



REAGAN PALS PLOT V.A. SALE



Reagan's new-right friends are at it again. Not only is this group of war-mongering draft dodgers against raises for the VA budget but now they've come up with the idea of dismantling the VA altogether.

Despite attempts to quiet the legitimate fears of veterans and veterans groups, this pilot study follows right-wing think

tank's positions on ending the VA. While some doubt the influence of these right-wing groups, look at their prior record: domestic use of the CIA; stopping the EPA from interfering with polluting companies; putting federal workers under social security; ending affirmative action programs in many places and cutting unemploy-

ment insurance. And that's just the beginning.

The committee consists of 150 executives from the largest and more powerful corporations and banks in the country. It's been named the Grace Committee after its head, J. Peter Grace. There are lots of suggestions from these corporate magnates: various VA programs

should be assumed by the Defense Department, by the Department of Education and Housing and Urban Development and by Social Security (which seems to have plenty of problems already without grabbing anymore). And the VA staff will be cut; VA insurance programs will be turned over to private firms.

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THE VETERAN

Vietnam Veterans Against the War

50¢

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DESPITE REAGAN... PEOPLE SAY NO NUKES

Some people get their jollies watching "Halloween I, II, III," Some people get their jollies watching Reagan speak on TV. Unfortunately not only is Reagan scarier but its hard to say its just a movie. Ever since Ronnie showed up, he and his creatures have been talking about winnable, protracted, limited etc nuclear (!) war. This is more than slightly distressing. But the government does come up with its basic justifications for this madness.

Government thesis #1: The Soviets are inhuman, subhuman insane creatures who want to rule the world and who can't be stopped short of destroying the world (which would be preferable to losing a war).

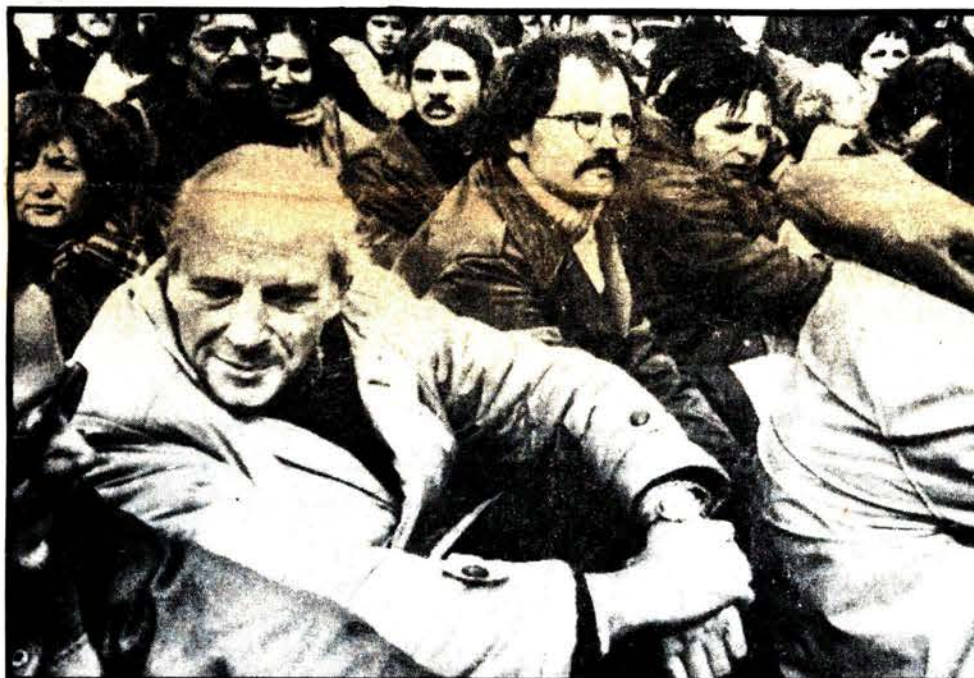
Our experience with the Soviet Union suggests that while they look, act and sound like any other great power the world has seen (rotten!) they are definitely within the human range. All human powers with muscle throw their weight around to the maximum, and those that can't whine about those that can. That isn't to say that it's justifiable to be a bully, but it is certainly very human.

Vietnam Veterans Against the War

National Office
P.O. Box 25592
Chicago, IL 60625

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Gert Bastian, a former general and present member of the "Greens" party in the West German parliament, demonstrates with over 200,000 others opposed to U.S. threat to Europe as a nuclear battleground.

Furthermore, a power that scores brownie points by saying that "destroying the world would be insane" seems, on the face of it, less of a bully than a power that threatens routinely to initiate nuclear holocaust. It's kind of like you had to live next to Billy the Kid or John Wayne Gacy, who would you chose? Not a nice choice, but at least Billy the Kid had some rational and logical motivations.

Recently, Ronnie went public with the line that he'd rather his children died young than lived and died of old age under communism.

Government thesis #2: (related to #1) We can't win a fair

fight against the Russians. If this is true it is based on the Soviets being flanked by Western Europe with 300 million people, China with 1,000 million people, Japan with 120 million against the USSR and allies with 350 million people. And this doesn't even count the population of the U.S. If, given these circumstances, the U.S. cannot keep the Soviets in line, then the entire Joint Chiefs should be shot for treason and ban'lity. If the Europeans cannot defend themselves (since they have almost the same population as the Soviet Union, and similar economic weight), then they are either too corrupt, cowardly, or unwilling for other reasons to do so;

why should we bail them out?

Many people have been asking this sort of question. As a result, the Reagan Administration is in weaker and weaker shape. So what does Ronnie do? He comes up with Star Wars pie in the sky--and that's 30 years down the line according to his own guesses. Perhaps he's trying to distract people by coming up with some insanity even more insane than his normal insanity.

But let us not be distracted. What do we really need to keep the Soviets from dropping their nukes on us? (That is, if they are not stopped by things like fear of ozone destruction and other types of potential damage that such an act might cause.) We need three nukes. Yep, 3. One for Moscow; one for Lenin-grad; one for Kiev. Loss of one, let alone three, would be unacceptable to any merely bully-ish nation but sane (and there is no proof that they're even as nuts as Ronnie). Now, since we already have about 10,000 war-heads (to say nothing about nuclear grenades, etc) why do we need to spend \$28.2 billion for new nukes in 1984. Why do we need to spend \$620 million a piece on 10 B-1 bombers?

Well, of course we know why. These guys are lunatic bandits--bandits because they're stealing our money, lunatic because they're stealing our money by piling dynamite around and under the country they, as well as we live in. Hopefully, they won't get away with it.



FRAGGIN'

Sp5 Willy(Ret.)



Got a letter from a reader of THE VETERAN wanting to know why "Fraggin'" wasn't in the last issue. I'm sorry. I just went out about a klick, put my gear down, lit a "j" and cooled out for awhile.

Did you ever hear of Andrei Sakharov. He's one of these Russian dissidents who's been sent to exile in a place called Gorky because he's been speaking out for human rights in that country. Recently there was a celebration honoring Sakharov's 60th birthday in New York. Ronald Reagan sent a telegram to the participants praising Sakharov. Among other things, Reagan said, "Mr Sakharov is a Russian patriot in the best sense of the word because he perceived his peoples' greatness to be not in militarism and conquests abroad, but in building a free and lawful society at home."

Nice, huh? If that's what a patriot is, I wish to hell that Reagan was one.

Instead, Reagan is going around promoting militarism and increasing the defense budget. They're even bringing battleships out of mothballs. For \$326 million they converted the New Jersey from a too slow, obsolete World War II battleship to a too slow, obsolete World War III battleship. It serves the purpose though. It's a military showpiece with all the latest in electronic gimmicks and missiles. They held a gala grand opening with red, white and blue covering it from stem to stern. Ronnie was there. He was positively blubbing with excitement. "I have the feeling," he said, "that I'm back on the set filming 'Hellcats of the navy.'"

All I can say is that I'm glad he didn't get the part in "Dr Strangelove!"

Having an actor in the

White House is not so bad. That's probably what Paul Laxalt, the Republican National Chairman thinks. As an answer to unemployment he wants Reagan to go on TV to promote American-made cars, washers and refrigerators. It would sort of be like the old days when Ronnie sold appliances as host of the General Electric Theatre.

I think a better answer to unemployment would be to stop building obsolete battleships and offensive weapons and put the money into building things that are needed. However, there is one part of the plan I like, and that is to put Reagan back where he belongs: on TV, preferably on the late, late show.

There's a new kind of protest going on at Offritt Air Base. Some religious people were objecting to the stained glass windows of the chapel of the Strategic Air Command. It seems that the stained glass contains images of radar equipment, fleets of bombers, a red "hotline" telephone, and yes, two mushroom clouds--as in clouds from atomic explosions.

A Dominican sister, a Dominican associate and a Sister of Mercy associate got dressed in sackcloth and ashes and staged a little protest demonstration at the SAC chapel. Of course SAC security had to save the chapel. They questioned and fingerprinted the dangerous suspects and banned them from returning to the base.

They should have locked them up and re-educated them. Told them that the mushroom cloud represented the shield of the 509th Bombardment Wing which dropped the A-bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. They should have explained to these people that God was behind us all the way on this thing. They could have been told that with a little imagination a mushroom

cloud look like a cross, and we all have crosses to bear, don't we?

A Federal Trade Commission memorandum reported that cold water survival suits used by seamen are defective. The report also said that it would be cheaper to have widows and children sue for compensation than to recall the 66,000 suits.

Just think about this: they spend \$326 million to refit the New Jersey. If it goes to war it will be too slow and probably get knocked out quickly. That means sailors will be in the ocean and won't survive because it costs too much to give them the right survival suit.

I guess the Navy doesn't always get the gravy. I wonder if Ronnie wore one of these suits when he filmed "Hellcats of the Navy."

GRENADE of the MONTH



Speaking of God and A-bombs, let's give this issue's "Grenade" to Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger. He spoke to a group of Harvard students and told them that he believed the world was going to end by an act of God. He then continued to talk and promote his plans to wage a protracted nuclear war.

Maybe Caspar thinks he was sent from God like the Angel Gabriel. He, St Caspar, will do what he can to help carry out God's mission to end the world. And they wonder why grunts become atheists!



No More Vietnams D.E.R.O.S. FOR M*A*S*H

After 11 years of trying to heal the wounds of the Korean War, television's M*A*S*H #4077 has collapsed the surgical tents, packed up the hemostats and not-so-silently stolen into the night, to be rerun and spun off for years to come. This medical/military series, so popular that its lifespan exceeded the war it was portraying by some 7 years, leaves an unfilled void in the "vast wasteland" of television.

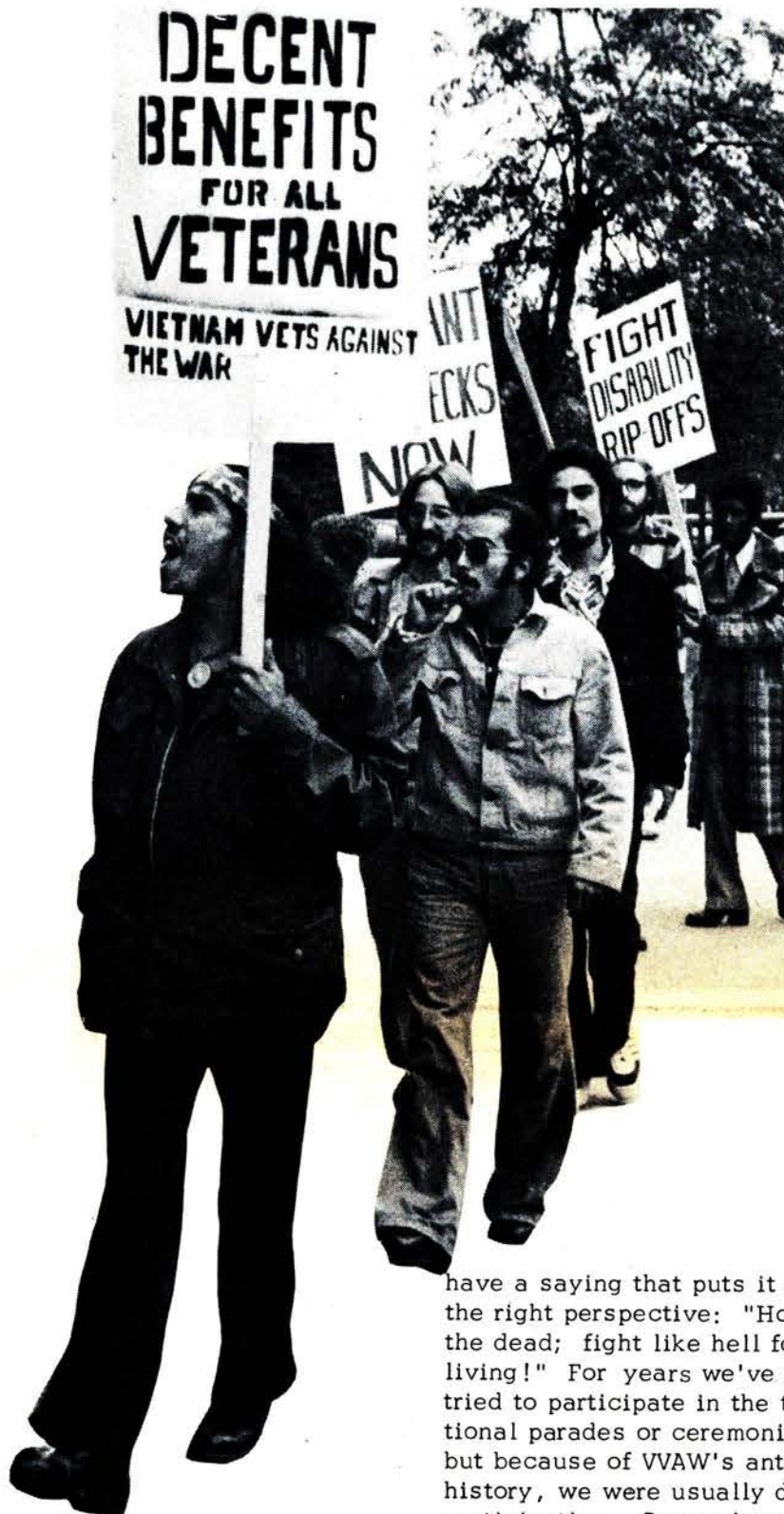
Those who have watched M*A*S*H on a long-term continuing basis point to the program's ongoing defense and reaffirmation of life in the face of overwhelming, war-brought death; program after program confirms the credo of medicine--heal the sick and care for the wounded--as well as the unofficial credo of the M*A*S*H team (and of most medical people in our acquaintance)--war may be hell, but life has to continue, and humor is the best medicine for many ailments. In none of the programs has war or its attendant miseries ever been glorified; to the contrary, M*A*S*H has shown that indeed war is hell, not only for the men who fight them but for the people who have to put the pieces back together again (if they can). War is contrary to what medicine stands for, and M*A*S*H has helped show that it can never be anything but dehumanizing and painful. While the program was never overtly anti-Vietnam war, it was anti-war in general, and its episodes celebrate the beauty, comedy and unfortunately, tragedy of humanity. The technical and verbal aspects of M*A*S*H always complemented the intent to dignify the human spirit, even through comedy.

Whether treating a wounded enemy soldier, being interviewed by the press, or trying to help a refugee family, the troops of M*A*S*H 4077 upheld a firm commitment to preserving life and spicing it with humor in the face of major obstacles, and for that commitment to humanity, we applaud them.

Annie Lugenbill
Veronica Burney
Chicago



HONOR THE DEAD, FIGHT FOR THE LIVING MEMORIAL DAY



Memorial Day--May 30th, 1983--proclaimed Memorial Day on May 30, 1865 to honor the dead of America's Civil War in order to mend the nation's wounds. America has never mended all its wounds, but neither has it run out of wars, so we've always had vets to honor.

As I grew up, Memorial Day always had a profound effect on me. I stood in awe of the old soldiers and their medals. I sure didn't want to miss a war when I grew up. All those speeches by local Congressmen and Senators on the missile gap and "Red China" had me all prepared when Vietnam came up.

For VVAW Memorial Day has always been important. We

have a saying that puts it all in the right perspective: "Honor the dead; fight like hell for the living!" For years we've always tried to participate in the traditional parades or ceremonies but because of VVAW's anti-war history, we were usually denied participation. Some places the traditional vets organizations still hold out; in most places VVAW has become an accepted part of the celebration.

VVAW has been persistent because we believe that the majority of veterans to feel a kinship with Memorial Day and what it has to say--not to talk about more defense money nor about the need for a draft but to honor those who died. Only the politicians, many of whom never fought a war, run those speeches.

This year's Memorial Day is here and other important issues stare us in the face. This is where "fight for the living" really gives meaning to "Honor the dead."

Our Vets Centers around the nation are coming under attack

from the VA. The class action suit against chemical companies who manufactured Agent Orange is coming to trial. The V.A. still has barely moved on the issue of testing, treatment and compensation for Agent Orange victims and their families.

The drum beat for a new draft beats louder. "Only \$110 million more and we can beat them in El Salvador." "Our advisors will certainly not be allowed into combat." The whole series of statements, exact replicas of what was said in the early days of Vietnam, show the move toward another Vietnam at the same time some parts of the country are living in a depression.

All VVAW chapters are urged to participate in local Memorial Day activities. If there are none where you are, plan your own. Sometimes it's uncomfortable to remember our own dead; sometimes the ceremonies seem hokey--but no matter. Honoring our dead brothers and sisters by working to stop future Vietnams is a vital task.

Here are some Memorial Day ideas:

1. Participate in local ceremonies at VA hospitals. Often they're followed by receptions at the hospital where you can talk up Agent Orange and the class action suit, or other VVAW activities in your area.

2. Participate in other local ceremonies or parades; experience has shown that VVAW's participation in parades brings a most favorable response from many onlookers.

3. In cities planning nothing for Memorial Day, plan your own ceremony at a local war memorial. Talk about what we learned from our experience in Vietnam and about some of the needs of veterans. This kind of project is good also for places where traditional organizations refuse to let VVAW participate in the "official" activities.

4. Plan a picnic or some other social event. Build it in the veterans' community, the vets centers, the local VA, and maybe the unemployment office. Use VVAW literature, THE VETERAN, VVAW's Agent Orange information, and sign people up for the class action suit--the June 27, 1983 trial date is get-

ting close.

Whatever of these activities you decide on, get out there and be visible; let vets and the American people know VVAW's position: "Honor the dead; Fight for the living!"

John Lindquist,
VVAW N.O..

THE TIGER is dead, but his struggle & memory demands;

"LONG LIVE THE TIGER"

**A.O.V.I. LOSS;
A LOSS FOR ALL!**

Among those who will be honored on this Memorial Day is Charles Hartz II, a vice-president of Agent Orange Victims International, a much decorated Vietnam veteran who spent the last five years of his life fighting his last and most horrible battle of the Vietnam war--Agent Orange.

Charley was a member of the "Tiger Force" of the 101st Airborne, small patrols dropped into enemy areas to report on movement and call in counter fire. But for the last years of life he answered hundred of urgent phone calls from fellow veterans and their families who were suffering, dying, bearing children with birth defects. Disregarding the pain from an inoperable tumor in his brain, Charley tried to talk vets out of suicide, referring them to doctors, attorneys, the VA and vets groups. The courage, determination and sacrifice of Charley Hartz is a symbol of the Agent Orange issue.

Charley's four children, three of which were born with various birth disorders, his wife Judy and his family and friends are proud of Charley--as proud as they can be. They know the years of suffering he endured, the hundreds of Agent Orange calls he received, his heroism in combat and his tremendous strength and determination and his final battle with cancer. The struggle which was his goes on. "The Tiger is dead; Long live the Tiger!"

(AOVI)



Staring out of the newspaper pages is an ex-special forces officer carrying out secret penetrations into Communist-held jungles of Southeast Asia in search of Americans still held as POW's by Vietnamese. This comic book hero would be laughable, but these theatrics can only serve to delay accounting for the MIA's in Laos, Vietnam and Kampuchea (Cambodia).

The MIA/POW question became a major political issue well before the end of the Vietnam War. Richard Nixon built up the issue as an excuse to continue that hapless war as the American people were becoming tired of pouring money and men down the rat hole of Vietnam, particularly to support a bunch of pimps, gangsters and drug pushers masquerading as a government in Saigon. To get over, the focus was switched to Americans missing or held prisoner. Releasing pilots while bombs were dropping on their heads did not make sense to the people of Hanoi, but it did serve to divert eyes in the U.S. Simply, Nixon and Kissinger and Company played upon the real sorrow of MIA/POW families to continue making more MIA's and POW's.

Hope is a vital human emotion; it got most of us through our tour in Vietnam. Hope, combined with the love of family which looks for the return of loved ones is more than understandable; they want an accounting of the missing. The pain that the families feel is real.

But the U.S. government has taken these emotions and this pain to use for its own cynical purposes and political ends. The families, the POW's and MIA's become pawns in both a propaganda and a real war with Vietnam. While the rest of the world saw photos of bombed-out cities and hospitals, Nixon used pictures of captured American airmen to condemn American anti-war protestors and continue his bombing. The families of the missing were used to shore up the Nixon position.

It could never be easy to tell families of the missing that there was little or no hope for the return of their loved ones as long as U.S. bombing continued and until a peace agreement was signed, the cynical position of Nixon and friends was to use more bombs as the answer to the families' pain. When the Paris Peace Agreements were finally signed, Nixon and Kissinger forgot about the MIA's--the value of the MIA's and the use of the families of the MIA's was no longer essential; the issue of the families was cast aside.

Instead the U.S. govern-

The Reasonable Solution **POW's ~ MIA's ?**

ment, after signing the Paris Agreements, reneged on its promises, both public and se-

point. Yet the issue stays alive, partly because of the activities of the families, but also because

in reasonableness and ability to talk, not in rhetoric about half-baked schemes. One step might be the recognition by the U.S. government of the government of Vietnam (it is already recognized by the UN and most of the rest of the world)--the U.S. government already recognizes dozens of governments that it doesn't like. Second, the U.S. government can stop the activities, both private and governmental, of groups into the internal affairs of countries of Southeast Asia; send Bo Gritz and his troops back to their well-deserved obscurity. Finally, there can be real talks with the possibility of using some of the money paid by the U.S. to the government of Vietnam for the purpose of searching out and finding the remains of American MIA's.

The way in which the U.S. government has used the issue of POW's/MIA's underlines some of the worst propaganda features of U.S. foreign and domestic policy. There has never been any hesitation to use families and the emotional impact of the issue to the utmost in support of whatever position the U.S. government wanted to support at that moment. Enough: let us be honest with all concerned, and get on with the business of normal relations with Vietnam which will lead to a resolution--cooperative--of the problem of POW's/MIA's. The sooner the better!

Barry Romo
National Office
VVAW



cret, signed with the government of Vietnam. There was no action about the \$5 billion in aid promised to rebuild the country devastated by U.S. bombings. The U.S. also continued its CIA and other clandestine operations against the Hanoi government. It's not hard to understand why the Hanoi government would find it hard to allow U.S. teams into their country to wander around. This was not just paranoia but was based on the concrete experience with the U.S. government and the CIA. The Hanoi government believed--with justification--that these teams would have the function of sabotage and stirring up trouble instead of finding bodies.

The probability or possibility of MIA's being alive in Vietnam is remote at best. There is no valid reason, aside from racist notions of the unscrupulous oriental, for there to be serious expectations that the Vietnamese are still holding prisoners at this

of the activities of the way out far right groups who have taken up where Nixon left off.

Among these far-right groups is the "Liberty Lobby," a bunch of loonies most noted for pushing the notion that Jews were not massacred by Nazis in World War II. This "The Holocaust is a Hoax" grouping has come up with totally fabricated lies about fresh POW's being held 20 years after their war was over. They use the MIA issue and some of the families to push their political line and sell their paper. Politicians use the issue to keep their names in the papers. Ex-military men use it to take vacations abroad and then sell their stories to Hollywood. In fact every two-bit hustler seems to see a couple of bucks to be made in the issue. That is, everyone--except the families who have to live with the constant pain of wondering.

There is an answer to the MIA question; that answer lies

IN MEMORIAM

THE VETERAN is sad to report that word has just been received noting the untimely death of Agent Orange class action attorney, Keith Kavenagh. We extend our sincere sympathy along with the hope that a final victory, in the suit, will be, in part, a monument to this man and his efforts. Condolences may be directed to; Yannacone & Yannacone, P.O. Drawer 109, Patchogue, NY. 11772.

AGENT ORANGE SHORTS

REPORT FROM VIETNAM

The Vietnamese government has sponsored a study which has profound implications for Vietnam vets worried about Agent Orange contamination. The study of 40,000 Vietnamese families, presented at the "International Symposium on the Long Term Ecological Warfare in Vietnam" reveals that men exposed to Agent Orange have an abnormally high

number of children with birth defects.

The study was based on a comparison of families where the father stayed in North Vietnam and families where the father served in South Vietnam. Women whose husbands had served in the South had a significantly higher rate of miscarriages, still births and children with abnormalities than women whose husbands stayed in the North.

While some right-wing politicians and apologists for thugs like Dow Chemical are calling

the findings propaganda, the Vietnamese study only confirms what many Vietnam vets already know--dioxin causes birth defects. Trying to coverup the truth by labelling it "propaganda" is not a new technique: in 1972 VVAW revealed that Agent Orange was causing birth defects in pregnant Vietnamese women. At the time it was called "propaganda." But much of the information is now confirmed by such disasters as Love Canal, Times Beach and the other dioxin disaster areas in the U.S.

One researcher into the pro-

blems of dioxin exposure, while not being ready to adopt the findings without further study, did say that this was the first study done yet with a sufficient amount of time since the event, and enough of a sampling of the population to make the study meaningful; she was going to study the results further.

Vietnam veterans can't wait another 10 years for the U.S. government to admit the truth. We need the treatment and compensation now, for ourselves, our wives and widows, and our children.

REPORT FROM AUSTRALIA

The following is from a letter sent to VVAW by Graham Bell, early member of Australian Vietnam Veterans Association, and longtime friend of VVAW.

"Fellow Veterans,

Senator Messner, the Minister for screwing veterans, has

released a happy report that Vietnam war veterans now have nothing to worry about; birth defects in veterans' children have nothing to do with service in Vietnam. I have mentioned Senator Messner before: he is the fuckwit who did a tour of the U.S. at taxpayers' expense, then came back to Australia full of bullshit and some great story of having done the rounds of veterans organizations in the U.S. As you said in your letter at the time, '...sorry but we have never heard of your Senator Messner.'

The timing and manner of the release of this report in the middle of the federal election campaign was a desperate move which backfired.

Unfortunately, Senator Messner has drawn #1 slot on his party's senate ticket in South Australia so he has a good chance of staying in Parliament anyway, but since his party is doomed, he won't be screwing veterans for much longer. The Labor Party leader, Bob Hanke, has promised veterans a 'Royal Commission'--you Americans don't have an equivalent; a Royal

Commission is heavier than a grand jury, similar but not the same as the Warren or Watergate inquiries.

Just on the Birth Defects study: 1) the research design was faulty; 2) data base was too narrow and too biased; 3) certain areas of relevant and important factual material were ignored. There are also unsubstantiated rumours about the personnel involved in the study.

Hope all you 'ungrateful' and 'unpatriotic' veterans keep up the good work--

Graham Bell

Toxic spray kills, deforms

by PHIL RESER

The issue of Agent Orange continues to haunt the veterans of Vietnam who have attempted to file a class action suit against both the U.S. government and the chemical companies which produced the substance.

While American and Australian vets push for more investigation and research into the effects of Agent Orange in Vietnam, the late Dr Ton That Tung of Hanoi and other physicians and scientists have continued to

Continued from page 1
V.A. PLAN

Corporations are apparently not satisfied with coining money off our blood in Vietnam when we were in the service; now they want to cut our benefits and make more money on our problems than they could on the wars they sent us to.

The Committee will be holding public meetings in mid April to discuss its proposals. Hopefully, Vietnam veterans will take appropriate notice of these turkeys in order to let them know how we feel.

make a priority of researching the impact of defoliants on their country.

Dr Tung, who died in May of last year, had an international reputation in this study that was so great that the Italian government had invited him to help liquidate the chemical catastrophe of Agent Orange which occurred in Seveso at a factory explosion.

In their research, Tung and his associates, studied a group of people from South Vietnam, a total of 903, who had been affected. For clinical study, 179 people were selected so that they were a representative set of the afflicted population. They included 90 men, 19 women and 70 children between the ages of 6 and 14.

Tung mentions as the immediate effect of Agent Orange on a human being injury to the upper respiratory organs among 91% of the victims, vomiting and intestinal difficulties among 70%, irritated skin among 41% and heart trouble among 38 percent.

The secondary, long term effects of Agent Orange are not yet all known. For the present, it has been proved that genetic disturbances occur, eyesight is affected and there are tumorous growths and birth defects.

Dr Tung was interviewed by Abe and Deborah Weisburd in 1980 and asked how he felt about the damage suits by U.S.

and Australian vets, to which he responded with full support.

"However," he continued, "the Vietnamese victims of U.S. defoliants are much more numerous and suffered more direct hits by the toxic chemicals. They also should be compensated, as should my government, for the terrible losses suffered from the herbicides dropped on this country."

Commenting on the effect of Agent Orange, Tung said, "Clinically I'm sure that the liver cancer of those who had contact with the toxic chemicals was caused by the herbicides." He also said, "The evidence shows that the num-

ANOTHER (!) STUDY.....

S.O.S. FROM 'DOWN UNDER'

According to a press release from the U.S. House Veterans Affairs Committee, a new Australian study shows that Vietnam veterans are not more likely than others to have children with birth defects.

The study, released by Senator Tony Messner, the Australian minister of Veterans' Affairs, found that, first, veterans had no greater risk of fathering a malformed child than did non-veterans, and, second, Vietnam vets had no greater risk than non-Vietnam vets.

---3/22/83 Press Release

ber of spermatozoa in the semen is considerably reduced in men who had contact with Agent Orange."

In the conclusion of one study Dr Tung and his co-workers did, they wrote, "The study of herbicides and dioxin seems to provide the real concept that the mutagens of the environment can be the principal cause of cancer, birth defects, heart disease and senility."

The Weisburd's requested a visit to one of the areas where the spraying of Agent Orange had taken place and this was granted

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THE LINES - THE LIES! LONGER & LONGER



Recent figures show that Vietnam vets are among the most heavily affected by the recent recession (which Reagan & Co have now declared over).

In the age group between 25 and 29, in January of 1982, 13.9% of the Vietnam vet population were among those laid off; the percent in the non-vet popula-

tion was 11%. In January of 1983, 13.7% of non vets were laid off; for Vietnam vets, the figure was a remarkable 21.8%.

We can only thank Reagan for having solved the problems of the economy once again--and once again giving Vietnam vets the chance to be in the front lines!

CONTINUED.

AGENT ORANGE

by the Vietnamese government.

"We had a long ride northwest of Saigon to Tay Ninh Province, where the most sustained

and heaviest Agent Orange spraying destroyed more than 200,000 acres of the very tall eucalyptus trees."

Leaving the paved road we travelled several miles along a dirt road into an area where we saw blackened, bare eucalyptus trees. The eucalyptus trees hit by Agent Orange no longer produce leaves, the source of oil of eucalyptus, a valuable medicine. We did not see any commercial logging of the trees which were highly prized as timber."

Before leaving Ho Chi Minh City, the Weisburd's visited the Tu Du Hospital for deformed children. The hospital takes care of over 200 children born without eyes, parts of arms or legs and with twisted bodies and other malformations.

The most distressing sight for the Weisburd's was in the two rooms of the hospital where some 40 children with incurable brain damage were quartered.

"Those children, many of them more than 10 years old, were all in cribs with high sides. Fifteen, unable to stand up, were lying in their cribs and will lie flat on their backs until they pass away."

The Weisburd's interviewed the two women who take care of these children, one a Catholic nurse, told them that all but two of the children had Vietnamese fathers who were victims of Agent Orange spraying in several provinces. The other two had American fathers who evidently, they said, had had contact with Agent Orange.

(Phil Reser authored this article which has been reprinted from the "Walking Point" section of the "San Francisco Appeal To Reason" newspaper • 1983.)

ISRAELI VETERANS AGAINST PRESSURE FR

"I was the last Israeli out of the Sinai," says Harel. "I served there for 3 years with the army, then stayed on to do some work as a tour guide and then I got a job teaching American officers from the 82nd Airborne about the desert." Harel is sitting on the bed in a small apartment belonging to his brother in a kibbutz near Beersheva, in the northern part of the Negev

to spend the term of his reserve duty in jail and forfeit his pay.

"This is my way of having an argument with the government," says Harel.

The growing peace movement in Israel is a veterans and soldiers movement. This is what many feel give it its credibility. According to Hillel Schenker of the Tel Aviv-



Committee against the War in Lebanon (C.W.L.) demonstration.

desert. As he talks, his brother nonchalantly takes a Galil assault rifle out of the closet and starts to clean it.

"For me the Sinai, at the time, was our border, an occupied place, but still our border. I have no argument with keeping the country's borders safe, but I will not go serve in Lebanon."

Harel is, like almost all Israelis, both a veteran and a continuing soldier. Every Israeli must join the Israeli Defense Forces, the IDF, at age 18--men for 3 years, women for 2--and then serve in the reserves until 55. Normally, reservists serve on active duty for 30 days a year, although this is often broken into smaller blocks of time. Since the war in Lebanon, the amount of service required of reservists has increased.

Harel is an example of a new phenomena in Israeli society. While committed to the existence and defense of Israel he is an opponent of the Begin's government's policies in the occupied territories, the West Bank and Gaza, and of the war in Lebanon. He is a military resister. His unit has been mobilized to serve in Lebanon and he has refused to go. He is waiting to see if his commanding officer can arrange alternative service for him. Otherwise, he is willing, like others,

based International Center for Peace in the Middle East, a Peace Now activist, "It is a general principle in Israel that the country is threatened. Up until now the peace movement could not be a pacifist movement. We had to admit the threat--that the return of the Jews to the Middle East was not welcomed. But now we are saying, 'Look, we have defended the country in the past, but now we believe there are options



Marching through the streets of Jerusalem demand "Peace Now" from Begin gov-

to continuing war and bloodshed."

Schenker points to the Sadat initiative for Israeli-Egyptian peace and Camp David as the beginning of the modern Israeli peace movement.

"At first everyone was eu-

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BT THE WAR FROM THE STREETS

phoric. Seeing Sadat in the Knesset caused a break in the feeling of being in a state of seige. But it wasn't so simple; Begin began to stall. It was at that moment that Peace Now evolved in order to make sure there was no breakdown."

One of the first acts of the movement was the circulation of a letter signed by over 300 reserve army officers calling for peace negotiations. In March of 1978, Peace Now organized its first demonstration; 40,000 took part.

"Begin admits that when he was at Camp David he was haunted by the image of thousands of Israelis in the street demanding peace; this was definitely a factor that made him sign," says Schenker.

The pressure from the streets continued until the actual signing of the treaty a year after Camp David. In the spring of 1979, Carter visited Israel to prod Begin. Peace Now organized a demonstration. So did the Gush Emunim and Kach Party of Rabbi Meir Kahane--fanatic religious nationalists who were opposed to the peace treaty.

"For some of us ex-Americans it was almost surrealistic. We had demonstrated against the war in Vietnam and against the American government; yet, here we were demonstrating in support of an American president in support of peace."

Schenker views the conclusion of the Egyptian-Israeli treaty as a victory for the peace movement, but dealing with

than giving back the Sinai; because it is so close to the heart of Israel, and perceived by many as a military danger; because of the religious and mystical attachments they have to the area; and because of the presence of over a million Palestinians in the territories.

Begin's right-wing Likud government, which was first elected in 1978 and taken by surprise by the Sadat initiative

The peace movement grew enormously during the war--the first Israeli war that saw open opposition from within Israeli society. Besides Peace Now, the Committee against the War in Lebanon was formed. Soldiers resistance groups developed: Soldiers Against Silence is a group of reservists returning from the front who denounced the continuation of the war; and Yesh Guvol.



Harel (on left) and other veterans and soldiers at conclusion of March 10th., 1983 C.W.L. demonstration in Jerusalem.

and the public support of it, was now determined to pursue a policy of expansion and suppression of Palestinians. The pace of settlement on the West Bank was increased and settlers allowed to run wild, harrasing and killing Palestinians. The spring of 1982 saw a reign of terror on the West Bank. Fifteen Palestinians were killed by Israelis. Peace Now held a demonstration of 25,000 against the repression and the settlements.

Then, in early June, came the invasion of Lebanon. The government told the people and the soldiers, that it was only going to go 45 kilometers in order to clean PLO fighters out of an area within shooting range of northern Israel. But even on the first day some units were far beyond that, and eventually the IDF sat on the door of Beirut, 110 kilometers away.

The occupation of Lebanon continues with over 600 Israeli dead. Arab casualties--both fighters and civilians--number in the tens of thousands. A nasty guerilla war has begun and there are casualties daily. Begin is stale-mating the negotiations for withdrawal, hoping to buy time to settle the West Bank and not willing to admit that the invasion was an enormous mistake.

Yesh Guvol has two meanings in Hebrew: "there is a limit," and "there is a border." It is a group of reservists who have refused to serve in Lebanon. By early March, 1,470 soldiers had signed Yesh Guvol's petition; 200 were officers; 31 had spent time in jail for their refusal.

Roni, a Yesh Guvol activist and lecturer at Tel Aviv University, points out that the movement has levels of support beyond those who have signed the petition. There are some like Harel, who don't publically sign, but resist, and there are many soldiers in military jails due to actions they took or didn't take during the occupation. "We meet them when we go in," he says.

Roni feels that the invasion of Lebanon parallels the war in Vietnam and the resistance to it. "Israelis who don't accept the comparison want to deny the shock in Israel of what the Lebanon war did. They agree that the national consensus is broken, but not like it was in America during Vietnam."

"The Americans were told that they had to fight in Vietnam to protect their own security. We are told we must fight in Lebanon. Maybe we will have to fight someday, but our system is not in danger. Everybody should remember that it was Israel that started the bombardment in Lebanon. There

had been a ceasefire for the last 11 months which the PLO observed. It was Israel that broke it."

"We should not have to sacrifice even our little finger for something that can be negotiated."

Roni does not feel threatened by the idea of negotiating with the PLO and feels that the establishment of an independent Palestinian state would not only be just, but also much less threatening than Begin and Sharon's military suicide.

Harel agrees; "Everyone needs a home. The PLO wants a country. Israel had its own independence war, not the Palestinians are fighting theirs. I may not accept how they do it, but I feel that I have a need to speak to them."

He points to the Bedouin Arab village of Rahat across the road from the Kibbutz. "For almost 40 years this kibbutz has been a good neighbor to the Bedouin and them to us. Nothing in the world is impossible."

Chris Deisinger
VVAW Milwaukee

ARMED FORCES DAY

While VVAW chapters in a number of cities around the country will be holding actions on Memorial Day, some chapters are focusing their attention on an earlier date--May 21st, Armed Forces Day.

Not too many years ago, Armed Forces Day was a major event, at least for a certain number of troops, a couple of high school bands, ROTC units, and the generals/admirals/politicians who graced a reviewing stand. VVAW along with many other anti-war groups turned Armed Forces Day in Armed Forces Day during the Vietnam War. Finding that VVAW and an anti-war stance attracted more favorable attention than the troops on parade, the powers that be decided to de-emphasize the Day which had become a public embarrassment.

Now, however, Armed Forces Day is staging a comeback; with a World War II grade-B movie star in the White House, the pomp of the '50's is being relived. Even New York City plans an Armed Forces Day parade on 5th Avenue.

VVAW chapters, in New York City as well as other places, will appear to show that not all veterans are willing to donate their children to Reagan's next war--in fact we're perfectly willing for Reagan to fight the war himself since he missed the last couple!



Jerusalem, members of C.W.L. government.

"the heart of the problem," the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, has proved more difficult. Giving up the occupied territories, the West Bank and Gaza, in return for peace is much more sensitive a problem for Israelis

Where We Came From, Who Are We, Who Can Join VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR

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Vietnam Veterans Against the War began in 1967 to join the ranks of those who wanted an end to 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, potentially, El Salvador, or the USSR's invasion of Afghanistan. We have supported, by whatever means were possible, those who are fighting for their own liberation. And we have stood with veterans of all eras in fighting for the things we need, have been promised, and have been earned.

From its early days VVAW has operated on the knowledge that the government will give vets what 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 accomplish, but when veterans unite to fight together, we can do much. VVAW has seen some real successes: we helped to put an end to U.S. troops in Southeast Asia, we helped get Nixon tossed out of office on his ear, we helped to win (to a great extent) amnesty for war resisters. With other vets groups we helped to stir up enough public furor that the Veterans Administration took its first halting steps to look for an answer to Agent Orange poisoning, and recognized what VVAW used to call Post Vietnam Syndrome when we were leading rap groups in 1970 (and is now-called "post-traumatic stress or 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. Sometimes this has brought us into conflict with the "traditional" vets organizations. While they have tended to stand behind the U.S. government and its various war-like maneuverings, VVAW has always asked "Why?" We've opposed moves toward war, fight against registration and the draft which will follow, opposed inflated defense expenditures, 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 used once by the government and its corporate backers, and then be thrown away with a bad GI Bill, wretched healthcare, Agent Orange ravaging our bodies, vivid memories of the war often ravaging our minds, no jobs, and all the multitude of other problems Vietnam vets often face. We do not intend to see our children go through the same thing in the next war for somebody else's profit!

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BY-LAWS OF VVAW

1. The name of the organization shall be Vietnam Veterans Against the War.
2. Membership in the organization is open to all veterans (regardless of discharge) and to non-veterans interested in joining together to build a veterans movement. While VVAW is made up primarily of Vietnam and Vietnam-era veterans and their families, the organization also welcomes veterans from other eras and non-veterans.
3. Membership requirements include filling out a membership form, paying the \$5 initiation fee and \$1 monthly dues to the national office. Other requirements, not in conflict with national requirements, may be added by local chapters.
4. Local VVAW chapters will decide on their own chapter structure, by-laws and dues. Chapters will, to the best of their ability, work on the national programs of VVAW plus whatever local campaigns they decide on which are not in opposition to national programs.
5. National meetings of the organization, open to all members, will be held at least once yearly. A National Steering Committee, made up of the national officers, the regional officers, & an elected representative from each chapter shall meet as necessary. Such meetings may consist of phone calls to the chapter representatives if necessary.
6. National officers are elected at national meetings for a period of a year. They are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the organization, for speaking on behalf of the national organization, and for the publication and content of THE VETERAN and "The Guidon."
7. Regional coordinators, as needed will be elected at national meetings to serve 1 year terms; regional coordinators will facilitate and coordinate regional activities, aid the building of local chapters, and provide input from chapters into the national office.
8. Policies, programs and positions of VVAW nationally will, as much as possible, be decided at national meetings. If that is not possible, such decisions will be made by the National Steering Committee or, in emergencies, by the National Office.



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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 _____

"DEADLY DECEITS"

My 25 Years With The CIA

Deadly Deceits, subtitled "My 25 Years in the CIA," by Ralph McGehee (published by Sheridan Square Publications, Box 677, New York, NY 10013) is a remarkable study of a CIA agent who still has no conception of what he wants. Perhaps there have been enough "inside the CIA" books written by now; perhaps the correct reaction is "Who cares?" But intentionally or not, McGehee makes it clear that what he saw in his 25 years of CIA activities is still alive and well in Central America today, as is the way in which CIA information (actually "disinformation") plays a major part in persuading the U.S. government and people to march off in the war to stop the spread of Communism. And all of this is--and was--done with basic lies!

Deadly Deceits is a summary of the CIA lies over the past 25 years, especially in Asia. The book also is the study of an individual who as a CIA operative learned ever so slowly that the CIA was not the hand of God on earth--in fact it was the hand of the U.S. presidency. Again and again the book details situations where policy was decided first, then "intelligence" produced to support that policy. As McGehee puts it, after helping concoct "facts" to prove the need for CIA-supported operations by Hmong tribesmen in Laos, "It was, of course, a perfect example of policy being decided from the top in advance and then intelligence being selected or created to support it afterwards--precisely the opposite of the way it should be done. Not only was it backwards, but it was a complete hoax contrived to deceive Congress, which naturally swallowed it hook, line and sinker."

Put that quote next to recent Congressional moves toward giving more bucks to the government of El Salvador--based on "intelligence," of course.

McGehee did everything right; a football player at Notre Dame, he learned patriotism in its rawest form, hating communism with an appropriate passion. When, after he failed his tryout with the Green Bay Packers, McGehee was approached by the CIA, he discovered home. The CIA, according to McGehee's

version of the CIA personality profile, wants "active, charming, obedient people... who see things in black and white and don't like to think too much." Despite his score (duly recorded in the book) of 143 on the IQ test, McGehee seems to have fit the mold, almost too perfectly.

The book becomes a remarkable history of McGehee's being screwed by the CIA and loving every moment of it. In what was only one of the more blatant examples, McGehee is called in by an upper-level supervisor and told to spy on his co-workers during a tour in Northern Thailand. When he refuses he's told that he'll never be promoted--all of which happens. But McGehee seems incapable of believing what is happening to him.

Or there's a program that McGehee developed, a kind of village by village survey which involved a couple of CIA people dealing with trusted villagers over a period of time and rooting out insurgency through getting to know and win the trust of the people. The result was the discovery that a high percentage of the people were connected with the guerillas, a fact which McGehee tried to publicize throughout the CIA. His discovery was true not only for Thailand (where he was working at the time) but also for Vietnam.

No one wanted to deal with the information. Even though, after a period of time, CIA training personnel awarded him a medal for the plans and tactics of his operation, no one cared for his results since they disagreed with the political points that politicians wanted to make (essentially, too many enemy sympathizers would have made it clear that the U.S. didn't have a chance). So McGehee's information conveniently disappeared. McGehee, 140+ IQ or not still followed the company line believing what the Agency wanted him to believe and certainly not in any way distrusting the sanctity of CIA information.

Perhaps McGehee was just plain too good for the CIA. He believed the Agency was as good as it pretended to be; he couldn't believe it when he found it

was a lie. There is such a thing as being too trusting--it's the old saying about fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me. For McGehee, it wasn't twice but a succession of rotten CIA tricks; the important ones, of course, were on governments and people around the world, and the people here at home. The less important ones were the succession of dirty tricks played on McGehee and, presumably, other CIA employees who preferred the truth to the CIA "party line."

The book provides countless details of all these things. It's hard to remember always that the book is written with hindsight, that the things so obviously CIA manipulation might have looked real when they happened. To his credit, McGehee keeps pointing to the future; things that looked good in '68 are now clearly false, so what about things that look real today? The answer for how the CIA is concocting information to support the U.S. position in Central America is clear and must be remembered.

McGehee wants to save the "intelligence" service. But he's convinced the CIA can't do it--though it is less clear why he thinks this sort of thing is so necessary.

With the CIA functioning as the covert arm of whatever Administration is in power, McGehee notes that Reagan & Co are now in the process of trying to cover up what the CIA is doing: "The President," he says, "wants the Agency free of the constraints of public exposure so that it can gather and fabricate its disinformation unharried by criticism and so that it can overthrow governments without the knowledge of the American people." The point of the CIA, as presently constituted, is "to benefit the rich."

With all the good information, with all the good points which underline the evils of the CIA and its role of lying to the American people, and with all this coming from the mouth of a CIA dupe, the book still doesn't ring quite true--a little nagging question remains. Perhaps it's this: McGehee comes off as a little better than possible. Would the CIA be willing to put its deadly secrets in the hands of one as naive as McGehee?

The book is, in addition to a study of McGehee, a study in the changes anyone must go through to get a book through the CIA censors--an interesting point in the land of "freedom of expression." Time and time again, to avoid the CIA rubbing

out whole segments of the book, McGehee had to rush to his source library in order to prove, to some CIA boss or other, that the material they wanted to chop had already been printed in some accessible source in the U.S. Elaborate rules and regulations go as far as possible to discourage publication of any information that the CIA might find offensive (which means give an insight into the plots and counterplots).

Under the most recent CIA rules they have the ability not only to refuse to allow publication of, but also to grab any proceeds from a publication not officially "approved" and, more to the point for someone like McGehee, to stop all retirement pay and benefits (a little hard on a 25-year employee). It's a rotten agency, the book makes clear, and is dedicated (along the way) to keeping its rottenness a secret.

Readers of Deadly Deceits will thank McGehee for making clear what the CIA is and has done. The CIA and its disinformation rule in Vietnam is clearly put and devastating. The application to El Salvador is unmistakable. McGehee has the CIA indicted, tied up and ready for trial. He gives the evidence, presents his conclusions. But finally he doesn't take the step to say they're guilty; after his 25 years in the CIA he's still an observer and won't become involved.

It's a fine book to see some of what the CIA has been up to and what some of our tax dollars have been buying. It's also a fine study of watching someone try, and finally fail, to come to grips with himself and what he's done with his life.

--Pete Zastrow
VVAW National
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Dewey Ruis, Larry Pypinowski, Bob Moinester, Jerry Sorrentino, Dennis Finnegan; all young men, all in the prime of their lives, all dead. Three enlisted men, two officers, three of them never saw their 20th birthday, one made it into his twenties, one almost made it out of his twenties. Two were friends from my boyhood days, one a brother of shared bloodlines, two were brothers of many humps, smokes, jokes, cups of cocoa, and terrified moments together. Four army, one navy, four had enlisted, one was drafted, three paratroopers, one regular infantry, one navy riverboats. Four dead from fatal gunshot wounds, one dead in the flaming wreckage of a helicopter. Four of them had never married, one of them left a wife and two daughters. Three from New York, one from Georgia, one from New Jersey. Two killed in 1968, two killed in 1969, one killed in 1972; four were on their first tour, one was on his fourth.

For the rest of my life I will remember these friends and brothers of mine; them and the others that time has left only their faces and nicknames behind.

Their names are now etched in our nation's capital for as long as granite exists. Their names are there among all the other Deweys from Georgia, all the other Ski's from Jersey, all the other Bobs and Jerrys and Dennis's from New York, and the Jims from Texas, and Reds from California, and Chiefs from Montana, and Docs from Puerto Rico. They are there, all these sons and daughters of little and big town America, for America to see.

What America doesn't see is the mothers and fathers who

NATIONAL SALUTE TO VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIES AND MESSAGES

THE UNSEEN WALL

fainted when they opened their doors to see a uniformed military officer and their local religious leader standing there with practiced looks of sorrow and compassion. What America doesn't see is the young wife, four months pregnant, who miscarries with the news that her 19-year-old husband is dead. What America doesn't see is the grandparents with weak hearts who yield themselves to death because the joy of their old age has been blown to pieces 11,000 miles away. What America doesn't see is the infants and young children, just starting to realize who the person with the deeper voice and stronger hands was, infants and children who now have only fast-diminishing memories. What America doesn't see is the family days in the park, gatherings for birthdays, Thanksgivings, Christmas, hopes and dreams and ambitions that now will never be. What America doesn't see is the surviving families who now dread the unspoken words and melancholy which surrounds their holidays. And what America doesn't see is the 57,939 shrines of pictures and medals in houses and apartments from Maine to Hawaii, Alaska to Puerto Rico, Chicago to New Orleans.

What America does and will see is the 57,939 names now engraved in our national memory. What America doesn't see is that number and more dead since their return from Vietnam.

What America doesn't see is that number of veterans and more that are now unemployed, drug addicted, alcoholic, incarcerated, confused and alienated. What America doesn't see is the hundreds of thousands wounded in Vietnam, men now without arms, eyes, spleens, kidneys, etc. What America doesn't see is the thousands of veterans and their children suffering from the effects of exposure to "one of the most toxic substances known to man." What America doesn't see is the 115,878 mothers, fathers, the 231,756 grandparents, the uncounted brothers, sisters, daughters, sons, friends and lovers.

Oh yes, the number of Americans permanently affected by our many-year military commitment to the Southeast Asian War goes far beyond the 57,939 names that have been immortalized. If all the names of the Americans who suffer from that war were inscribed, the 10-foot blocks of granite would surround Washington, DC. And that sounds like an exceptionally fine idea.

There is not the name of one, not one son or daughter of any Congressman or Senator who held office during the Vietnam war years, to be seen on the monument. Over 1500 of their children were draft-eligible during the Vietnam war. Twenty-seven of that number went into uniform, 3 went to Vietnam, one was wounded. The children of the people who voted for the war, voted funds for its continuation year after year have a service rate of 1.8% compared to 34.6% of the same age groups in the general population. Their service in Vietnam rate (once they got into the service) was 11.1% as opposed to 33.3% for the rest of us. If we were all called to

serve in the same proportion as the children of the war makers, we would need no monument for none of us would have died and only 468,000 instead of over 7,000,000 would have been in uniform with only 52,000 instead of 3,000,000 serving in Vietnam. It is easy to perceive a blood-bath as a "just and noble cause" when you and yours are not being asked to bathe in the blood. A wall around Washington, DC sounds real good. The next time they want to have a war, they can have it among themselves and leave the rest of us out of it. We paid our dues many times over; they refuse to even turn the check over to see what their bill is.

If we put the names of all the Vietnamese, Cambodians and Laotians affected on a monument we would have a wall a 100 feet high around the entire nation. If we do not as a nation examine, criticize and learn from those terrible years and from there move in a direction of peaceful co-existence with the other nations of the world, that 100-foot wall should go up with a steel top to it to ensure that the sickness that caused the sacrilege of the Vietnam war is not allowed to run amok in the world again.

As Americans we pride ourselves on our wars, always to the extent of being unaware of how much the rest of the world suffers in these wars. America has not had one bomb, one shell or even one bullet cause wartime damage since 1865, while the rest of the world has crawled out of the rubble of war many, many times. There is only the one planet, and 4,000,000,000 of us must live on it, or the chances are that all 4 billion of us will die horribly with it.

--Pat Finnegan
Albany, NY

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LETTERS TO VVAW

Dear VVAW:

I'm enclosing an article on Marine Capt. Charles Johnson (the Marine who stared down an Israeli tank in Beirut) who was an all-conference quarterback and also Sergeant Jay T. Stanley, of Towson, MD, the first American to be wounded in El Salvador.

I would say, my dear friends, that we still have our work cut out for us.

We note that Capt. Johnson's father, Don, back in Neenah, WI, says that he is the "kind of guy you'd want there" and Janice, the wife, says she's proud and "thankful no one was hurt" and I think that the Marines should land at DaNang to straighten all that mess out.

Seems to me that we are right back where we started from.

My life has been that of an observer of the Americans, and others, too; it seems that I have seen such courage, such courage, and I saw it in Vietnam and I have seen it on these construction jobs when death was close. And Capt. Charles Johnson is, of course, very brave, and that is not the issue, is it? I see this Texas Macho down here and it will attempt to stop a freight train, and there are the politicians who also see this and use it.

In Houston there is (or was--it may not be going still) a group of former Vietnam officers who had a rap group and I,

again, observed one evening; the bottom line of their hurt is how they used the enlisted men over there. They know it, deep in their heart of darkness, it is still there.

Your work is needed more than ever, I think.

--Al Reynolds
Houston, TX

VVAW:

Enclosed please find a money order to cover the subscription cost for THE VETERAN. During the past 18 months I've managed to get my hands on a number of issues of THE VET and have enjoyed them. The first thing I look for is the "Fraggin'" column; 'Fraggin' really blows me away!

To get a little more serious--last week I sent out letters to U.S. Rep Steven Bartlett and Senators Tower and Bentsen concerning the extension of the Vet Center Program beyond 1984....

I've only been in Dallas a short time but am a veteran activist in the Vietnam veteran movement from my home state of Massachusetts. We managed to build a coalition of over 23 national and state grassroots groups, from Boston to the Berkshires, from Cape Ann to Cape Cod, into a viable vehicle to address the concerns of Vietnam veterans residing in the state. According to Phil Girard of Agent Orange Victims International (AOVI) Massachusetts is the only state where AOVI and Vietnam Veterans

of America (VVA) worked together. Phil and I saw eye-to-eye on a number of issues and based on our working and personal relationship upon those concerns. I am convinced that of all the issues we face today, fratricide is the most subtle and dangerous. It causes us to destroy ourselves as a unit and the things that we accomplish on the grassroots, activist level. So since I can't give more in terms of money, I can give of myself....

I attended the National Salute in Washington. The Sunday I returned, my wife gave me a message from a reporter for a local newspaper for me to call her. The telephone interview and subsequent news story were deeply personal, emotional and full of hope. It is impossible for me not to be encouraged, not by the hoopla, but by the sheer numbers of brothers who attended. I've not seen so many Vietnam veterans in one place since I'd left Vietnam. It was wonderful. But, I cautioned the journalist, the American public should not expect us now to all go away. What confronts us now, confronted us before the events in November. They are still there....

Roland E Nichols
VVA, Dallas TX

Dear VVAW:

I would like a copy of THE VETERAN, Nov-Dec '82. I believe this is the issue with the

story of the Vietnam vet military nurse who committed suicide.

I was an Army nurse in Pleiku, Vietnam, in '68-'69. I was dismayed by this story--there has been so little support for the veteran nurse--the "unknown warrior."

Diane Evans
River Falls, WI

Dear VVAW:

I thoroughly enjoyed the Feb/Mar issue of THE VETERAN. Please send more copies of Vol 13 #1 to me at the below address.

I found this issue to be exceptionally comprehensive and relevant.

I suggest we keep hammering away at the disparity between the Australian Vietnam Vet Compensation for Agent Orange and our own. It drives Americans crazy to be second best!

David Berg
St Cloud, MN

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



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D.A.V. Assumes Westphall Memorial

DONATIONS STILL SOUGHT

"In 1968 Lt David Westphall and 12 of his comrades were killed in an ambush in Vietnam. David's death left his parents and brother determined to erect a visible reminder of war's most tragic consequence--the loss of people who are loved and the snuffing out of human potential.

"When we started construction, we realized that it would take far more money than we could provide personally, but we also thought, surely money would be available from such sources as a foundation," said Dr Westphall.

"After making a heart-breaking number of applications, we were forced to admit failure of this approach."

So Dr Westphall, his wife, and younger son Douglas who had served in Southeast Asia as an Air Force pilot, went it virtually alone. They completed the walls in the summer of 1968 and added the roof the following summer. When its construction was completed in 1971, it was called the Vietnam Veterans Peace and Brotherhood Chapel. It is located 25 miles northeast of Taos, New Mexico, near Eagles Nest.

In 1971 the local VVAW chapter helped with perimeter security after threats from local rednecks. The Memorial mentioned and included pictures of Vietnamese. The rednecks

threatened to destroy it for awhile because it talked about peace.

Since 1971 the Memorial has always been short of funds. Last year several D.A.V. officials visited the Chapel. Dr Westphall spoke with them about the possibility of turning the Memorial over to the D. A.V.

On September 6, 1982, the D.A.V. finalized details for a separate, non-profit organization, the D.A.V. Vietnam Veterans National Memorial Inc under the laws of New Mexico. With the approval of the D.A.V. National Executive Committee, the new non-profit organization assumed full responsibility for

the memorial and fund-raising activities to support its operation.

Your help is needed. More parking space is needed. Land surrounding the chapel must be bought to prevent resort developers who want to build high-rises which would obscure the chapel and destroy its open beauty. Improvements are needed immediately to expand accessibility of the chapel and grounds to disabled people. Also there are normal maintenance and staff expenses.

Contributions are tax deductible; they can be sent to:

DAV Vietnam Veterans National Memorial, Inc
c/o Fifth/Third Bank
Department 00459
Cincinnati, OH 45263

RECOLLECTIONS

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

FLAG~WAVING & THE MARINE CORPS WAY

FLSG-B--what the hell does that stand for? This was the first question to enter my mind when I received orders. LZ Stud--was that an abbreviation for "student?"

Out of 50 Marine radio men who flew to Okinawa on a yellow Braniff jet, I was one of only five who did not get their orders changed to Khe Sanh. Seeing as I was no longer a dumb John Wayne freak, that was OK with me. I had orders for FLC--Force Logistics Command--in Da Nang, but my joy was short-lived.

Upon my arrival in Da Nang, two of us were transferred to FLSG-B Dong Ha. Dong Ha was about six miles from the DMZ. I was told that the battle for Dong Ha City was still going on. Even though it was May 3, 1968, and Hue City had been retaken at the end of February, the Tet Offensive was not yet entirely over.

All over South Vietnam there were areas that still had to be recaptured. In the case of Dong Ha and other areas, a mini-Tet was on during the first two weeks of May. Another NVA offensive was being repulsed.

We drove to the Da Nang airport and waited in a tin-roofed building which served as a terminal. The sign said: "World's Busiest Airport." The heat was unbelievable and the noise and dirt were overpowering.

Finally, they loaded us onto a camouflaged plane which they called a Caribou--a C-123 I guess. Officers and NCO's went in first and sat on the web seats on the side. All the enlisted men, from salty-looking grunts to us Newbies sat on the metal floor in ranks and files of three. We talked a little until the plane's engines started up and then our talking was overpowered. We banked out over the ocean and flew to Dong Ha.

We landed with a jolt--and then came the surprise of my life. The plane's engines never stopped. All our gear was kicked out the rear door and officers were pushing us off the plane as fast as possible. The ramp went up and the plane took off, and it finally sunk in that Dong Ha really was hot.

I went through the pile of

gear, sweating like a pig, and found my sea bag. As I walked to my area, I could see jets dropping napalm about half a mile from the perimeter. It was too much.



I walked past some old multi-sided buildings. I was to find out later that day that these were old French bunkers from the 40's and 50's. I found out when I reported in to FLSG-B (Force Logistics Support Group-Bravo) that we had been fighting about 5000 NVA for three days now. They had tried to take the base but had walked into the 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines.

FLSG-B was a service regiment. We did the convoys, ammo, EOD, engineer work, motor maintenance, bakery, medical supply--you name it. I found out that first night on A Guard that Dong Ha was a kind of USMC dumping ground. Dong Ha was within artillery range of North Vietnam, and every shit-bird, troublemaker, and a lot of regular guys were sent up to build Dong Ha in late 1967.

As I watched the napalm drops, I heard all about the old French bunkers we lived in, as we sat with our backs to Vietnam's only Railroad to Nowhere.

One of the biggest heartbreaks I experienced while in Vietnam happened in late 1968. I had been sent back down from

Cau Viet after our bunker burned down during a 125-round artillery attack. The LT said I was too jumpy--why not do 88 convoys? (Just what I needed)

While I was at Cau Viet a

new replacement arrived, a quiet kid from Alabama or Mississippi. I saw him once before he was transferred to Quang Tri. While at Quang Tri he raised up his state flag over his hootch--his state flag was the confederate stars and bars.

His staff NCO from New York said, "Take it down. Ain't no Rebel flags in my Marine Corps." The kid said it was his state flag and that other Marines had their state flags up. So, in the Marine Corps tradition, all flags were ordered down. And that didn't make the kid too popular.

The kid wrote his Congressman who went down and pounded on the Commandant's desk. The Commandant wrote a letter to 3rd Marine Division and they contacted Major English, CO of HQS Company, FLSG-B.

Major English ordered the kid transferred back to Dong Ha and then to report to his office. I saw the kid move into the hootch next door. He unpacked, put on clean whites and went to see the CO.

Major English told him that there had been a misunder-

standing. He told the kid that he needed to write another letter to his Congressman and tell him he had made up the story or twisted the facts. Something had to be done to lift the heat on Major English, heat coming from the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

The kid said, "Sir, it is not a lie. I told the truth."

Major English told him to get with the program.

The kid answered back:

"Sir, I'd rather be dead than write that letter."

"Son," said Major English, "you better go back to your hootch and think it over."

The kid--can't remember his name--came back to his hootch and packed all his gear. A bunch of us were sitting one door away, smoking some joints, when M-16 shots were heard.

The kid had packed his gear away neatly and sat down on the steps. He put a clip into his M-16, put it on auto, put the barrel in his mouth and blew his brains out.

As we rushed to his side I heard a Marine proclaim, "Your son gave his life for his country." I wondered, would Major English get a promotion?

John Lindquist
Vietnam--
May '68-May '69

support vietnam veterans in their struggle to tell the truth of their experiences!

The next day we went right back into it again. They'd fire us up and then we'd go down the other side. We set up on top of the hill. There was a running battle around this hill. There was a North Vietnamese soldier later. My stupid platoon sergeant--which you should never do. Because his friend M-79 and became six of them. He was from Ecuador. He was the 11th. Rooks and Shroth got back to the hill. About that time the Vietnamese counter-attacked.

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