



VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR, INC

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Dear Friends,

2019 is coming to an end. As we write this, the US military presence continues to spread and we are on the possible brink of more war. Will Chump be impeached? Will he withdraw more troops? Then send them back to steal oil? Will he coddle up to more dictators? Will he condone genocide?

We do know, that to fight all these wars, the US needs more soldiers. The US Army wants a 500,000 active-duty force by the end of this next decade, about 25,000 more than today. Preying on low income high schoolers is apparently how they intend to do it. Recruiters today downplay the forever wars and their outcomes. Instead they are using the national student debt crisis to try and meet their goals. Once again, the rich find ways to get the poor to fight their wars.

And what happens when these soldiers come back injured? They should be able to access the VA and its services, but that is under threat. The current administration continues to chip away and undermine the integrity of the VA. We must do all we can to fight privatization and to make sure the VA does not get dismantled.

What can we do? We can't answer all these questions, but we do know that in 2020 we need to take action to remove Chump and his cronies from office. As a non-profit, we do not endorse candidates. But we can encourage everyone to exercise their right to vote, and vote out the warmakers, profiteers, and privatizers. We know that action does not begin or end at the ballot box. Without a real movement for social change, we've seen how easily votes can be stolen and decisions overturned. We must make sure the voices for veterans, peace, and justice are not silenced.

Another Veterans Day has passed. We need to use these days when everyone has veterans on their mind, to remind everyone of the true cost of service and war. We need to use these opportunities to remind people of the attacks on the VA, the Forever Wars, or the numerous chemical poisonings, or psychological damage that vets endure. We must be strategic in our approach and use every opportunity we can to spread our message. VVAW has made its mark on history by emphasizing the true cost of war, both in material, psychological and ethical terms.

We have to make sure the struggles we have engaged in are remembered and carried on, not wiped away and forgotten. CSPAN just aired the Winter Soldier documentary, which documented VVAW's Winter Soldier hearing where members confessed to participating in brutal acts of war on the Vietnamese people. This is not just an exercise in history, but an important guide for today. The realities of US military engagement are even more stark now. Many of those who participated in that 1971 event are no longer with us today, but

those of us still here cannot forget and we must continue to raise these issues.

There are many ways to continue the struggle and shine a light on the injustices we have spent our lives fighting to correct. We will not give up. We will not forget our brothers and sisters who have done time in the service. We will not forget the Vietnamese people who we waged an unjust war on.

As you have read previously, VVAW is sponsoring a library for the children of Vietnam in the Bến Tre Province. We have an opportunity to leave a permanent marker to VVAW's role in reconciliation. Progress is being made, a project manager has been secured in Vietnam, and ground breaking should occur soon. Fundraising is ongoing as we plan to complete the project in 2020. We hope you are as excited as we are about this project and donate what you can. Check out our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/groups/vvawinc/) for updates on the project.

We are deeply thankful when our members and supporters make tax-deductible donations to VVAW's work, at whatever level. Your contributions to VVAW help us keep distributing *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 as well as archives of many other articles, photos, and videos. Spend some time and search our website and explore our archives. Your donations allow us to make VVAW's legacy not only accessible to all through our website but also to archive them for generations to come. Your donation will also help us to build the library in Vietnam. We thank all of you for your continued support.

In solidarity,



Bill Branson
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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