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# THE VETERAN

**Vietnam Veterans Against the War**

**25¢**

**Vol. 11 No. 3**

**P.O. Box 25592 Chicago IL 60625**

**SUMMER 1981**

## CONGRESSIONAL LEGISLATION

# AGENT ORANGE... NOTHING NEW

In mid-June the U.S. House and Senate passed separate bills with comprehensive packages for Vietnam vets. Both bills addressed extensions for Vets Outreach Centers (scheduled to be axed in October) and, importantly, the problems of the herbicide Agent Orange.

The bills have not yet been resolved nor have they gotten through the White House; more importantly, they haven't made it by the ax of Management and Budget czar David Stockman. Still, the bills need close examination for their actual merits.

Both bills would authorize VA hospitals to give priority medical treatment to Vietnam vets whose conditions is determined by VA physicians to be associated with Agent Orange. Additionally, current VA studies would be expanded to include veterans affected by other herbicides--Agent Blue, White and Pink; and the controversial experiments performed on Vietnam vets with the anti-malarial drug, dapson.

Despite the nice-sounding words of the bills, the reality of this legislation has to be seen in perspective, especially for vets and their families suffering from the effects of herbicides.

Since the VA has yet to determine exactly what test procedures are to be used to find the presense of 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T (the major ingredients of Agent Orange) in vets, the question of broadening the studies will add little to the VA's already pathetic Agent Orange program.

The question of priority medical treatment, however well-intentioned, is a cruel hoax. With no standardized test program,

the VA may give the vet priority in the VA waiting room but what treatment he or she receives will be directed toward a particular

to contend with the VA whose history around Agent Orange has already been dismal at best.

Dated May 17, 1981, the



Lambert Caldwell, member of Chicago VVAW and victim of Agent Orange, speaks during Chicago Memorial Day ceremony.

symptom rather than an herbicide-related illness. Bluntly speaking, if this legislation makes it into law, nothing changes on the Agent Orange front. There is little doubt that already prevalent horror stories of medical screw-ups, bad diagnosis, and intimidation of vets reporting Agent Orange symptoms will probably increase.

### VA DOCUMENT SHOWS REAL INTENTIONS

Once Congress passes the bills into law (barring resistance from Stockman or the White House) veterans will still have

an official VA memo, launches an incredible attack on the media, which has commented favorably on vets' positions, specific members of the media, Maude DeVic-tor (the VA employee who broke the Agent Orange story to the press), Vietnam vets and even wives of Vietnam vets who are activists.

The memo begins, "The

"other side" in the current Agent Orange controversy is making a strong appearance and may provide the counterpoint necessary to keep this important issue in objective perspective."

The scientific evidence comes from The American Council on Science and Health which states, "the herbicide 2,4,5-T is not hazardous to people." It further states, "No scientific reports presented to date have shown any convincing relationship between the traditional use of 2,4,5-T and adverse health effects in people." The VA has just over-ruled the Environmental Protection Agency, several governments of other countries and the majority of the world's scientific community.

The sources for the VA memo, The American Council on Science and Health, and Accuracy in the Media (AIM) Inc are questionable themselves.

The American Council on Science and Health has a long history of siding with major corporations on questions of safety to the American public when corporations, in this case the chemical companies, are being put to the wall by Vietnam veterans.

Accuracy in the Media, Inc, another conservative bastion to champion the privileged spends its time in the report slamming the New York Times for a series of articles favorable to Vietnam vets and their families.

Singling out Bill Kurtis of CBS and ABC's Geraldo Rivera, the VA's Office of Information has pointed the finger of blame for manufacturing a "scare" in

## TURN TO P. 6

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# FRAGGIN'

Sp 5 Willy(Ret.)



## "The Times They Are A'Changing"

When I was in, it seemed like the U.S. Army would never change. It felt like medieval times without the castle walls. You were supposed to kiss your sword, kiss someone's ass and defend your kingdom with your honor. To think anything different--well, you weren't supposed to think. It seemed like some things would never change.

But things are changing--things you could not believe. When you think of the army, what do you think of? Your buddies, fatigues, spit-shined boots, barracks and jeeps. Well, spit-shined boots and jeeps are on their way out. Both will be gone by the mid-'80's. Spit shines are out because enemies using infra-red lenses can spot foot soldiers with spit shines. Jeeps are out because they need a modern utility vehicle--one that can carry small missiles or something.

What are all the sergeants going to do? I can hear it now. "Soldier, your boots are filthy. Get down and give me fifty!"

"But sarge, it's against regulations to shine my boots."

And then the poor sergeant starts crying, and they carry him away.

But most sergeants are resourceful. They'll figure out new ways to be assholes. Rifle cleaning should get to be very popular. I predict that the dry shave will make a big comeback. I remember back in basic when we had a week in the field. I didn't change razor blades beforehand so it was dull by the second or third day. I got caught in inspection. Then, the big, fat sergeant stood there grinning underneath his Smokey Bear hat with spittle coming out of his mouth while I dry shaved with my dull razor. Yeah, dry shaving should be big.

But the jeep? How can they get rid of the jeep? I remember the jeeps I drove with affection. There was the one where you put the pedal to the metal and it stayed there until you reached down and pulled it back. In most of them you could hurt your back trying to step on the brake. Then there were those where the gears always froze. Right in the middle of the Delta and the damn gears freeze. But jeeps were fun too--like when you took a curve at 45 MPH or when we got the general's brand

new jeep and drove it into Saigon for a little R&R. One thing I'll say for the jeep. It taught you how to deal with a lot of situations.

## Bread & Water

The jeep and spit shine may be gone, but I guess the military really doesn't change all that much. It's still medieval. Paul Terice found that out the hard way. It cost him his life. Paul was on the USS Ranger. He had a good time in Hong Kong, stayed a little too long and got thrown in the brig for it.

In the brig he was given bread and water for 48 hours and made to run and do calisthenics as part of his discipline. He died of heatstroke and cardiac arrest. A spokesman for the Pacific Fleet said that this was not unusual treatment for the correctional custody units.

It wasn't all that unusual treatment for medieval times either, but this is supposed to be 1981!

## Dead Asses for the Navy

Life is cheap for the Navy. We all know that. Now they want permission to resume shooting wild burros at the Weapons Center at China Lakes, California. It seems that the burros stray onto the runway and cause problems, and it costs about \$50 to shoot a burro and \$500 to trap one and relocate it.

They're very conscious of cost efficiency. It reminds me of the figures they used in Vietnam. I think it cost something like \$16,000 in ammunition to kill one VC. Only, since there were a lot of civilians killed, the dollars spent per enemy was probably higher. But, if you include the destruction of animal life and the environment, the figure is lower and you get more bang for the buck.

At least that's how these cost-analysis people figure it. A certain number of dollars equals one life. However it comes out, the bottom line is that they treat the burros like they treat the seaman and they treat the seaman like they treat the burros.

## Higher Education

A lot of fellows ended up stuck in the military and then stuck in places like 'Nam because of education--the lack of it. But some people are lucky and get a lot of good education

because of who their daddy is.

Take Amy Carter, for instance. Up until a few months ago she lived in a nice house at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington. One weekend she was having trouble with her homework. She had a problem doing a paper on the Industrial Revolution so she went to her momma with the problem. Her momma told one of her aides who went to the Labor Department with the problem.

It was Friday so the folks at the Labor Department worked overtime on the weekend on what they thought were orders from the White House. Sunday afternoon, a truck rolled up to the door with a computer printout on the Industrial Revolution. It all cost the taxpayers a couple of hundred thousand dollars.

So Amy turned in her homework but she only got a "C". Maybe that's why the Carters are no longer living in the White House: they weren't cost efficient. An old Navy man like Jimmy should have known that she could buy a much cheaper and well done term paper at the local college.

## GRENADE OF THE MONTH

This month's grenade goes to Congressman Larry McDonald of Georgia. He's the kind of fascist dimwit who could probably merit a grenade every month. He's a bit looney and a leader of the John Birch Society. He probably has an honorary membership in the Wrightsville, GA American Legion Post--the one famous for its segregated swimming pool.

Anyway, he gets the grenade for a bill he introduced in Congress that would bar women from the military academies. It seems that he thinks it is a waste of time and money to train females because they can't be leaders anyway.

Then there's the problem of foxholes in firefighting. He's afraid that men and women might get so carried away in a foxhole that they won't defend their position (or cover their ass?).

I don't know if this is more stupid or more sexist. Maybe McDonald is still scared of the hippies, afraid they will infiltrate the military with their philosophy of "make love, not war."



## EDITORIAL

### WHAT WAR?

Occasionally people ask us "Vietnam Veterans Against the War? That war is over!" And we have to answer, "Is it really?"

Statistics show that more Vietnam vets have killed themselves than were killed in Vietnam. Estimates range from 50% to 80% of combat vets will suffer from Vietnam-related stress problems if there is not psychological intervention by 1985. The prison population is 1/3 Vietnam veteran. And unemployment among Vietnam vets has doubled in the last year.

While these are just statistics to most people, to us they represent lives of comrades and friends, people we survived with, people we came home with. During the Memorial Day season, VVAW had several of its members attempt suicide and others who suffered flashbacks from 'Nam. The "holidays" were not that festive for vets unemployed, for vets denied disability, for vets with memories too painful to live with.

For us the war did not end with the plane ride home--it merely transported us from one battlefield to another. And so VVAW's name remains the same. We are Vietnam veterans a fact which will remain no matter what Reagan or Stockman come up with. And we still are against that war we fought in and any more like it in the future. And finally, we are against the war against us and tired of being on the front lines of unemployment, cutbacks and neglect.

## SPECIAL!

WHAT IS AGENT ORANGE...page 16

**THE VETERAN**  
Vietnam Veterans Against the War

Veterans' Investigation into Effects & Problems  
**VETS SAY 'TREAT AGENT ORANGE' TARGET VA**



16 pages of testimony by victims of Agent Orange and experts on the effects of the chemical on Vietnam Vets and their families. 50¢ post paid.

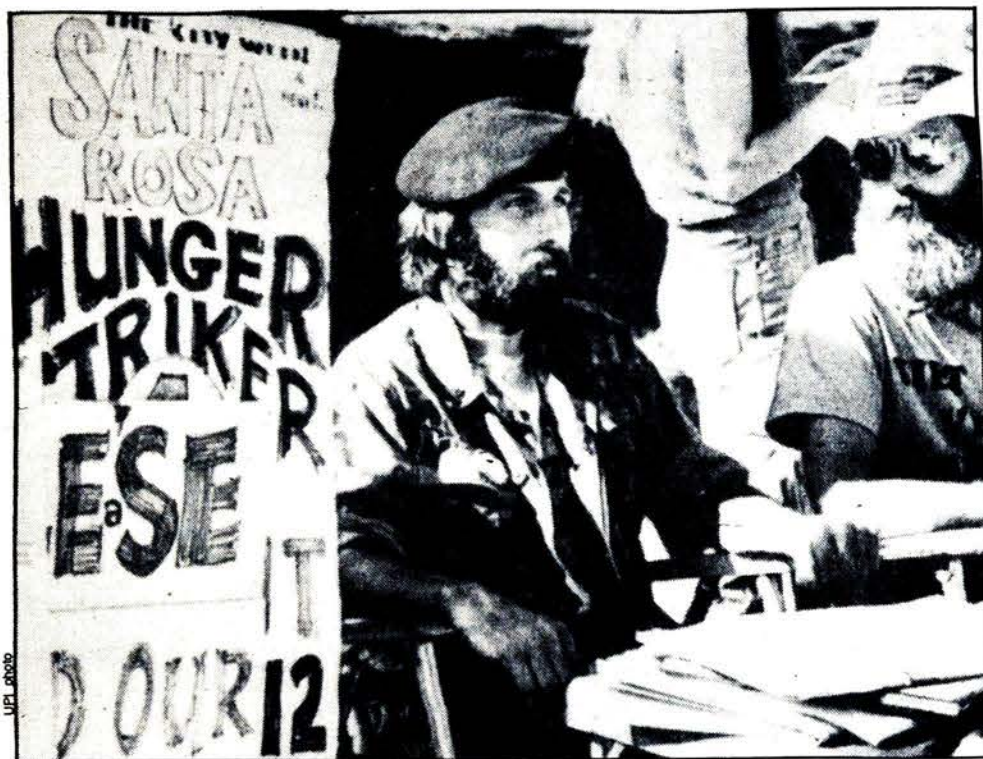
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# Hunger Strike and Sit-in VIETNAM VETERANS PROTEST IN CALIF.



James Hopkins was found dead a few days before Memorial Day. He had complained of lack of VA medical care and indifference about victims of Agent Orange poisoning. He had gone to the VA, been given medication and turned loose. His death sparked a sit-in at the Wadsworth VA in Los Angeles and later a hunger strike by vets demanding decent medical care, treatment for Agent Orange poisoning and a meeting with President Reagan.

Taking over the VA lobby they called a march on Memorial Day which attracted 200 people including some Hollywood notables. They also began a hunger strike, a liquids-only diet. News of the action spread and vets in Santa Rosa began a

sympathy strike, while other vets were arrested in an attempt to sit-in at the VA in Washington, DC. The LA strikers continued their sit-in for 18 days before being evicted by police.

Michael McCarthy, the vets' spokesman, left Los Angeles, moving the hunger strike to LaFayette Square across from the White House. At the same time a group working with the Community for Creative Non-Violence in Washington was arrested at the White House; they sat down on the White House lawn during a White House tour and refused to leave. Five of those arrested were Vietnam vets; one was a Gold Star Mother whose son was killed in Vietnam.

VA doctors looking into the charges stated that the Wadsworth VA was as good or superior to other VA facilities. Of course, this is like comparing quality in a POW compound. And Reagan has said, not surprisingly, that he will not meet with the strikers.

There has been a lot of support from the Vietnam veteran community for the sit-in and protest though the hunger strike has met with less enthusiasm. But regardless of the tactics, it is important for vets and others concerned about vet's health to support actions calling on the VA and federal government to carry out their commitments to veterans.

The following statement was released by those arrested during the sit-in on the White House lawn:

"As veterans and supporters of veterans, we are especially affected by the proposed Reagan budget cuts. Slashes in benefits and assistance will push many closer to the edge of physical and mental survival. The lack of jobs and job training means crushing despair for others. We who have been victimized by chemicals such as Agent Orange, as well as by nuclear radiation, face a long struggle, because of a government which refuses to take responsibility for the consequences of its actions.

"At the same time, veterans --many of whom are survivors of US foreign policy in action--see dollars pumped into an already bloated military budget. El Salvador threatens to become another Vietnam, and the cloud of nuclear war hangs over the survival of mankind...."

will be channeled into avenues of life, not death.

Joan Maiman  
Vets Leadership  
Conference

## VVAW

After seeing a copy of the Bobby Muller telegram, VVAW's National Office sent the following telegram to the vet hunger strikers in Los Angeles:

"Bobby Muller's mailgram ... is revolting! To attack fellow Vietnam vets because you disagree with their tactics is inexcusable. Vietnam Vets Against the War supports all actions in the L.A. area that are putting pressure on the VA and the Reagan administration for decent benefits for all veterans."

# V.V.A. Director SELLS OUT STRIKERS

How quickly some vets forget. Take, for instance, Bobby Muller, Executive Director of Vietnam Vets of America. We remember Bobby when he first got back from 'Nam and was languishing in a VA hospital trying to survive. We remember him condemning Nixon for continuing the war in Indochina. We remember him complaining about an insensitive VA, federal government, and rich man's system. Of course that was before a few TV shows and an article or two. Now with vets fighting for their lives, look at what Bobby sends to the vets in California, to Reagan and his other buddies:

"This communication is to advise you of our hope that you will discontinue your protest at the VA Hospital. The Vietnam Veterans of America does not support your continuing protest for several reasons: we feel the Reagan Administration has acted in a commendable manner.... Dr Custis, acting VA administrator has committed the President to the most significant goals Vietnam veterans have been lobbying for over the last several months. The commitment to continue the interagency work group as a moving vehicle to resolve the Agent Orange issue pleases us greatly, as does the expanded budget for Agent Orange research. The additional commitment to honor Congressional intent in continuing to operate the vet centers in their present form, as store front facilities, at the full level that Congress appropriated funding for, is a major breakthrough. To continue a positive dialog between Vietnam veterans and the Administration requires Vietnam veterans also to act in good faith, and, to continue protesting, in light of the very significant commitments the hunger strikers were given is unwarranted; any continued action on your part will only serve to give the impression of divisiveness and unreasonableness on the part of the Vietnam veteran community.

"Hopefully, you will reconsider your actions before serious and irreparable damage is done to the Vietnam veteran community."

Bobby Muller  
Washington DC  
May 29, 1981

Gosh, Bobby! We liked you more before you appointed yourself THE LEADER of Vietnam vets. We suppose that hobnobbing with the upper crust has made you forget about the guys on the bottom.

## TELEGRAMS TO THE STRIKERS Veterans Leadership Conference

The following letter was sent to the Los Angeles hunger strikers by Joan Maiman, Chairman of the Veterans Leadership Conference:

"Dear Veterans,

Many of us who were in Vietnam are deeply concerned to hear of the continuing hunger strike in which you are involved.

"We who have seen so much of death, have found that one of the lasting legacies of our time in Vietnam is a profound reaffirmation of the value of life. In a sense, we were held hostage to the future in that war and came home, granted in some cases to an untenable situation, but we did come home.

"It would be, indeed, the su-

preme irony if the loss of life were the only avenue open to the achievement of a better quality of life for your fellow veterans. We reject this notion; there are other options. This is not to be simplistic in our belief that such solutions are easy or will, in the end, achieve all that we desire, but we do have hope. In death there is no hope, only the end of any options.

"While we cannot, in conscience, endorse any act which may cause suffering or loss of life to any human being, this is not a condemnation of the issues raised or of your courage and commitment as individuals taking a stand. Rather, it is a statement of hope that your devotion



WASHINGTON, DC

Memorial Day in Washington DC, had a hard act to follow, namely, the meeting of the National Association of Concerned Veterans in nearby Baltimore, followed by a week of activity by the National Veterans Task Force on Agent Orange which culminated in a demonstration and march to Arlington National Cemetery, initiated by VVAW and other vets groups. With these two weeks of activity by Vietnam and Vietnam-era vets groups, the National Memorial Day activities rang very hollow.

Of the two DC programs that day, the Memorial service near the Lincoln Memorial was the larger. Called to honor the seven GI's killed in Jimmy Carter's aborted attempt to free the U.S. Embassy personnel in Iran, the principal speaker was Ellsworth Bunker, the U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam toward the end of U.S. involvement. The program was a festival of the absurd from the beginning. The commander of the ill-fated mission, popularly known as "The Turkey has landed," had already resigned in shame for botching the fiasco. He didn't make it. The former hostages, rocketed to superstar status by the U.S. media, and whose treatment by the nation infuriated already sullen Vietnam vets across the country, were also conspicuously absent. So what did the crowd get? A retread Nixon and Ford man, Ellsworth Bunker, who failed to mention his successor's daring rescue of his dog, left behind at the U.S. Embassy in Saigon as South Vietnam toppled like the pile of horse manure it was. A little-known footnote to the whole affair, and one that Bunker did not mention in his speech, was the abandonment of the bodies of U.S. Marines at Bien Hoa. They had died at their posts while the ambassador beat feet and then pulled off the rescue of his dog. The tragic death of the 7 GIs in the Iranian rescue attempt, and the attempt to give them fallen hero status became even more tragic in the face of this Memorial Day circus.

The other program in DC on Memorial Day was a bigger flop. Trying to capitalize on the week of Vietnam vets activities that had caught national media attention, the Reagan Administration tried to grab a piece of the action. Calling for a national Memorial Day to "honor" Vietnam veterans, the Reagan Administration trotted out George Bush, the vice president himself, as featured speaker among the generals and admirals on the stage.

Someone forgot to tell the Vietnam veterans about the program. In fact, they forgot to

# MEMORIAL DAY '81



Photo by Walter Kole, Chicago Tribune

Wreath-laying at Chicago's Eternal Flame on Memorial; Maryknoll Father Tom Peyton giving the Eulogy.

invite anyone. The national media panned the sea of empty folding chairs at Arlington Cemetery, commenting that Vietnam vets seemed to be missing with the exception of a handful of vets leftover from the previous weeks activities; these vets seemed less than comfortable with all the cameras in their faces and two-bit speeches coming from the stage.

First, who wants to hear George Bush talk about anything? Second, the Reagan Administration's dealings and intentions with veterans of all eras has been absolutely cutthroat and isn't likely to improve. So far Reagan has earned the hatred of almost every vets groups, traditional and Vietnam-era alike, with the exception of an occasional ass-kissing "vets leader" here and there. To draw a crowd the government would have done better with David Stockman as their main speaker; there would have been a crowd if only to throw things.

## CHICAGO

The story of Memorial Day in Chicago started a week earlier than expected during the city-sponsored Armed Forces Week. After a large demonstration only a month before by Vietnam vets against Reagan's budget cuts, Mayor Byrne and Alderman Farina, himself a vet, decided to make some political hay while attention was focused on Vietnam vets. What occurred was another political joke--on the city.

Alderman Farina assembled a group of Chicago businessmen to plan what was to be a "tribute" to Vietnam and Korean vets. When contacted by a representative of VVAW, Farina said, "We would welcome you to participate as members of the crowd. You see, this isn't a political event, for or against the war." The speakers turned out to be former General Healy of the Green Berets, Mayor Jane Byrne and Cardinal Cody, a diehard Vietnam war supporter--a real non-political bunch.

On Armed Forces Day the Mayor dedicated a bronze plaque to Vietnam and Korean vets. A large crowd was on hand, including enough Vietnam vets to count on one hand. Vietnam vets present included a member of Vietnam Vets of America and Joan Maiman of the Vets Leadership Conference who spent the time being patronized as "there, there now little lady," and being stepped on by a senile Cardinal Cody. The few other vets were looking through the crowd for fellow vets in order to pass out leaflets about Reagan's budget cuts.

The plaque wasn't even paid for by the city; the only publicity the media received about the event was a press release by VVAW stating that, "Neither we nor any other Vietnam vets would attend because of the poor employment record of the City of Chicago and the businessmen included for Vietnam vets." The media was then calling VVAW for information as

to when and where this ceremony was to occur; another well-planned event for the Vietnam veteran!

On the Saturday of Memorial Day Weekend, VVAW sponsored its annual observance to the theme of "Honor the Dead--Fight Like Hell For the Living" and to help focus local attention on the Agent Orange activities going on in Washington. Attending what turned out to be the only Memorial service in Chicago, 30 members of VVAW and supporters, including members of Vets for Peace, the Veterans Leadership Conference and Near West Suburban Coalition Against Registration and the Draft, heard speakers from VVAW address Reagan's budget attacks on veterans, the still unresolved issue of Agent Orange to include testing, treatment and compensation for those affected and the demand of decent healthcare for all vets.

Even though it was a small event, it spoke to the real needs of veterans, which the official programs in Washington and Chicago missed--and it outdrew both combined in numbers of Vietnam veterans.

Bill Davis  
VVAW National Office

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Vietnam Veterans Against the War  
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# Theory Behind the Budget SUPPLY-SIDE ECONOMICS

Politicians and businessmen across the country--at least some of them--are proclaiming the economic miracle awaiting America because of a "new" theory called "supply-side economics." But what is this theory that the Reagan administration is basing our future on?

First, the theory is as old as capitalism itself. J.B.Say, an early and obscure follower of Adam Smith first came up with the premise in the late 1700's.

Capitalism has always gone through a boom/bust cycle: it goes from production to expan-

sion to overproduction to depression to war. Capitalists--industrialist and entrepreneurs--develop industry in order to make money; their profits come from producing the goods and services needed by society. They do this in neither a controlled nor a centralized fashion; instead they base their production on what they see as the place where they can make the greatest profits.

At first this development creates new products and technological breakthroughs; it makes for production of goods and services and for hiring of workers. But as more and more is produced and bought where a

point of equilibrium is reached: there are enough goods and services to meet the society's needs. But production does not slow down because industries and empires are built on the profits made by selling what they produce. So there is overproduction--more goods than it's possible to sell. Prices fall; warehouses fill up; workers are laid off and a downward spiral begins. Laid-off workers clearly can't afford to buy the goods produced, often not even the necessities. Then is when war becomes a way to expand, to get more markets and more resources at a lower price and maybe more workers, also at a

cheaper price. So the cycle goes, sometimes with bigger swings in the cycle, sometimes smaller.

Supply-side economics says that the problem comes from the top layer of the economy--the industrialists--not having enough--not enough money for reinvestment, for expansion, for producing more. The theory basically says that the demand for products is not the most important thing; instead, the production (supply) is more important. If industry keeps on producing then industry must hire workers and the workers will then buy the products.

The problem is that industrialists don't produce according to the needs of a society. If such were the case, we would see American industrialists today building houses. But industrialists instead look for what they can make the most money from; there is no centralized plan but simply chasing after the most bucks. This often means producing luxuries while neglecting necessities--for instance, making video machines but not kidney-dialysis machines.

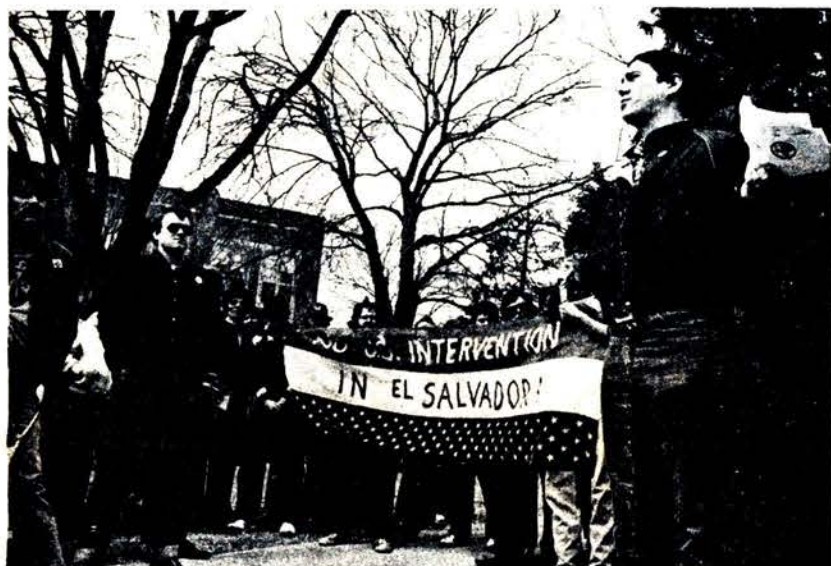
In fact the supply-side theory was a basic assumption of the Harding, Coolidge (Reagan's favorite president) and Hoover administrations in the 1920's and early '30's; the result was the Great Depression.

Will it work? Well, the theory is based on the assumption that multi-national corporations don't have enough money to invest and re-invest. In fact, according to "Business Week," corporations are sitting on top of "a record \$80 billion pile of ready cash." Giving them more money doesn't mean they will reinvest it or, for that matter, that if they do it will be invested in the U.S. (as can be seen from all the plants and factories being relocated in foreign countries).

According to economist Paul Sweezy, "the trouble with supply-side economics is that it operates on the principle of moving a string by pushing on one of its ends. The string stands for the economy: one end is labeled supply, the other, demand. The supply-siders propose to move the whole piece ahead by pushing on the supply end. The result, of course, is not to move the string but to mess it up."

And that's exactly what Reagan's economics is going to do to the working and the poor. By cutting all the programs for the poor, by cutting environmental and job safety, by cutting minimum wage and unemployment compensation, it is simply going to mess us up!

Barry Romo  
VVAW National  
Office



Norman VVAW joins others at No Aid To El Salvador Rally on the Oklahoma State University campus.

## PHONY "VVAW"

We have heard, from a few areas of the country, that the Revolutionary Communist Party is continuing to pretend to be VVAW. These throwbacks to the cult of James Jones in Guyana and very like the Moonies have tried before to use VVAW's name to push their nonsense and sound legitimate. VVAW took them to court where they agreed to stop using the symbol, the name and our masthead for THE VETERAN.

Of course their word was worthless. Most places they stopped using the name out of a legitimate fear of VVAW, but in areas where VVAW is weak or where there is no chapter, they still try to steal the name. So, if you hear of some pimply-faced 19-year-old claiming to be VVAW or see some bedraggled individual, donation can hung around his/her neck, a button of Bob Avakian (their guru) on his/her chest, with newspapers in one hand and strange posters in the other--that's not us!

## VVAW OKLA. ACTION

As part of the continuing effort to build the struggle against U.S. Intervention in El Salvador, two members of the Oklahoma Chapter of VVAW participated in an international affairs seminar entitled "Revolution and Counter-Revolution; Central America & U.S. Foreign Policy" at the Incarnate Word College in San Antonio, Texas.

Arnaldo Ramos of the Democratic Revolutionary Front of El Salvador addressed the Saturday morning plenary session. He had addressed the 100,000 strong anti-intervention rally in Washington, DC on May 3rd.

Mr Ramos spoke of bringing a message from the people of El Salvador to the whole planet. The message was peace and was issued by the new society beginning there, a society whose be-

ginning is wrapped up in the internal policies of North America. These policies are actively involved with the living and dying of both our peoples, he said.

The press, he stated, had indeed dropped El Salvador coverage. They are not reporting from the battle field and there is no coverage of the links between the U.S. and the history of El Salvador. "There are no borders," said Arnaldo, "when living and dying is involved."

He spoke of the fear his people feel when they see the Reagan administration militarizing Central America. Mr Ramos also stated there is no hope for the planet if the U.S. sides with the rich against the necessary social changes in the 3rd world.

He explained that while the El Salvadorian military has forced 50,000 people to flee from the Northern Provinces, because the people support the FDR and extensive tunneling has been done, there remain more than 7 liberated zones controlled by the Front.

Confident of victory, Arnaldo explained that the National Armed Forces of El Salvador are now composed of draftees coerced into the Army, and veterans of 10 years of struggle; neither want to continue fighting, so that now, he feels, 5 guerillas can hold off 25 soldiers. With the rainy season just beginning (a favorable time for the guerillas) he hopes, with enough ammunition to drive the soldiers from their garrison.

Mr Ramos maintained that we can bring our force of numbers to bear on the Reagan administration's insistence that social-political problems can be solved by military means and change that attitude. As vets we applauded the clear need to de-militarize the area; after all, "We are all Americans."



# Defense? Offense? Nonsense! Trillions for What?

## 'DEFENSE' BUDGET

Lots of kids have fantasies where they have all the money in the world in order to buy any toy they want--not only any toy but all of them together: a perpetual Christmas, and when something new pops up on the TV screen, wave once and it appears in the livingroom. Usually, these fantasies run into such blocks as parents and budgets.

But not if you happen to be an admiral or a general in the U.S. military. Any toy you want and the more complicated the better. And if your toy happens to have small problems--like the U.S.S. Nimitz where a plane landed crooked, killed 14 GIs and burned up well over \$100 million worth of equipment--take it to the shop and get it

**Continued from p 1**

## Agent Orange

the press without which the Vietnam vet would have never known there was a problem--that is, with the exception of Paul Reutersham and other brothers who have died, the high incidence of birth defects in our children, the simultaneous growth of Agent Orange vets froups in Australia, New Zealand and Korea (without the benefits of American media) and the Vietnamese victims that VVAW knew about as early as 1971.

The VA Memo goes further to refute findings by the Italian Government on a large-scale industrial accident in Seveso, Italy in 1976; a Monsanto plant accident in Nitro, W VA in 1949 (where a bitter fight, like that of Vietnam vets is being waged by the Atomic, Petroleum and Chemical Workers Union) and vet's children with defects on the basis of a three-part series by two reporters from the Baltimore Sun newspaper.

The conclusions and opinions put forth in this memo show an entirely different attitude than that of spokespersons for the VA. The memo flies in the face of any so-called "supportive" legislation given to Vietnam veterans.

Vietnam vets and their families must remember that as we are given assurances, petty legislation and glad hands by public officials, there is a strong undercurrent of opposition to what we are fighting for from many VA big wigs. Our fight remains the same: testing, treatment and compensation for all Agent Orange victims.

fixed. Or buy a new one!

And because of the clout of the military and the military industry, there are no parents to say no; in fact, Congressional committees and the Reagan Administration insist on pouring in more money, not less. It's every kid's dream come true.

There are, however, several small problems: it's our money these overgrown children are flinging around and worse yet, they're not getting a whole hell of a lot for it. And neither are we, the American taxpayer. While the final figures are still not in, it looks like the Pentagon will be given \$136 billion to play with for the next year. Plans for the next five years carry a price tag of \$1.5 trillion, more than double the cost of World War II. It's for sure enough money to buy toys for all the generals and all the admirals so that each of them can have his own little project.

All of this will be brought to you by the same Pentagon which produced the raid into the Iranian desert to free the hostages, with helicopters falling apart on the trip and those which made it finally crashing into each other once it was decided they couldn't pull off the job. And this was carried off with the best in brainpower, manpower, equipment and as much money as was needed!

As many Vietnam vets will recall, the U.S. military was in sorry shape at the end of the war (as well as during the war). Not only had we just finished losing a war against a small, unsophisticated enemy, but the higher military leadership had, for the most part, commanded nothing larger than a desk in combat; lower-ranking officers were leaving the service as quickly as they could, as were NCO's by the thousands. Combined with the problems of being unable to trust our own military leaders was the additional problem of equipment; who doesn't remember the lectures (in the safety of a U.S. training camp, of course) about the newest of electronic sensors, sophisticated missiles, tanks that would leap streams--and on and on. No matter what you heard, however, once in 'Nam you were faced with the reality that sappers snuck into U.S. camps almost any time they wanted to, that infiltration continued, and that the U.S. lost the war.

It's not that the Carter Administration was not projecting big bucks for the military; their



projections called for only about \$1 trillion over the next five years. But at least they didn't froth at the mouth like the Reaganites who have successfully built the Soviet Union into the master manipulator in the world today with greasy paws in each and every situation which the U.S. faintly dislikes. And while Reagan and Haig froth at the mouth, the military licks its chops at the prospect of more and more bucks.

The bucks, to a large extent, don't even go into the kind of projects that follow the Reagan proclamations; the Navy, for instance, is trying to drum up the money to bring the battleships New Jersey and Iowa out of mothballs, and to build more aircraft carriers, large enough to replace a large airport. It takes no brilliant military strategist to see that floating football fields are not going to be difficult targets for the Soviet Air Force in an all-out war, conventional or nuclear, nor are they quite what's needed to rapidly deploy a large force of troops in some far off corner of the world overnight. They are, however, remarkably useful to sail into San Salvador or Panama or, even more likely, various oil-producing capitals in the Middle East where a U.S. presence is

"desirable." While Reagan and Haig & Co rabidly declare their anti-Soviet policies, it seems that they are taking military care to be ready to take on third world countries.

While the overall thinking of the administration and its military masterminds comes straight out of the 19th century, the gimmickry is pure 20th--or maybe 21st century. The guiding principle seems to be that if it is fancier (and therefore costs more money) it's got to be good. Whether it's useable or not is secondary. The Army, for instance, wants to spend a cool billion over the next 5 years for 44,000 laser-guided Copperhead anti-tank missiles which will gobble up Russian tanks (a forward observer will aim the laser beam). It sounds like a great weapon for the desert, where observers can see for miles (although if the observer can see he can also be seen, and presumably the bad guys would prefer him not to guide the missile) but in rough terrain, such as much of Western Europe, the gadget doesn't seem quite worth the price.

Other problems pop up. In mid June began sea trials for the first Trident submarine; it was supposed to be working two and

**Turn to next page**



*'But the President has been real nice about it. He cut their Social Security benefits, but he's encouraging them to work past 65... G'nigh Gran'ms.'*



# Recruited by Alice from Wonderland RONNIE'S BOYS

(News Item: "After the defeat of Ernest Lefever for the position of Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights, the Reagan Administration is now considering abolishing the office altogether.")

THIS IS A MEDAL I GAVE MYSELF FOR KILLING ORLANDO LETELIER AND RONNI MORFITT BY BLOWING UP THEIR CAR IN WASHINGTON, D.C.



Wright Miami News

OK--so Ernie Lefever--champion of Chilean, South African and South Korean regimes--didn't make it as head of the Office of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs. Is that any reason to close down the office entirely?

Ronnie, if you can take a dentist--James Edwards--from South Carolina, whose primary qualification is membership in the American Conservative Union, and turn him into a Secretary of Energy who supports no controls on oil or gas and who

loves nuclear energy, they you can find someone else to cover your Human Rights Office

James Watt made it as Secretary of the Interior. Now here's a man whose own "public interest" law firm is financed by coal, oil, timber and mineral companies and yet he gets to oversee the conservation of our natural resources as well as the Ocean Mining Administration. His firm once sued to keep the handicapped, elderly and poor

AND THIS IS THE MEDAL I GAVE MYSELF FOR SUCCESSFUL TERRORIST ACTS CONDUCTED IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD



forgetting lower utility rates. He was even involved in lawsuits challenging the rights of Native American Indian tribes to control mineral leasing on their reservations, and he's going to oversee the Bureau of Indian Affairs. (You'll find someone--maybe some juanta could spare

an "off" switch (a request denied by the brass)! To buy one of these, should it ever get working, will cost as much as three of the old M-60 tanks.

Examples go on and on, but the basic problems are clear. The Pentagon and the great defense thinkers don't know what kind of war they want to fight so, like the man who jumped on his horse and rode off in all directions, they fumble every which way looking for the magic technological solution. Second, when a senior officer spends a couple of million dollars of our money on some pet project, that project will be a "success"! If that "success" requires faking tests or creating needs (and later killing GIs) that makes little difference--a career is at stake!

Perhaps admirals and generals should be given all their toys and sent away where they can't hurt anyone. But since the tax dollars of the American people are not a bottomless pit, and since Reagan & Co believe that only big business should benefit from government activity, the huge defense budget means cutbacks elsewhere. Among the programs scheduled for cuts: social security, particularly benefits for college students and disability and death benefits; public service jobs--eliminated; food stamps--cut by at least 1 million present recipients;

one of their guys for three and a half years.)

The Defense Secretary, Casper Weinberger, was known as "Cap the Knife" for his swell budget cutting back in California's free-the-mental patients

THIS HOISTER HOLDS THE 45 I USE TO SHOOT ANYBODY IN MY OWN COUNTRY WHO DISAGREES WITH ME. AND THIS LEATHER BELT AND ELEGANT HAND-STITCHED UNIFORM WERE MADE FOR ME BY THE STUPID PEASANTS.



days. And together with your budget man Stockman, he attempts to take from the poor and give to the defense contractors, like United Technologies (the 3rd largest) whose president was Secretary of State Alexander Haig. (Come on Ron, isn't Theiu hanging out in London now?)

You've got Samuel Pierce as Housing and Urban Development Secretary who, as previous member of Prudential's board of directors, can now oversee the Federal Insurance Administration. Oh, and the vice-president of a company which was caught violating safety standards 135 times since 1974--Raymond Donovan--is Secretary of Labor. And the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Dick Sweiker, who once sponsored anti-OSHA legislation, takes his new job so seriously that his

school lunch and milk programs will be sharply reduced; education--cuts in vocational education, education for the poor and handicapped. The list goes on and on--and this is just the first year under the Reagan/Stockman knife.

The choices are straightforward: a hungry child cannot eat a tank. But can Reagan's defense plans prosper when America's inner cities are in rebellion? Can the admirals and generals find the educated people-power to run their complex machines when schools are closed? Can a rapid deployment force "deploy" both in Watts or South Chicago or the South Bronx and, at the same time, save Arab oil for Ronald Reagan?

With the Reagan snow job about his "mandate," the defense budget will sail through Congress and the corresponding cuts in social problems will pass. (Counting voters who voted for other candidates or didn't vote, plus those who didn't even register, about 82% of the American voting-age public did not vote for Reagan; he has still managed to convince Congress of his "mandate.") As yet the cuts haven't been felt; that will begin in October.

And there's one more problem. With all the bucks--our bucks--that Reagan will lavish

AND SEE THESE? THESE ARE THE BOOKS KISSED BY ALEXANDER HAIG AND RONALD REAGAN.



department is planning to recommend that his office of Adolescent Pregnancy Programs try to solve the teen pregnancy epidemic through abstinence on the part of the teens.

Edwin Meese III--your chief of staff and #1 advisor--has been working with the Heritage Foundation for years. This radical right think-tank has been involved in textbook censorship battles and believes food should be used as a weapon, that the neut-on bomb should be deployed in Europe, that you should use McCarthy type tactics against dissidents because the threat to internal security is greater today than at any time since World War II.

So, it naturally follows that if you can get all this crew, who won't do one damn bit of good, surely you can find someone for your human rights post. Why disband the office? It's the same as if you did anyhow! (Maybe Godzilla is still around.)

Lynne Miller  
Chicago, IL

## Continued from p 6 DEFENSE

a half years ago; the cost has gone up 35% (the first sub will cost close to \$2 billion). There were little problems: of 36,000 welds that required inspection, a quarter had not been inspected, and a third of these were defective--not a big problem, perhaps, on the family car, but a significant problem to the crew of a sub at the bottom of the ocean.

Then there's the Army's masterwork, the M1 Abrams tank. This star-wars delight has a laser range-finder to tell the gunner the distance to a target, and a computer stabilizer which allows the tank to fire accurately while moving. It also has treads that fall off, dust filters which have to be cleaned each 75-100 miles (making the crews excellent targets), a blind spot 27 feet in front of the tank making it difficult to see small obstacles like mines, and, because of its size, a basic inability to be transported (though the Army is working on a special--and expensive--railroad car to move the thing). Probably the most significant comment on the technological wizardry is the request from the tank crews giving the M1 its trial runs that the computer stabilizer be equipped with

on the Pentagon, there still must be people to run the tanks and fly the planes. And while social service cuts may force a few more people into the military (since they have little choice) more and more people are asking what is, in fact, worth fighting for and dying for? Often, the answer is not the career of some overaged two-year old with a new toy who happens to be a general, and not the hysterics of Reagan or Haig about the Soviet Union, and not the fervent wishes of U.S. corporations to control the economy of some small country like El Salvador.

Vietnam vets saw how useless was American technological gadgetry against a people who believed in what they were fighting for. We saw officers trying to make careers off the deaths of our friends. We saw American corporations making billions in profits off the blood of the 55,000 who died in Vietnam. And while it may be too late to stop Reagan's bandwagon to stuff the pockets of the Pentagon brass this year, VVAW will continue to take the lessons we learned from the last American war and tell everyone we can, that while the government may take our taxes, they will not get our sons--no matter how many of our dollars they spend!

Pete Zastrow  
VVAW National Office



## Songs of Protest

These songs by Jim Wachten-donk, Vietnam vet whose children are Agent Orange victims and member of Madison, Wisc VVAW, were written and sung during VVAW's DC actions.

"Red, White & Blind,"

Monuments are made of stone  
White, cold marble--clean to the bone.  
It's my nation I hope to find,  
And all I can see, is Red, White & Blind.  
Three-piece suits, beaurocracy's best,  
Eating lunches, while they're sucking breasts,  
Making paperwork, passing the buck,  
And all I can see, is they don't give a fuck.  
One step forward, two steps back,  
Looking for cover like a sapper attack;  
Fighting for liberty--fighting to be,  
And all that we're fighting for, is to be free.  
Walking two by two to Arlington's gates,  
Brothers buried yell, "It's gettin' late;  
I feel you kneeling with your fists in the air,  
I heard the rumblin', yea, we felt you there."

Those God damn monuments, they're made of stone,  
White cold marble, clean to the bone;  
It's our nation that we came to find,  
And all we see, is Red, White & Blind.

### Past Arlington's Gate

Beware Vietnam veterans of Orange fate  
It's true that they won't let you past Arlington's gate,  
You might have sacrificed one of your arms,  
Or come home dreaming to silent alarms,  
It don't matter to the guards at Arlington's gate.  
Old soldiers never die--they just fade away,  
But we can't let the truth fade another day.  
We'll add a rumble to the roar  
When we meet at Dewey Canyon IV  
We're Vietnam Veterans Against the War.  
Now Uncle Sam misjudged us,  
Said he didn't like our wreath  
He knew he couldn't budge us  
So he shoots at our feet.  
But we are steadfast--we stand as one  
We're runners-up and it ain't no fun;  
We're like symbols in the sun,  
Past Arlington's gate.

Old soldiers never die, they just fade away,  
They hope we'll do the same  
But we'll have our say--  
We'll add a rumble to the roar  
When we meet at Dewey Canyon IV  
We're Vietnam Veterans Against the War!

When Freedom Birds were boarded  
And we looked ahead,  
To babies, wives and families,  
Never forgetting the dead.  
We couldn't help but pay our dues,  
While America watched us on the 5 o'clock news  
And the graves were filled anew  
Past Arlington's gates.

Old soldiers never die, they just fade away.  
But we can't let the truth fade another day,  
We'll add a rumble to the roar,  
When we meet at Dewey Canyon IV  
We're Vietnam Veterans Against the War!

## NEW ADDRESS!

**THE VETERAN**  
Published by the

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Photo by Bill Wa

Vietnam vets bring their demands to Washington--here, moving to the Veterans Administration.

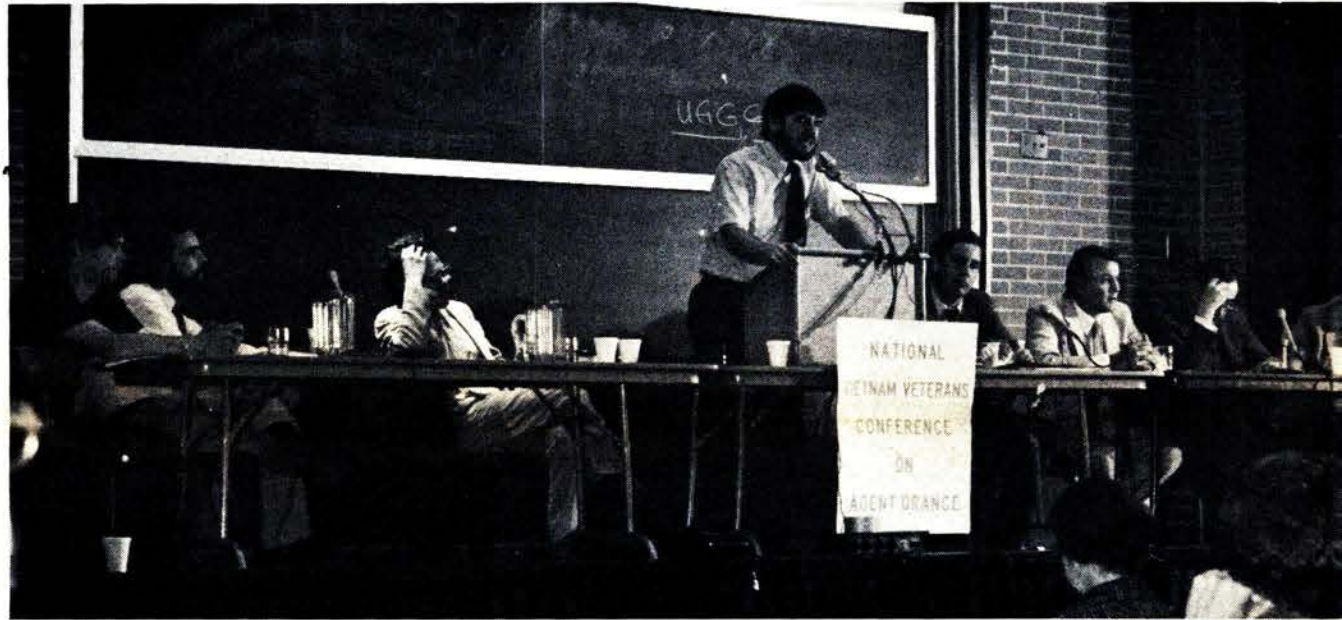


Photo by Bill Wa

Opening of the National Agent Orange Conference.

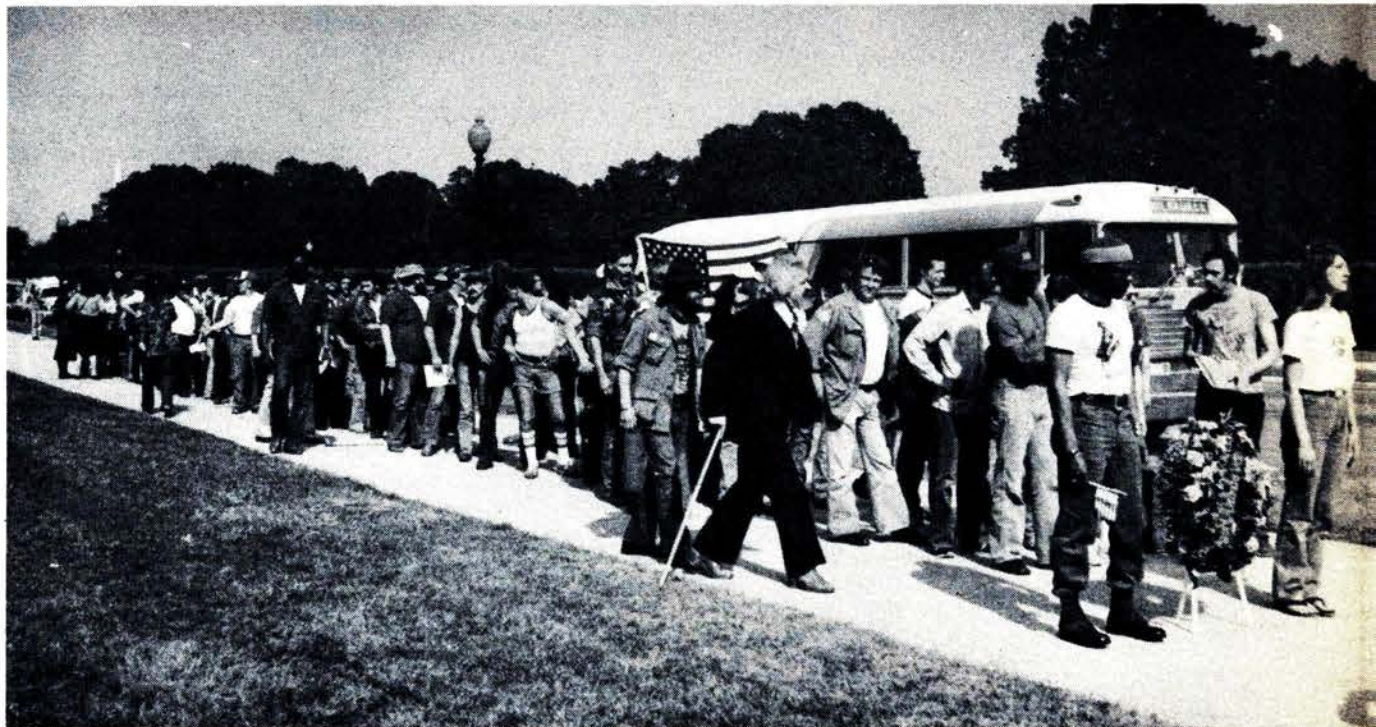


Photo by Bill Wa

'Nam vets and families lining up to try to lay a wreath at Arlington National Cemetery.



# March and Conference VETS DEMAND ACTION IN D.C.



"Operation Red, White & Blind," VVAW's latest action in Washington, DC around Agent Orange was an overwhelming success.

VVAW joined forces with brothers from the National Association of Black Veterans to attend the 1st National Veterans Conference on Agent Orange, and to protest the government's refusal to acknowledge the lingering effects of Agent Orange on Vietnam veterans.

A contingent of 22 vets and families from Milwaukee and Madison got off a bus (after a 21 hour trip) to leaflet LaFayette Park and picket the Central VA Offices in DC. Chanting and calling cadence, flanked by reporters and TV cameras, we reminded our government of their duty to "Honor those who have borne the battle and his widow and his orphans," the theoretical purpose of the VA. We were greeted by riot police, locked doors and swat teams with snipers on the roofs surrounding the VA offices.

Our picket line was strengthened by brothers from New Jersey, Florida, New York and California. Several Washington residents joined in, chanting and marching and offering their support. Despite hostile surroundings, the picket was peaceful. After an hour we marched away, past the White House, still chanting, and gathered in LaFayette Park. There VVAW and NABV held a rally to inform the public of the Agent Orange struggle and to talk about the upcoming National Veterans' Conference at American University.

The Conference, sponsored by the National Veterans Task Force on Agent Orange, was called to exchange ideas, inform veterans of successes and failures on local and national levels, and to discuss outreach programs and lobbying efforts to get action on Agent Orange.

Veterans from all parts of the country participated in the three-day meeting which included a scientific panel and discussion with Dr. Jeanne Stellman of Columbia University and Dr. Steven Stellman of the American Cancer Society, both longtime advocates of testing and treatment for Agent Orange victims.

Dr. James Dwyer, Department of Psychology from the State University of New York, and several other noted physicians and psychologists attended and shared the veterans' concerns.

A panel on the lawsuits a-

gainst the chemical companies included representatives of Yannaconne & Associates of New York and others, as well as a group of veterans advocates who discussed government policies and legislation pending in Congress and the Senate.

Small group workshops continued throughout the Conference and included films, local outreach programs, discussions on pending state and federal legislation, and help in mobilizing vets and community members in the Agent Orange movement.

The Conference was outwardly ignored by the VA, but around the country, directives were sent to local offices instructing VA personnel to boycott the meetings. Several VA workers did attend on their own; physicians, nurses and psychiatric personnel spoke with vets individually and in workshops, offering their support and their continued efforts to promote positive changes within the VA.

VVAW's presence and leadership was hailed by the organizers of the Conference as well as the rank and file vets of the Task Force. During the course of the three-day conference VVAW attracted scores of new members and two new chapters. As in the past, our ability to organize on all fronts--in legislative, outreach and mass action--united and strengthened the national veterans movement. We welcome our brothers and sisters to the ranks of VVAW.

The Conference culminated in a private and emotional memorial service on the grounds of the American University. Song, poetry and love brought forth solemn voices, adding names of war dead to the endless list... Tom Wilson... Gary Dorn... Phil Knoke... Dave Schme... 2 children of Rob and Marion Thielbar... the babies of Jeanette and Mike Mullane... the babies...

Veterans, wives and supporters shared their successes and their sorrow; the brotherhood was again solidified.

A group of 200 carried their grief and their strength and determination to Arlington National Cemetery to share with brothers buried there, and with the nation.

A silent march to the gates, with a wreath of orange, white and blue flowers dedicated to Agent Orange victims was blocked by guards in riot gear. To gain entry, we were told, we would have to remove our orange armbands and ribbons, and replace our wreath with one of red, white & blue.

Many in the crowd flashed back to Dewey Canyon III in 1971 where recently returned Vietnam veterans and Gold Star mothers were barred from Arlington. Then, as now, veterans, still on the outside, offered silently their kneeling, raised fist salutes to the fallen brothers inside the gates. The irony of the situation weighed heavily on many as veterans knelt at the gates, unwelcome while the people who sent them off to war rolled through unchallenged in tour busses.

The unity and strength shared by those who assembled at Arlington will be carried home to brothers and sisters across the country, and will add to the promise to return to DC for VVAW's Dewey Canyon IV in May of 1982. The spirit is reflected in a vow spoken by one vet and felt by all: "We will not be locked out of our cemetery away from our brothers again--nor will we be locked out of this nation's history."

On to Dewey Canyon IV!

For further information call:  
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or 463-2127;

(414) 963-0398 (Milwaukee)



WELCOME HOME, YOUR PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS ARE PROUD OF YOU

## WOMEN IN GREEN

In the past few years since becoming actively involved in the Agent Orange struggle and participating in demonstrations and picket lines, I have several times become embroiled in conversations with veterans often uncomfortable with the fact that I and other women wear fatigues and march in formation with the men.

I am often asked "What gives you the right to wear the green? You're not a Veteran--you didn't put your life on the line; thus, you haven't earned the right." ("And a Vet is still a Vet," you know!) The last such conversation, with a veteran at the National Conference on Agent Orange, prompted me to address the issue.

Wives and lovers of Vietnam veterans have, for the past 10-12 years, been living and sharing--along with our veterans--the horrors of the Vietnam conflict. Not the actual combat but the dream battles. The 3 AM screaming fire fights complete with incoming rounds and the flashbacks low crawls across the bedroom floor. For most of our lives we've experienced, along with our veterans, the searing LZ's, the leeches, the jungle rot, the mud, dust, monsoons, and the maniacal death.

We're angry that our government had taken from us our whole generation of healthy, handsome young men, wasted their lives and our, and thrown us away without hesitation once their purpose was served. We've had our babies cut from our bellies, birth-defected and stillborn. For too many of us, pregnancies ended in miscarriage and sterilization. The war continues in the form of dioxin poisoning, traumatic stress, inadequate VA health-care and the government's unquenchable bloodthirst for another generation.

We may not have shed our blood on the soil of Southeast Asia, but we've definitely done our time on the battlefield of America. We've all pulled hard duty and we've committed ourselves for the duration.

We wear the fatigues proudly and honorably, as you have, and we fight for our veteran's rights and freedom, and the future of our children.

\*\*Sukie Wachtendonk





Who Are We, Where We Came From, Who Can Join



# VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR

Vietnam Veterans Against the War began in 1967 to join the ranks of those who wanted an end of U.S. involvement in Indochina. Basic principles of the organization have continued ever since: we have fought against unjust wars, whether the U.S. invasion of Indochina or the USSR's invasion of Afghanistan. We have supported, by whatever means were possible, those who are fighting for their own liberation.

From its early days VVAW has operated on the knowledge that the government will give vets the things we need only when forced to do so--that vets get nothing for nothing. We've learned that when one vet fights alone, there is a limited amount he or she can do, but when veterans unite to fight together, there is no limit on what can be accomplished. VVAW has seen some real successes: helping to put an end to U.S. troops in Southeast Asia, helping to get Nixon tossed out of office on his ear, winning (to a great extent) amnesty for many who resisted the Vietnam War, getting the Veterans Administration to begin the process of looking for answers to Agent Orange poisoning and to recognize Post-Vietnam Syndrome (now called "delayed-stress syndrome") as a service-connected disability.

VVAW has consistently stood with the interests of vets of all eras, especially Vietnam and Vietnam-era vets, and this has often brought us into conflict with more traditional veterans' organizations. While the Legion or VFW have hawked more wars, VVAW has fought against future U.S. wars of aggression as in Vietnam; while traditional organizations have waved the flag at every opportunity, VVAW has always asked "Why?" We've opposed moves toward war, are fighting against registration and the draft which will follow, welcomed vets with bad discharges into the organization and fought to get the discharge system dropped entirely from the military.

We know what it means to have been unused once by the government and its corporate backers, and then thrown away with a bad GI Bill, wretched healthcare, Agent Orange ravaging our bodies, no jobs and all the other problems that Vietnam vets face. We do not intend to see our children go through the same thing in the next war for somebody else's profit!

(312)275-0043; 989-4684; 463-2127



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## Membership Form

P.O. Box 25592 Chicago, IL 60625

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VVAW welcomes all people who want to join together to build a fighting veterans' organization. Although the majority of our members are vets of the Vietnam-era, we want all veterans of all ages--as well as interested non-vets--to join to build the vets' struggle. Membership requirements are participation in the life of the organization, and payment of \$1 per month to the national organization with a \$5 initiation fee.

VVAW is a democratic organization. Chapters decide on local projects and programs under the general guidelines of the national program. Chapters elect local leadership and representatives to the National Steering Committee meetings where major organizational decisions are made and national coordinators elected. These coordinators are responsible for day-to-day leadership and publish the national newspaper, THE VETERAN.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Vietnam Veterans Against the War

VVAW T-SHIRTS! WITH THE VVAW INSIGNIA IN THREE COLORS ON THE FRONT AND THE WORDS VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR. \$5 each; send orders (with size) to the VVAW National Office.

"AGENT ORANGE DOSSIER"--43 pages of information about Agent Orange including maps of areas sprayed and information on how an individual vet can work on his own case. \$2 each; send orders to the VVAW National Office.



# AGENT ORANGE SHORTS

(VVAW wants to continue a column of short informational items concerning Agent Orange; we invite individuals or groups to send us information.)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## "Babies Are Replaceable"

Of 12 pregnancies in Ashford, Washington, in the past year, there were 9 miscarriages, one stillborn, and one baby born with a rare heart defect--that baby died shortly after birth. During the year, Weyerhaeuser, involved in timbering in the area, sprayed 2,4-D over a large area just outside Ashford 15 times.

In response to charges that

## BEWARE! Congress and Vets

During the war in Indochina, Congressional conservatives used to chant, "Support our boys in Vietnam," and then raise the allocations for aid to the Saigon government and to buy more weapons for the Pentagon. The war was "noble" and all the liberals and peaceniks were "unamerican."

It's now several years later and "the boys" have come home. The same conservatives who sent billions off for killing un-animously voted in the Senate to cut \$300 million from the VA budget. Yes, all those patriotic senators--Thurmond, Goldwater, and much of the rest of the Republican-dominated Senate voted to cut the VA budget. If it wasn't for the House and particularly groups like the Congressional Black Caucus and former antiwar Congressmen, the Vets Outreach Centers would have ended and the VA budget would have been slashed.

The fact is that those who were so determined to win the war in Vietnam will pour billions into defence and not one cent for veterans. As Kipling said more than 100 years ago:

"For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' chuck him out, the brute!"

But it's 'Savior of 'is country,' when the guns begin to shoot.

Yes, it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' anything you please;

But Tommy ain't a bloomin' fool,  
--you bet that Tommy sees!  
And so do we!

2,4-D spraying had caused the unusual rate of miscarriages, a company chemist, Dr. Illo Gauditz told a local environmental group that "Babies are replaceable." The good doctor also suggested that women plan their pregnancies around the spray schedules.

(From the "Agent Orange Newsletter," 944 Market St Room 500, San Francisco, CA 94102)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## Agent Orange Spill into Mississippi

Hundreds of fish in the Mississippi River near Burlington, Iowa, have been killed and contaminated as a result of illegal spraying of 2,4,5-T, the active ingredient in Agent Orange. 80 gallons of 2,4,5-T were sprayed by plane over an 80 acre field to control brush near the town of Ellison Creek in Illinois. Though the spraying was four miles from the River, rains washed the run-off into the Mississippi.

Officials are urging people to discard suspicious-looking fish caught in the area; the fish show signs of chemical burns. The illegal poisoning took place during the area's busiest catfish season. Authorities, however, were quick to claim that there has been no effect on the drinking water.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## Wisconsin Governor's Move to Veto Agent Orange ID Program Stopped!

Governor Lee Drefus of Wisconsin moved recently to veto the Agent Orange Identification Program for Vietnam Vets. The main focus of the program is a 55,000 person mailing to Vietnam vets who may have had contact with Agent Orange.

Drefus' announcement brought a storm of protest from Vietnam vets groups in Wisconsin--and the governor backed down. Spokespersons for the vets groups are now pushing for a face-to-face meeting with the governor. According to Agent Orange activists, the governor wants to veto the program for economic reasons in spite of a large response, 67% of whom report children with birth defects and other Agent Orange related health problems.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## Wisconsin Anti-Pesticide Coalition Makes Gains

The Wisconsin Coalition Against Misuse of Pesticides, a broad coalition which includes Vietnam Vets groups, Agent Orange International, Disabled American Veterans, Friends of the Earth, Migrant Workers Union, and Wisconsin Beekeepers, has successfully pressured the Wisconsin State government to change codes regulating pesticides and their use. The group of organizations are now working towards a total ban on 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T (both components of Agent Orange) and organic phosphates.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Open-air biological warfare tests were conducted by the Army in 1952 at Ft McClellan, AL according to recently declassified documents. This same year pneumonia cases in the surrounding county rose by 240% with a total of 29 deaths. Bacteria used in the tests were capable of causing pneumonia. The Army contends that any relationship between the illnesses of the 12 or more tests was "purely coincidental."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## Civilians in Vietnam and Agent Orange.

While veterans affected by Agent Orange in Vietnam have joined together to file a class-action lawsuit against the Chemical companies, the some 5000 civilians who were in Vietnam during the same period are not parties to the suit. Red Cross nurses, missionaries, USO personnel and government contractors all faced the chemical defoliant while in Vietnam but because of various legal complexities may find it difficult to get compensation.

A paper prepared for the Veterans Leadership Conference by Gregory Stayart, Chicago Attorney, examines the various possibilities open to civilians and concludes: "A civilian who served in Vietnam and now is experiencing health problems believed to be caused by exposure to Agent Orange may have a compensation remedy available. There are obvious legal difficulties, but it costs nothing to file a claim and a lawyer is not needed to do so."

For copies of the paper, contact: Veterans Leadership Conference  
300 N. State St, Suite 3409  
Chicago, IL 60610

## Paul Reutersham Healthcare Center Opens in New York

On June 14, 1981, Agent Orange Victims International held the grand opening of the Paul Reutersham Health Care Center. The opening coincided with the 3rd anniversary of the founding of A.O.V.I.

The objective of the center is to provide veterans with a holistic approach to their Agent Orange or war-related health problems. Holistic means to treat the whole person, the psychological problems as well as the physical, the problems facing the families, and special programs designed for children born with birth defects and disabilities.

The medical center is a combined effort of clergymen, doctors, psychologists, various healthcare specialists and A.O.V.I. The Reutersham Center is being funded by a \$5,000 donation from the Dextra, Baldwin McGonagle Foundation of New York, and fund-raising activities of vets groups throughout the nation.

For more information, contact: Agent Orange Victims International

42 W. 13th St  
New York, NY 10011  
(212) 741-2316

## Agent Orange PAMPHLET

VETERANS SELF-HELP GUIDE  
VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR

Defoliant, Agent Orange  
CHEMICAL TIME BOMB  
IN VIETNAM VETERANS

Do It Your Self Guide  
AGENT ORANGE VICTIMS

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Vietnam Veterans Against the War  
P.O. Box 25592  
Chicago, IL 60625



# RECOLLECTIONS

VVAW invites contributions to "Recollections"--stories or poems describing the military or Vietnam.

## "YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE SO CIVILIZED"

This story happened in Binh Dinh Province while I was an Assistant Gunner of the 1st Squad gun team, 3rd platoon, 1/503rd Airborne Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade.

We usually worked in platoon-size, but for some reason were in company-size--maybe were a blocking force or the sweeping force; I don't remember, if I ever knew. We always humped our food, so it could have been 3 or 4 days of "C's" plus the rest of it. For me, it was 15-20 magazines for the '16, 150-200 loose rounds for the gun, 3-4 frags, 2 smokes, 2 trip-flares, maybe a pop-up flare, 1/2 of a Claymore, poncho and liner, and personal gear. I figure it weighed 70-80 pounds with the food.

They told us we were humping about 7 clicks to this village where the gunships had chased or trapped an NVA battalion. So we put our rucks on and headed out. Somewhere along the way, after a couple of hours, we were coming out of the foothills and heading toward the villages near the ocean--maybe it was a little better than halfway.

They stopped us and told us to chow. So we chow and we're still sitting there. Then one of them asked for a smoke to bring in a ship; I volunteered mine figuring it was one less thing to hump. I went out to this clearing and popped the smoke--it might have been purple. While this is happening the platoon RTO yells over that it's the Battalion Sergeant Major with some ice cream. I take a closer look and can just about make out the bald-headed prick sitting there with the 5 gallons of ice cream between his legs. Rumor had it that this was how he got his Air Medals. Since we were on an operation he would count this run as a combat assault or log the time, whichever got him the medal quicker. I don't remember if it was 15 or 25 combat assaults we needed to get the medal; I do remember that a lot of grunts never got them no matter how many combat assaults they had. The ice cream must have been beaucoup cold: the Sgt Maj's balls were so frooze up that you couldn't get him more than 20 feet away from that ship for a million dollars. We killed the ice cream quick--must have been 110 people on that 5 gallons. We

got our shit back on and headed for the big battle that was held up for Sgt Maj's ice-cream medal.

We break out of the bush into the first fields of paddies and can see the gunships tearing the village up 1/4 mile away. We start running, or whatever you call it with all that garbage on your back, across the dikes, then across the road. Now the village is to our left set back about 4 paddies, with 4 more paddies to its right so that the paddies formed a backward "L" around the village. Anyway, to our right, not more than 300 yards, is a fair-sized ARVN camp with permanent guns, wire--the whole show.

We all start to wonder what the story is. The lifers put the whole company on line behind the paddy dikes between the ARVN camp and the village, facing the village. What they want us to do is charge the village across the 4 fields of paddies. Now I say to myself, "they got to be kidding" and I'm starting to think I ain't going to do this. If my counterpart in the NVA battalion and one other gun team is set up fairly well, all they have to do is wait until we are in the middle of the 2nd or 3rd paddy and then open up. They would take out a least 15 with the first burst and if they got a good angle, another 20 before we could get to the cover of the dike.

You could tell from the way we were slow getting on line that most everyone was thinking the same. Doc and I looked at each other conspiratorially, but then in mute testimony to the hold they had on us, we got on line like all the other fools, and when they said, "Move out," we moved out fully expecting to be opened up on within the next minute. Eleven years later I sit stunned at the things they had us do.

It was a dud. There wasn't anything in that village. Word came back that the first platoon ran into a little as we filed through the village. Now I can imagine the lead platoon was told that the rear of the line ran into something.

Anyway, the heart of the story is something that happened going into the village and was one of the many incidents that changed my view of the war. As we were going through, a little in front of us there was a woman yelling and screaming at us as we passed by. The Army spent all its time teaching me how to

kill the Vietnamese rather than talk to them, so I don't know what she was saying. It didn't matter; anyone could tell it wasn't "Viva American" or "Viva El Liberator."

And I started thinking to myself, "What the fuck is she yelling at me for? I come 10,000 miles, march in the rain, mud, monsoons, tropical sun, through mountains, rivers, hip-deep rice paddy slime, tripping over vines, falling off dikes, being bitten to death by uncounted species of bugs carrying unknown sicknesses, got diarrhea, always tired, fucked with by the lifers, living on crap packed 15 years ago that I wouldn't give a dog I hated, getting shot at, ambushed, bobby-trapped, hand-grenaded, friends getting fucked up to save her sorry fucking ass and she's going to stand there and spit and cuss at me!"

Then a voice in the back of my head started to talk, softly then because there was still a lot of misguided patriotism in the way making it hard for any sensible thoughts to linger for long. Still, something back there was saying, "Hey, man, this woman don't care about how noble you are for coming all this way and being here to save her from her neighbor; all she knows is that you or someone just like you set her house on fire. You

may call it a hootch and laugh because it ain't got a door, but it's her house and you just torched it for whatever noble reasons. That is why this woman is cursing you and all your ancestors, because you, not her evil neighbor zipped her home and destroyed all the things valuable in her life. As far as the lack of a door goes, she is so far ahead of you you'll probably never know. She has a society where she doesn't need a door, forget about a lock (since where are you going to put a lock if you ain't got a door). That's right, asshole! You thought you were so civilized, going to do so much for these poor ignorant savages. Maybe in a thousand years if your society lasts that long, you'll have evolved to where you can live without the fear that causes people to put locks on their doors and then, after another thousand years you'll get to where you can take the door off. Think about that for awhile, fool!"

I did think about it and a few weeks later told them I wasn't doing it anymore. I didn't care what they did, but I wasn't going out there to burn people's houses down to save them from communism--it didn't make any sense!

Pat Finnegan  
Waterford, NY





# RECOLLECTIONS

On June 2,, 1970, Charlie Co, 1st of the 501st, 101st Airborne Division went on a company-size combat assault. The grunts were unhappy about the plan and all of us squad leaders had complained to 3-3 about the logistics of the operation. For an lz, command had picked an old firebase, a hilltop devoid of cover. We were hit by mortar fire as soon as the first wave went in. Recon aircraft reported over 80 incoming rounds. And this was precisely what the grunts were concerned about. My squad had 50% casualties.

The next morning I woke up in 85th Evac Hospital in Phu Bai. The Top and a chaplain were pinning a Purple Heart to my pillow. Other wounded brothers were cursing them and some threw their medals at them.

A couple of days later I was sent to Camp Drake, Japan. The ward I was on had around 100 beds. All the wounded on the ward were enlisted men except for one 1st Lieutenant who refused to be on the officer's ward.

Two to four times daily (depending on your condition) the corpman would change dressings and clean wounds. The military used wire stitches a lot--they were stronger, lasted longer and were cheaper. The twisted ends of the wire would always snag the dressings as it was removed. This was only warm-up pain for the procedure. I was at the end of the first row, so after the first week I only had to hear a quarter of the ward get changed, then I'd escape. Everyone tried really hard not to scream alot; it got real nerve-wracking to listen to your brothers begging the corpman to be more careful.

The only thing they gave me for pain was Darvon. I spent most of my first two weeks flat on my back, hands tied to the bars above me, tapping my foot to the ever-throbbing pain. I had been out in the boonies for 2 weeks without washing; it was 2 weeks in Japan before I could get someone to wash my hair. I finally got a Red Cross volunteer to do it--she couldn't believe how dirty I was or the requests from others who wanted the same thing. If I hadn't been able to chew through my restraints and escape I'd have gone hungry and shit in my bed more than once.

I had heard about "Sparks" for a week. "Sparks" was an E-6 corpman. He got his nickname from carrying around a small battery when he changed dressings. If you screamed too

## "MY FOOT STILL TAPS TO THAT THROBBING PAIN IN MY SOUL"

loud while he changed your dressings and cleaned your wounds he would put the battery between two wire stitches. He didn't do it all that often, but he loved to torment the brothers by taking it out of his pocket and threatening them. I think his rationale was that he didn't put the stitches in, so he didn't want to hear about it.



Dennis Kroll (rt) posing in Vietnam before being wounded.

About two weeks after I was there my "doctor" operated and took skin from my thigh to graft on to my hand and wrist. A couple of days later I was running a temperature; the dressings were removed from my hands and the grafts were very infected. The "doctor" said the grafts would have to be removed and tried again. I thought I would go in for another operation, but five minutes later he returned with a corpman. The corpman asked me if I wanted a pillow. I didn't know what to expect but I knew pillows were used to suppress screams that might cause stress for other patients. The corpman held the pillow over my mouth and pinned my shoulders down. I look up and saw the "doctor" take an unsterile pair of scissors from his pocket; then he just scraped the skin grafts off. I remember biting a hole in the pillow, screaming for him to stop, and then nothing more. A period of time passed and the "doctor" came back. I was lying on sweat-soaked sheets trying to rationalize what had just happened, and he said, "I didn't think that type of graft would work--now we know. We'll try again in a couple of days."

I tried to kick him in the crotch but missed. The next

day on rounds the Colonel said I could get an Article 15 for striking a superior (superior?). The Lieutenant next to me defended me by saying I was irrational at the time. I told the Colonel that if he'd get the "doctor" closer to me I'd show how I wanted to do it the first time. The incident was dropped "for my own good," and no one would listen

to me about filing charges against the "doctor." Half of the second graft took and I was sent home after a month's time.

I was sent to Great Lakes Naval Hospital. It was pretty weird there also. After one operation to straighten a mangled finger, I was sent to a convalescent ward which was nothing more than a barracks. An ensign put me on a detail shovelling gravel in front of the hospital. When I complained about my cast breaking up, the ensign told me to shut up and dig if I wanted a weekend pass. That weekend 2 of the pins came out of my finger. After 6 months I was discharged with no disability. When I asked my Doctor about disability he told me I was just as good as when I went into the service, and I could always get a job pushing a broom.

It's been 11 years since my Vietnam experience. I've had more botched operations by the VA (some of them good), same-type of attitude toward my brothers and myself, and my foot still taps to that throbbing pain inside my soul.

Dennis Kroll  
Madison, Wisconsin

## Poem

Dong Ha, 10 March 1968: 3rd Marine Division Information Office disclosed that a marine rifle company was involved in an all-day battle with a North Vietnamese regiment. On the 9th of March an understrength marine rifle company, proceeding in convoy along provincial route #9 south of Gio Linh, was ambushed by a North Vietnamese Army regiment. The marines dismounted and counter-attacked, closing with the enemy force in a defensive complex of trenches and camouflaged bunkers. Subsequently the company was assisted by the rest of its parent battalion. The engagement was terminated at dusk. Reliable sources characterized the company's casualties as "extremely heavy." They emphasized that most of the casualties were sustained during the assault on the entrenched NVA force, not during the ambush. The enemy regiment was reinforced with a heavy weapons battalion and supported by 127mm and 152mm artillery based north of the Ben Hai River in North Vietnam.

The major focus of activity was to the west at Khe Sanh in the Scotland II area of Operations where....

Disaster arrives  
with the haughty élan of  
gathering storm clouds  
blue-green spheres drift,  
languidly elegant like dandelion  
puffs riding  
gusting currents.  
Fright's hyperkinetic ambience  
masks, with fog-like haze,  
thought's terrors  
muting the metallic malevolence  
of tracer's dawdling traipse.  
Red-black and yellow-gold flowers  
sprout randomly,  
grow large,  
propagate vacuoles of rustling  
violence.  
Erupting eternity contracts  
reduced to nexts:  
steps;  
sights;  
breaths.  
We moved toward thorned coronation  
with the high complacency  
of summer hitchhikers  
gaging high-crowned thunderstorms ahead.

Gordon A. Perry 2323394  
M 3/9, 3rd Marines  
RVN, 4/67--4/70



# LETTERS TO VVAW

VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR ~ National Office ~ (312)275-0043; 989-4684; 463-2127

**THE VETERAN** welcomes letters, comments and criticisms. Please write. Also, send along any poetry, drawings, photos or stories you would like to see in the paper.

**P O Box 25592  
Chicago, IL 60625**

Vietnam Veterans Against the War:

Thank you for inviting me to speak at your Vietnam Veterans Memorial Rally on Saturday, May 23, 1981, at 10:30 AM. Regretfully, I will be unable to attend due to a prior commitment made some time ago.

I support all three of your demands:

1) Testing, treatment and compensation for Agent Orange victims.

2) No V.A. Cuts

3) No aid to El Salvador.

In the present Congress, I can't promise any quick victories, but I do pledge to you that I will take a leading role in the fight against V.A. cuts and aid to El Salvador, and for the testing and treatment of Agent Orange victims.

Sincerely,  
Harold Washington  
Member of Congress  
First District, Illinois



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IF YOU HAVE A "WAR"  
STORY YOU WANT TO  
TELL, SEND IT TO  
VVAW

We would also like  
poetry and photos.

Hello there:

Enclosed is a poem which was written after I attended a conference for concerned veterans at the Pioneer Inn in Oshkosh. I hope to donate more than words to our particular area of interest, but this will have to do for now. I am a victim of both Agent Orange and Delayed Stress Syndrome.

It seems to me that anything in the way of raising the public consciousness cannot be regarded lightly, even though the public regards us in a rather light vein....

Charles Phelan  
Oshkosh, WI

Cocktails, and fancy talk; discussions of African drums. V-100's, Laws, and M-16's never let me know

That it would be anything like this...

Mornings when the devil presides, lead to the daytime When the truth screams from inside:

No was the only answer, Yes was the only truth, A truth that screams at you... that eats you,

One that turns you into a fraction of what you are....

Or is it the other way around? There is no room for a mistake in a situation....

Such as this....  
Tell it to your grandmother,  
Big boys play by the rules, or so they say,  
Little boys play until they cry,  
Big boys cry until they try  
To set the matter straight... then go.

Dear VETERAN,

As a long time member of VVAW I found some striking parallels between the veterans of pre-Nazi Germany and the Vietnam vet in a recent David Bowie movie, "Just a Gigolo." After the First World War the German veteran came back defeated, disillusioned, shattered. There was little or no work in Germany at that time and veterans either became avid fans of Hitler's young Nazi Party or, as the young lieutenant did in the movie, ended up becoming gigolos.

One thing VVAW always has tried to stand for is truth and peace. Although disillusioned and mutilated by our own country after defeat, instead of becoming para-military and aggressive toward the rest of the world we were able to learn from our experience and show people that the only real answers lie in peaceful solutions.

Hopefully, our whole society

will not continue to force more vets into becoming gigolos and part of the unemployment lines. And hopefully, Vietnam vets will take control of their own disillusionment and turn it into a constructive force by teaching brotherhood and peace.

Sincerely,  
Scott Moore  
Nazareth, PA

The Sanity of War

Have you seen my sanity?

I can remember being alive and well--sometime--long, long ago.

I once felt my senses blossoming with the spring--

laughing happily with the summer-- becoming colorful with the fall-- and seeking warmth during the winter months of my life;

I can remember when my senses were in unity with my heart...

There are stitches that line these pockets of time; encased within each stitch there are memories...

I cannot find a reason for my pockets to have left the great protector--the clothing of my mine What remains is a heart within a shell;

cracked and broken--like the old clock that once sat upon the fireplace mantle....

My pockets were once filled and fully stitched, weren't they?

With these eyes--

I watch you.

With this heart--

I reach for you.

To feed my desire, this endless void of starvation--

I grasp every virtue you do possess...

I steal away...

Like you--

who sent me away when I was whole--

I shall thief away into the night.

Like you--

who stole away a peoples' right to live--

I shall steal away the day...

If war is a means to recapture what man steals away from mankind--

By day--

By night--

then I shall war away for what is mine:

Empty pockets;  
worn stitches--  
in time...

Have you seen my sanity?

\*\*Stephen W. Gregory  
Marion, Ohio

(Dedicated to Dr John Wilson,  
Director, Forgotten Warriors  
Project, Cleveland State University.)

Dear VVAW,

I am a high school freshman and have recently finished studying the Vietnam War in Contemporary Problems class. The highlight of the unit was when a Vietnam veteran and representative from the Milwaukee Chapter of VVAW came and talked to us about the war. Needless to say, it was very enlightening.

Good luck in preserving the benefits and rights of veterans. You have my support.

Very truly yours,  
Allison Bethea  
Milwaukee, WI

## VVAW and American Legion

For the first time in the history of VVAW, members of the National Office and Chicago Chapter of VVAW were invited into an American Legion Post to give a presentation on the effects of the Reagan budget cuts on vets. Forty-five members of the John H. Shelton American Legion Post in Maywood, IL, attended the panel discussion. They expressed concern about proposed cuts in their benefits and wanted more information about Agent Orange defoliant poisoning.

Speaking for the VVAW National Office, Barry Romo stated, "What the Reagan Administration is saying is that we were fine to fight their wars, we were fine to bleed for them, but once they're out of money, once the economy has hit the skids, they'll throw us on the skids with it."

On the question of Agent Orange, Bill Davis, another national officer of VVAW, said: "The biggest problem with the government in trying to get a program for veterans exposed to Agent Orange is the acknowledgment that the chemical is harmful." Davis further stated, "We're not asking that they make each and every one of us rich; all we're asking is that we be tested, treated and compensated if we're affected by it."

The final panel member, Lambert Caldwell, staff person of the Chicago Chapter of VVAW, told the American Legion Post, many of whose members are third generation participants in the post, that, "Veterans of different eras must work together to preserve their benefits and bring an end to the competition among vets of different eras and organizations."



# A Limited Incursion into Congress'Land' OPERATION DEWEY CANYON IV



Gold Star Mothers and veterans are barred at Arlington.



Veteran hurling medal on the steps of Congress.



In the last issue of THE VETERAN, the VVAW National Office proposed that veterans hold a national march on Washington in the Spring of 1982. That will be the 50th anniversary of the Bonus March on DC by World War I vets demanding their rights (and giving the impetus which led to unemployment compensation). It will also be the 11th anniversary of VVAW's Operation Dewey Canyon III, the demonstration against the war we had fought in, where Vietnam vets threw away their medals demanding "Bring Our Brothers Home--NOW!"

More important than the anniversaries involved is the situation that Vietnam vets and their families now find themselves in, with budget cuts, Agent Orange poisoning, and moves toward another Vietnam-type war in Central America.

Following the proposal for "Operation Dewey Canyon IV" VVAW held a National Interim Committee meeting to come up with an outline for the action. We decided to bring up the following demands based on what we saw were the needs and desires of Vietnam vets:

1. TEST, TREAT, & COMPENSATE AGENT ORANGE VICTIMS
2. DECENT BENEFITS FOR ALL VETS.
3. STOP ALL VA CUTS.
4. SUPPORT INCARCERATED VETS.
5. SINGLE-TYPE DISCHARGE FOR ALL VETS
6. NO AID FOR EL SALVADOR.

We decided to combine demonstrations with confronting our Congressmen and Senators on vets' needs and workshops around organizing and education.

Following the Agent Orange Conference in Washington, VVAW held an extended National Office meeting and decided to hold Dewey Canyon IV from the 12th of May through the 15th of May, catching Congress in session during primary elections, during Armed Forces week but before Memorial Day. The basic scenario for the limited incursion into the nation's Capital is as follows:

Starting on the morning of May 12th we will be setting up a photo display on the history

of Vietnam vets, the war and the history of the veterans' struggle. In the afternoon there will be registration with the opening of the camp beginning with the 5 o'clock follies (press conference). At 7 PM there will be a candlelight march on the White House with speeches and music by 'Nam vets and their families.

Thursday, May 13th: At 10 AM, a picket line at the VA Central office demanding rights and necessities. Following that will be lobbying and confronting members of Congress. At the 5 o'clock follies we'll give out reports on the results, to each other and the press. In the evening there will be music followed by educational and rap groups.

Friday, May 14th: A 10 AM demonstration and the Office of Management and Budget, confronting David Stockman. More lobbying of Congress will follow. At the 5 o'clock follies we will continue to report on our reception by Congress, and announce the final push of the operation for the following day. In the evening, a vets cultural event followed by discussions on how to build the vets movement and continue the struggle back in our local areas.

Saturday, May 15th: At 11 AM vets will assemble at the Vietnam Vets Memorial. We will march to Arlington to lay a wreath remembering our fallen friends. We'll then march back to the Capitol, past the Lincoln Memorial, the Washington Monument and along the Reflecting Pool. At the Capitol we will make our final statement for the operation giving vets and families a chance to say their piece.

While we believe this is a sound basic outline, we are open to suggestions, and hope to get as many as possible from as many individuals and vets groups as we can. We welcome support, participation and endorsements. Initial negotiations for sites and permits are underway and plans are moving forward quickly; the earlier people get involved the more input they will have. As always, we will need donations--donations to VVAW are tax deductible. For more information

follow THE VETERAN or write to the VVAW National Office of the VVAW Chapter in your area.

We believe that Dewey Canyon IV can be a strong statement from vets to the government that used us once and now is trying to throw us aside. We won't have it and we're willing and able to stand up for what vets need.

ON TO DEWEY CANYON IV!

Demands:

1. Test, treat and compensate Agent Orange victims: None of us asked to be coated with Agent Orange, nor were we told what could happen to us and our children. Now it's the plain duty of the government and the VA to do what is right--test, treat and compensate victims.

2. Decent Benefits for All Vets: This includes decent healthcare for vets from World War I through Vietnam; GI Bill benefits that permit vets to go to school; disability payments that mean something, and a host of other vets benefits which are more on paper than they are real.

3. Stop all VA Cuts: We'll know more about what cuts are coming down as time goes on, but with hundreds of billions for defense, we know there's money to help the veterans of the last war.

4. Support Incarcerated Vets: With up to 1/3rd of the state and federal prison population being made up of Vietnam-era vets, and with their benefits being smashed, it's up to us to do for them what they are unable to do for themselves.

5. Single-type discharge for all vets: Too many vets have suffered from bad discharges handed out because the vet wouldn't go along with military nonsense. By getting rid of the present discharge system we take one more club out of the hands of the military brass.

6. No Aid to El Salvador: We've been through one Vietnam and have no interest in contributing our children to another.



## All Vietnam Vets; All Veterans, Groups & Organizations Join Now!

Contact: Vietnam Veterans Against the War

**P.O. Box 25592 Chicago IL 60625**

**(312) 275-0043; 989-4684; 463-2127**



# ***A Limited Incursion into Congress'Land'*** **OPERATION DEWEY** **CANYON IV**

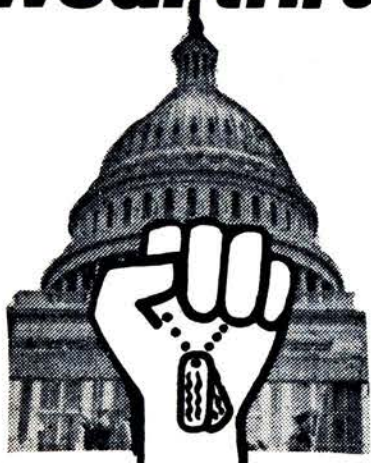


As Vietnam vets, the time is NOW to reach into our closets and pull out the fatigues, the boots and the medals. It's time to march; we've got to lobby

and we've got to demonstrate to Reagan, to the bureaucrats, to the V.A. and to the Congress that we're angry and demanding our rights! We can't take the cutbacks that are here and we sure aren't taking any more!



## **Veterans' Counterattack** **Wed. thru Sat., 12th thru 15th May, 1982**



WE ARE ANGRY AND NOT TAKING IT ANYMORE. FIRST WE WERE USED IN A DIRTY WAR AND THEN ABUSED BY THE GOVERNMENT AND THE V.A. WHEN WE GOT HOME. NOW EVERY MAJOR PROGRAM DIRECTED TOWARD VIETNAM VETS IS BEING CUT (a total of only \$70 million) WHILE \$140 MILLION IS BEING SENT OFF TO THE DICTATORS OF EL SALVADOR. WE NEED JOBS, NOT PROMISES; CAMPAIGN PROMISES CANNOT REPLACE DISABILITY PAYMENTS; WE NEED DECENT BENEFITS, NOT HIGH-SOUNDING WORDS. 50 YEARS AGO, IN 1932, WORLD WAR I VETS FORMED THE "BONUS ARMY" AND MARCHED ON WASHINGTON TO DEMAND THEIR RIGHTS. ELEVEN YEARS AGO VIETNAM VETS DEMANDED "BRING OUR BROTHERS HOME FROM 'NAM, NOW!" TODAY WE NEED TO MARCH AGAIN OR BE TOSSED STRAIGHT ONTO THE GARBAGE HEAP!

- **TEST, TREAT & COMPENSATE AGENT ORANGE VICTIMS !**
- **DECENT BENEFITS FOR ALL VETS !**
- **STOP ALL V.A. CUTS ! SUPPORT INCARCERATED VETS !**
- **JOBS or INCOME !**      ◦ **SINGLE-TYPE DISCHARGE !**
- **NO AID TO EL SALVADOR ! NO WAR !**

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**All Vietnam Vets; All Veterans,  
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