessible to all through our website but also archive them for generations to come. We need to preserve our legacy and to be an outlet and a united voice for veterans now more than ever.

Take this opportunity to make an end-of-the-year tax-deductible donation before December 31 so that you can claim it on this year's tax return. We thank all of you for your continued support. On behalf of VVAW's staff and Board, we hope you have a safe and wonderful New Year!

In solidarity,



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.

Name (print) _____

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