



VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR, INC

PO Box 355, Champaign, IL 61824-0355 (773) 569-3520

www.vvaw.org
vvaw@vvaw.org

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"(We) demand immediate legislation to provide proper care and service for all veterans in V.A. hospitals; to make available job training and placement for every returning veteran; and to provide the funds and means necessary for their educational and vocational endeavors." – From Objectives of VVAW, The First Casualty, August 1971

Dear Friends,

In 1971, one of VVAW's nine objectives acknowledged the importance of jobs for returning vets. Whether we had volunteered or were drafted, many of us went to Vietnam soon after high school and upon discharge, we were back "home" but nothing was the same.

Many of us worked night and day for many years to stop the war. But as the 1970s wore on, we had to get jobs to feed ourselves and our families. A lot of us turned to the Post Office, which to this day is one of the largest employers of vets in the nation.

Many national leaders in VVAW worked at the post office and took their organizing skills to leadership positions in postal unions – Barry Romo, Dave Cline, Clarence Fitch, Pete Zastrow, Bill Shunas to name a few. They, and many others, put in years of service to make the United States Postal Service a better place for workers and a better service for all citizens.

While we were in Vietnam, the Post Office was our lifeline to our lives back home, keeping us connected to those we cared about stateside. Many of us cast our first votes while we were in Vietnam, and the only way to do that was by absentee ballots sent overseas by mail.

Today, over 113,000 vets work for the USPS. That's 18% of their entire workforce. Right now, most of us Vietnam era vets are retired, but many of us rely on getting our prescriptions from the VA in the mail. The USPS delivers over 330,000 of those meds every single day.

In an affront to all citizens, the Chump in the White House has increased his attacks on the functioning and very existence of the USPS. We cannot let this fool destroy the United States Post Office. If the Post Office is de-funded and crippled, how will mail-in voting take place? This attack on the PO is not by chance.

We must fight back. All US citizens are in the cross hairs of this corrupt and cowardly administration, but we are now an especially vulnerable population. We need our mail, we need our prescriptions, and most importantly, we need our votes.

We are heartened by the new generation of Black Lives Matter activists who have been waging heroic struggles across the country. VVAW stands in solidarity with their efforts. We were often on the receiving end of police violence, as were our comrades in other fights for self-determination in the past. We must demand a stop to the continual attacks by the official and

"unofficial" state thugs on those who are fighting for their rights and their very existence.

No matter what some of us have felt over the past five decades, the current administration proves that elections matter. We cannot let the pandemic halt or hinder the elections! We cannot stand by and silently watch as the USPS is dismantled, our voting rights are stolen, and our sisters and brothers in the Black Lives Matter movement are brutalized. We also cannot neglect the continued sabotage and looting of the Veterans Administration, a lifeline for millions of veterans.

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, neo-fascists, and privatizers. We know that voting is important, but social action does not begin or end at the ballot box. We must help this nascent 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.

Especially during this time, don't forget your friends and comrades in the struggle. Everyone who can needs to reach out and give a call or email or zoom or whatever. We can't let this current period push any of our friends over the edge. Let's make ourselves available!

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. 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. 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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