

US OUT OF LEBANON, NOW

Listening to Reagan's speeches and comments on the continuing U.S. presence in Lebanon is a reminder that we have indeed entered 1984. Orwell's "Newspeak" has truly

become an art performed by the ex-host of "Death Valley Days."

We are now in Lebanon, he says, because the U.S. cannot allow "terrorists" to dictate

"our" foreign policy. But wait a moment! What happened to our role as "peacekeepers?" That was our reason just a month or so ago. When did it change, or was it ever our goal?

In fact, just what is our goal--if any--in Lebanon?

The U.S. present occupation of Lebanon began a year

Turn to page 4



THE VETERAN

Vietnam Veterans Against the War

50¢

VOL. 14 No. 1

Feb-March 1984

TRIAL SET FOR AGENT ORANGE

VETERANS TOUR NICARAGUA

"We Won't Be Fooled Again!" "U.S. Veterans Against Intervention!" "Reagan--No More Lies!" "America--Do You Know Where Your Boys Are?" "No More Vietnams!"

These were the placards held by the eleven members of the ad hoc group of Veterans Against Intervention in Central America during our December 1 demonstration in front of the U.S. Embassy in Managua, Nicaragua, a demonstration that

Turn to page 8



Nicaraguans bury victim of a "contra" attack.

"They killed me in Vietnam and I didn't even know it," said Paul Reutersham, not long before he died of cancer in 1979. This became a battle cry for thousands of veterans, their families and supporters as they dug in for battle to get testing, treatment and compensation for Agent Orange. A six-year long battle still rages; the court date for the trial against the chemical companies is set for May 7, 1984. Hopefully, we can straighten out some of the tales circulating recently in the media.

First, we do now have a new judge in the case, Jack Weinstein of the Federal Court in Brooklyn, NY. This judge is different from Judge Pratt, but that has disturbed the corporations on the other side more than it has upset the lawyers for the veterans. The working-class make-up of whatever jury comes out of Brooklyn may well work to our advantage. Judge Weinstein is known as a no-nonsense judge. That means the attorneys may have to work twice as hard to prove our case. Weinstein is also anxious that the case not go on forever and wants no mistakes which might be overturned on appeal. He has re-included Hercules Chemical Company (it had been dropped during earlier maneuvering) and expanded the case into three parts:

1) Settle the issue of generic damage; do these chemicals (no matter who made them) cause damage to human beings?

2) Did these chemical companies act negligently, thus making them liable for the damage done to these veterans (all Vietnam veterans are part of the class in this part of the trial)?

3) If these companies damaged these veterans, how much should they get, and how can these damages be awarded

Turn to page 5

Reagan Takes the Blame, So What? LIFERS & DEAD GI'S

When we were in the service there was something called dereliction of duty. If you came back late from pass, if you fell asleep on guard, if

your weapon was not properly maintained, your reward was discipline. The military constantly reminded you that YOU were responsible for your actions and equipment. If you screwed up, there were article 15's or captains' masts, or even time in the stockade.

It seems as if the military, and the Marines in particular, have decided to change all

that, at least if you are a general or colonel (not, of course, for the privates or sergeants).

Marines died in Lebanon because officers charged with their command were derelict in setting up the defense for the Marine positions. As GI's we know what a few claymores could have done to that truck filled with explosives; we re-

Turn to page 4

Vietnam Veterans Against the War

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

Nonprofit Org
US POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No 1425



FRAGGIN'

Sp 5 Willy(Ret.)



Tomas Borge is the Interior Minister of Nicaragua. He recently planned to visit the U.S. to make a few speeches and attend some meetings. The State Department granted his visa, and he was all set. Then Ronnie Reagan stepped in and denied the visa.

What was Ronnie afraid of? Borge had planned to speak to "Establishment" lawyers, businessmen and journalists. It wasn't too many years ago (I believe the peanut farmer was president) when this country allowed a rugby team from South Africa to come here on a goodwill tour.

We allowed representatives of a country which enslaves a whole race of people to come and try to establish good will but we refuse to establish a dialogue which could help prevent another Vietnam in Nicaragua. Then again, maybe some people want it that way.

What is this? Is my head turned around? Maybe this is 1984 and this is doublethink. War has become peace and peace has become war. There is a new hero--the Pentagon and the military establishment. The Pentagon came out and said that our policy-makers were wrong to have Marines in Lebanon, and then we get this quote from recently retired Major General Kermit Johnson, ex-Chief of Army Chaplains (you know, the guys who blessed the body count in Vietnam): "I became very ill-at-ease at being even a small part of this present U.S. Administration. I don't agree with our interventionist policy in Latin America. I'm very exercised about human rights, civil rights and the environment. I feel that contrary to what the Moral Majority says, many of the basic positions of this Administration are immoral. They offend not just my faith but my humanity." Right on General!

* * * * *

Alas! Just when I thought the Pentagon was getting righteous I read where the Defense Department is paying somewhere from \$11 to \$14 million

a year for Congressional members to journey around the world. They supply the planes and they also supply escort officers. These officers carry along bags of money to be used for meals, lodging and entertainment for the politicians. Sometimes they bring along trunks full of food and booze and other goodies for the convenience of the Congress-people.

I guess the military does this so that the members of Congress have a good feeling inside when it comes time to vote money for the latest missiles, bombers and tanks--tanks like the Abrams which requires the removal of the engine in order to change the oil. Maybe an escort officer should be assigned to every Abrams tank; he could keep it well lubricated.

Then there's Charles Wick, U.S. Information Agency Director. He's the guy who got caught making secret tape recordings of his phone conversations. He was a little piqued at Maggie Thatcher, boss lady of Great Britain. He didn't like it that she opposed the invasion of Grenada, and he blamed it on the fact that she is a woman. He should know better. After all, Maggie conducted a major invasion of the Falkland Islands. (Hey! Maybe that's a new NATO policy to stick it to the Russians: invade little, out-of-the-way islands and claim victory for the good guys. Latest reports have sighted the Italian Navy off the coast of Gilligan's Island.)

Anyway, old Charlie realized his criticism of Maggie was uncalled for, so he said, "Please don't print what I just said; I'll never get back to London." I don't think he is really afraid of not getting back to London. All he has to do is find the right military escort officer. No, he was afraid someone might associate him with James Watt, Ronald Reagan or others of this Administration with foot-in-the-mouth disease. Actually I think Charles is a nostalgia freak. He wants to go back to the past, to be part of Watergate--and back to the days when women were women: in

their place, not invading islands.

And you thought your DI was bad. Latest scuttlebutt from basic training at Ft Benning is that some DI's are forcing trainees to engage in homosexual acts. Let's hope these sadists are caught. Better yet, let's hope they get to spearhead Reagan's next invasion.

Depravity in the military may begin in basic, but it goes all the way to the top. A Pentagon study of phone calls made by the Defense Intelligence Agency found that \$25,000 a month in calls were made to one New York number. The number? Dial-a-Porn.

Maybe these intelligence officers figure that the Russians were behind it, trying to undermine the moral fiber of our country. They would have done better looking for this type of Russian agents by calling Ft Benning.

Some intelligence officers are kinky. Others are just stupid, like those in the State Department who sent a top secret file cabinet to the prison at Lorton, Virginia where it was supposed to be repaired. Unfortunately, they forgot to remove the files and inmates made copies. So, if you want information or intelligence reports on Soviet missiles or information on foreign embassies, you might check somewhere in the prison grapevine. Too bad the intelligence reports that encouraged involvement in Vietnam hadn't been sent to Sing Sing.

Did you see where they held a new kind of NATO maneuvers in Germany? This new maneuver required the use of bulldozers. They were practicing how to do mass burials of battlefield casualties. I suppose that with the arrival of Pershing II and Cruise missiles in Europe, they have to get ready for the results of their deployment. I'm sure this does wonders for the confidence of the European people we're over there defending.

GRENADE OF THE MONTH

We have to give this month's grenade to Presidential advisor Ed Meese. Following in the mouthprints of Ronald Reagan, James Watt, Charles Wick and others, Meese let slip with more of the Administration's inner thoughts. Meese said, "People go to soup kitchens because the food is free and that's easier than paying for it."

Meese made his statement and then backed it up by saying there is no authenticated hunger in the land. This all happens while the Administration is planning to cut back on health benefits, social security for the handicapped and food stamps.

A couple of days later there was this Christmas party for some rich folks. They had smoked trout, prime rib, plum pudding and three kinds of wine. How can anyone imagine that there are hungry people around? Presiding as Santa Claus for the affair was---jolly Ed Meese, of course. No, Virginia, don't count on Santa Claus.

Maybe next Christmas Ed Meese will get a lump of coal in this stocking--or better yet, a frag.



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.

Make checks payable to
VVAW
P.O. Box 25592
Chicago IL 60625

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

Point Man of the Vets' Movement JOIN US, ORGANIZE

VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR



It's seldom that VVAW blows its own horn or does some intense recruiting of membership, but the time has now come. Like it or not, events in places like Grenada or Lebanon or Central America make it essential that vets speak out. More than just talking, coordinated actions can stop foreign adventures as well as attempts to slash the VA--these are things that must be done.

All too often members and coordinators of VVAW wait for people to ask to join. This isn't good enough. That Vietnam vet may be just waiting for you to ask him to join--you could both wait for an eternity for the other to take the first step, and the responsibility rests with VVAW to recruit. Second, being asked to join VVAW and to become a part of the organization makes an individual stop and think about the politics of what's going on; it asks, further, to make the commitment to struggle for a better future. Even if he or she doesn't want to join now the discussion can be good and the individual knows that you want him or her as part of VVAW.

Organizing VVAW Chapters: There are tons of VVAW members out there who belong, who consider themselves to be members of the organization and who believe in what VVAW stands for. But, they have not organized themselves into chapters or organizing committees. It may be out of fear of getting in over their heads or of getting into too much work. The fear is real--there can be a lot of work. But quite simply, if every vet would take down one brick, Reagan and his tribe would not have a roof over

their heads. People can only do so much but working together and coordinating activities produces more results with fewer people.

Other Groups: We're also asking other groups to affiliate with VVAW, not because we want to wield control but because of the history of VVAW. VVAW is the first veterans organization in history composed of vets fighting against the war we fought in. While others were getting their

college educations or moving up the corporate ladder, VVAW was putting first the lives of our brothers left behind in Vietnam. We demonstrated, we lobbied, we sat-in--everything we could in order to stop the war. Vets remember that. And they also remember throwing away our me-



Vets & families
together in struggle

dals on the Capitol steps. That history can give people faith that VVAW is not about to disappear--we're in for the long haul!

We are democratic: check out the by-laws. But more important VVAW sees the need to work by consensus in order to hold the group together. Work and programs are developed by local people on the local level. Broader matters of politics are decided at national meetings, and information is exchanged on a continuous basis so that one area doesn't have to make the same mistakes as someone else has already made. Another point: no VVAW leadership person is paid for VVAW work; it is all volunteer. The organization is not a career used to avoid honest work. All money raised goes to VVAW publications or demonstration or projects and occasionally to individual vets with outstanding needs who local chapters decide should receive help. Finally, VVAW is a tax-deductible, non-profit veterans organization.

Some veterans organizations do work on Agent Orange or on Post-Traumatic Stress as one group and do "anti-war" work as VVAW; they see the two areas as separate, but they are not. VVAW was the first group to deal with PTSD, with Agent Orange, with the GI Bill. In 1972 VVAW members brought back proof from Hanoi about chromosome damage and deformed children (some of this film was used by CBS in their award-winning documentary "The Deadly Fog"). It was several years earlier than that that VVAW held "rap groups" to try to deal with what we then called "Post-Vietnam Syndrome." Since then it's become post-traumatic stress disorder and the vet center groups are little different (though vitally necessary) from the groups that we

held 15 years ago.

But unlike other groups we do not separate these activities from our anti-war activities. In fact the right wing (with some exceptions) cares as little about really doing something about Agent Orange or hospital care as they do about Salvadorian peasants. Cuddling up to Reagan

types only gives credence to their lies that they care about vets conditions; they end up trading crumbs of service for Vietnam vets for the lives of GI's, and that's a tradeoff we will not make. VVAW fights for everything we can get, will work for any change for the better, but we'll never trade our rights for future Vietnams, our benefits for the blood of the next generation. Vets benefits and future wars go hand in hand.

Sometimes VVAW is seen as too "political" or "radical," and the reputation scares people away. It shouldn't. We do consider ourselves the "grunts" of the vets' movement. We are not always the cleanest or the best dressed or even the best mannered, but we are indispensable. We've been the point man in bringing up issues and fighting battles, often ahead of the pack; without that point there's a real chance of getting ambushed, and while we haven't won the battles alone--not by a long shot--we've often staked out the battleground. Not that VVAW has always been right; we've read the map wrong on more than one occasion. But by using the views of veterans and their families as our compass (not a federal grant or a job) we have gotten back on the track.

Because VVAW was--and is--a national organization we have found it easier to stay on that track. While local VVAW chapters get intensely involved in local or statewide issues, they do not lose sight of the larger issues that affect veterans nationally. And it gives VVAW the ability to pass along information and tactics from one side of the country to the other.

As former soldiers we have to learn and apply the lessons of the guerillas and supposed enemy we fought--especially those who beat us like the Vietnamese. That means unity of action: not fighting as an individual or only in one area, but attacking together in every locality. We must spread out to areas where we are absent or weak to carry out actions which will inspire others to join.

We have a responsibility to win, not just for ourselves as veterans but also for the younger generation of cannon fodder, and for the overseas victims of U.S. adventures; every day the news tells us there's work to be done. Get involved and help VVAW do that work.

UNITY**STRUGGLE**VICTORY

continued- Lebanon

ago. We supposedly put Marines in to act as neutral monitors of an uneasy peace following the departure of the PLO (the first one). We were to take no sides but allow the Lebanese to settle their own problems. The Marines were to protect the international airport as part of a European "peace" forces to keep the city of Beirut open.

From our role as neutral peacekeepers we quickly became partisans for a rump gov-

ernment composed of a minority of a minority in Lebanon, the Christian "Phalange." The Gemayal government that we supported controlled no more than a few acres of the city, was not recognized by different factions of the Christians, and was universally scorned by the majority Muslim population.

The Christian population is divided into 3 main groups, one led by Gemayal (the Phalangists, allied with the U.S.), another led by recently deceased Major Haddad in Southern Lebanon (and backed by Israel) and another led by former President Suleiman Franjeh (allied with the Muslims).

The Phalange itself is a direct descendant of Italian and Spanish fascist parties and still adheres to that philosophy and political ideology. One of its first acts as government was to set up a secret police and open torture dungeons in Beirut.

The Lebanese army is primarily composed of former Phalangist militia. It has no respect outside of its own particular area and is seen as representing the interest only of the Phalange Christian minority. It is trained by U.S. Special Forces, and is paid, equipped and armed by the U.S. government.

The opposition is represented by the National Resistance Front (NRF) whose leadership is made up of Walid Jumblatt, leader of the Druse community; Rashidid Karami, Sunni Moslem community leader and former Prime Minister; and Suleiman Franjeh, leader of the Maronite Christian community.

The Reagan Administration makes it appear as if Gemayal represents Lebanon as a whole while Jumblatt or the others represent just their own sectarian forces. Just the opposite is true. The opposition to the Gemayal government is fairly broad and represents a cross-section of the Lebanese population, religions and classes.

Proposals at the Geneva talks on the future of Lebanon centered on a government of reconciliation based on a secular political system. These proposals contained provisions for: election of president by popular ballot, parliamentary representatives elected on a non-sectarian basis, a separate senate with equal representation for each of Lebanon's communities, and a check on the presidential power by a judiciary. This may not sound too radical. In fact it sounds like a way out of the swamp in Lebanon. Yet the U.S. and Gemayal have both rejected this so far, mainly be-



Andre Brutmann, New Outlook

"There Is A Limit"
"Bring the Soldiers Back From Lebanon"

20,000 Israelis gather for an anti-war concert sponsored by Yesh Gvul, dubbed "Yesh Gvulstock."

cause it would be the end of Gemayal's power and would, as a result, mean a non-aligned Lebanon (not one controlled by Israel and the U.S.)

If Reagan was truly interested in peace he would drop the Gemayal government and back the National Resistance Front, which is not controlled by Syria or the PLO or Russia or any other non-Lebanese group. But that's the problem: Reagan isn't looking for a solution for Lebanon's problems. He's looking for a solution to the U.S. problems in the Middle East, and those center around oil and a homeland for the Palestinians. The first Reagan wants to control and profit from; the second he wants to deny.

It's hard, looking at the whole situation, to avoid a feeling of deja vu. It's a real enough feeling for those of us who lived through and fought the Vietnam war. A lot of the rhetoric is the same; one need only substitute "international terrorist" for "international communist" conspiracy. But in the end it all means another wall in Washington, DC, one whose names already number almost 300--and are most surely going to be followed by more.

Barry Romo
VVAW National
Office

Lifers-Continued

call how to build a barricade not so easily broken; or even that you don't put quite so many men in one unprotected building.

If a private had gone to sleep allowing the truck to get through, you can bet that the President would not have taken the blame. If the sergeant of the guard had forgotten to post a guard at the gate allowing the truck to get through there would have been a mammoth court martial.

But if you happen to be a general making \$75,000 a year plus fringe benefits and then you don't set up an adequate defense, you aren't even barred from the officer's club for a week. There are thousands who would be glad to "suffer" like those derelict lifers!

Banners!

Made to order-----\$30-\$50

Send diagram with desired colors and dimensions to:

Sukie Wachtendonk
1051 E. Johnson
Madison, WI. 53703

Available-----Now

KNOW THE ENEMY

and know yourself;
in 100 battles
you will never
be imperiled.

sun tzu

RECON

Quarterly newsletter on anti-military affairs: draft counseling, U.S. troops abroad, chemical warfare, military-industrial complex, direct action against the Pentagon, and books for organizers. Subscribe for \$10 to RECON, P.O. Box 14602, Phila., PA 19134.

VETERANS SELF-HELP GUIDE

VETERANS VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR

CHEMICAL TIME BOMB IN VIETNAM VETERANS

25¢ post paid

Make checks payable to
VVAW

P.O. Box 25592
Chicago IL 60626

Continued from Page 1

AGENT ORANGE

without lots of individual court battles for money.

The third part will be decided by trying 6-10 actual cases covering a broad range of effects in order to see how much the trust fund should be.

As there is a new judge now hearing the case, we have also lost Victor Yannacone and Associates as the lead counsel for the veterans. As veterans we had no say in the matter. Yannacone has been forced, by circumstances, to be relieved of the responsibility as lead counsel. Over the past years he has rendered us a service

which can never be repaid, and is also left with \$235,000 in debts.

There has been confusion over who did what to whom in terms of representation. We knew that when we got involved in the case it would be no picnic, but what has happened is that we no longer have any say in the case. The case is alive and well, we are being represented in court, but we have no control over what happens. Of course once we turned over control to attorneys, even those we trusted, we had lost control. We do want to let everyone know

that, once the case is over, we will try to find out what happened in the internal in-fighting, the power trips and manipulation that seems to have gone on, and we will let people know what we find out.

For now, however, we're in pretty good shape. The court appointed a "plaintiff's management committee" to represent us. The chairman of that committee is Steven Schlager of Chicago (whom we know) who is, according to Yannacone, an excellent lawyer with a great deal of confidence and determination to win.

We are involved, once again, in the making of history. The trial should take (according to the judge) from May until September 1984. We fight on because of brothers like Paul Reutersham, Ed Juteau and others who have already died from Agent Orange exposure. We fight for ourselves and for our families and for the countless hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese who were also exposed to our herbicides. The chemical companies, the Pentagon and the VA fight us tooth and nail because they can't admit what they have done to us or the people of Southeast Asia. As we can see from their actions in Lebanon and Central America, they haven't learned a damn thing!



Book Reviews - Book Reviews - Book Reviews - Book Reviews - Book Reviews

"WAITING FOR AN ARMY TO DIE: THE TRAGEDY OF AGENT ORANGE"

In the process of writing Waiting for an Army to Die: The Tragedy of Agent Orange, Fred Wilcox traveled thousands of miles, poured through stacks of documents, and spoke with hundreds of people about Agent Orange. He interviewed scientists who have spent years researching the effects of dioxin on laboratory animals; veterans who are suffering from one or more of the symptoms associated with dioxin exposure; veteran's wives who have suffered repeated miscarriages or given birth to children with multiple birth defects; women living near Alsea, Oregon, whose complaints were instrumental in getting the EPA to suspend certain domestic uses of 2,4,5-T; lawyers for veterans who are suing the chemical companies; and many others.

This book will clarify matters for those who are confused or bewildered by contradictory reports on Agent Orange.

Wilcox tells of the ploys the Veterans Administration uses

to avoid paying service-connected disability to victims of Agent Orange, and some of the individuals behind the ploys. Every step along the way the Vietnam veteran had to file a Freedom of Information Act against the VA and the Defense Department to get information. The VA uses its bureaucracy to keep putting up barriers of "no cause and effect," "no correlation," and never do the tests that might prove the vets are right about Agent Orange. Wilcox tells the story well.

And there are the stories of the veterans he met with cancer of the colon, testicular cancer, liver dysfunction, heart ailments, and veterans whose children were born with as many as sixteen birth defects.

The book also tells of some really great people like Maude DeVictor who, in 1977 was working in the Benefits Division of the VA's Regional Office in Chicago; her personal campaign of gathering statistics, against the orders of her superior, led

to an hour-long documentary entitled "Agent Orange: The Deadly Fog" on the CBS affiliate in Chicago in March of 1980.

By 1978 articles about Agent Orange were appearing in local and national publications. Officials at the VA decided it was time for a strategy for dealing with Vietnam veterans' complaints. Wilcox tells the shocking story of how this strategy was arrived at.

Included in the book is the story of Agent Orange Victims International and how the lawsuit against the chemical companies and the VA came about.

The chapter "The Vietnamization of America" tells of the toxic herbicides being used in America--and how Agent Orange-type contamination continues.

Waiting for an Army to Die is a much-needed book and well worth reading by Vietnam vets, their families, and everyone concerned with our environment.

Bob Spicher
VVAW-Chicago

THINGS TO DO IF YOU THINK YOU WERE EXPOSED TO HERBICIDES

1. Go to the nearest VA and take the Agent Orange screening.
2. File for service-connected disability for Agent Orange.
3. Join the class action suit against the chemical companies; get others to join. The chairman of the management committee is attorney Steven Schlager, 1 North LaSalle St, Chicago, IL 60602. The phone is (312) 782-1061. A phone call could direct you to a local attorney who is involved in the suit.
4. Gather up your records including your children's health records. Send for your 201 file (Service Record Book), health records, statement from people in your old units, a personal narrative, copies of the H.E.R. B.S. tape.
5. Write to VVAW. We have the nation's best Agent Orange material. Also get active in the local veteran's community.

-John Lindquist
VVAW National Office

Hot Off The Press

AGENT ORANGE BIBLIOGRAPHY

If there's a doctor or researcher in your community doing work around Agent Orange or dioxin, his or her life could be made much easier with the "Agent Orange Bibliography" for the clinician. Completed by Muriel Hogan, VVAW's national researcher, this volume has collected the best and most recent research on dioxin, with over 200 bibliographic citations. It's a job which hasn't been done before--and which needed doing. Copies are available from Milwaukee VVAW, 3433 N. Fratney St, Milwaukee, WI 53212 at \$5.00.

AGENT ORANGE DOSSIER

A new, 76-page "Agent Orange Dossier" has just come off the presses in Milwaukee. A collection of material which is not brought together anywhere else, the "Dossier" provides a wealth of information which both answers many questions about Agent Orange and will give the reader a lot more questions to think about. The "Dossier" costs \$4; send for your copy from Milwaukee VVAW (address above) or the VVAW National Office, P.O. Box 25592, Chicago, IL 60625; rates for 5 or more copies can be discussed.

Surprise! Surprise! One of our big bennies from military service during the Vietnam-era isn't such a great bennie after all. A book on the U.S. high school class of '63 prepared by a prominent research institution shows that a year of education is actually worth less to Vietnam and Vietnam-era veterans than the same year of education is worth to non-veterans.

Josefina Card in Lives After Vietnam: The Personal Impact of Military Service shows that in terms of earning power for our time spent in getting an education, we were getting short-changed. Just how much we've been short-changed can be, through the wonders of modern statistics, expressed in a measure that we all have learned to understand the hard way. According to the study, a year of education was worth an additional \$2190 per year in salary for non-veterans. A similar year of schooling is worth only \$1598 in yearly salary for Vietnam veterans and \$906 in yearly salary for non-Vietnam veterans. While the author noted that these differences are all significant in statistical terms, it doesn't take a PhD to recognize the significance of those differences in dollar amounts for a family in terms of food, shelter and health care. Still, the study added that these differences can't be explained by pre-service social background, job seniority or psychological problems.

So we don't have to worry about psychological problems causing our educations to be worth less. That doesn't mean we don't have to worry about the psychological problems. The study also showed that Vietnam veterans were much more likely to suffer from psychological and physical difficulties of all kinds. Vietnam veterans are especially more likely to suffer from the symptoms which psychologists have associated with post traumatic stress disorder. Additional findings in the study revealed that Vietnam veterans and non-Vietnam veterans were more likely than comparable non-veterans to have experienced at least one lengthy unemployment spell and they were more likely to have been convicted of a felony or a misdemeanor.

Still, there were some significantly positive outcomes in the realm of personal happiness for non-Vietnam veterans who demonstrated the highest ratings of any group on "interest in being with people," "sensitivity to the feelings of others," and "interest in cultural activities," and these men attributed their advantages in these areas to

Nam Vets: Jobs, Education, Problems WE ARE STATISTICS

their military experience. Unfortunately Vietnam veterans are the worst off of the three groups on these same three items, and the Vietnam veterans score lowest of the groups on a number of other indicators of personal happiness.

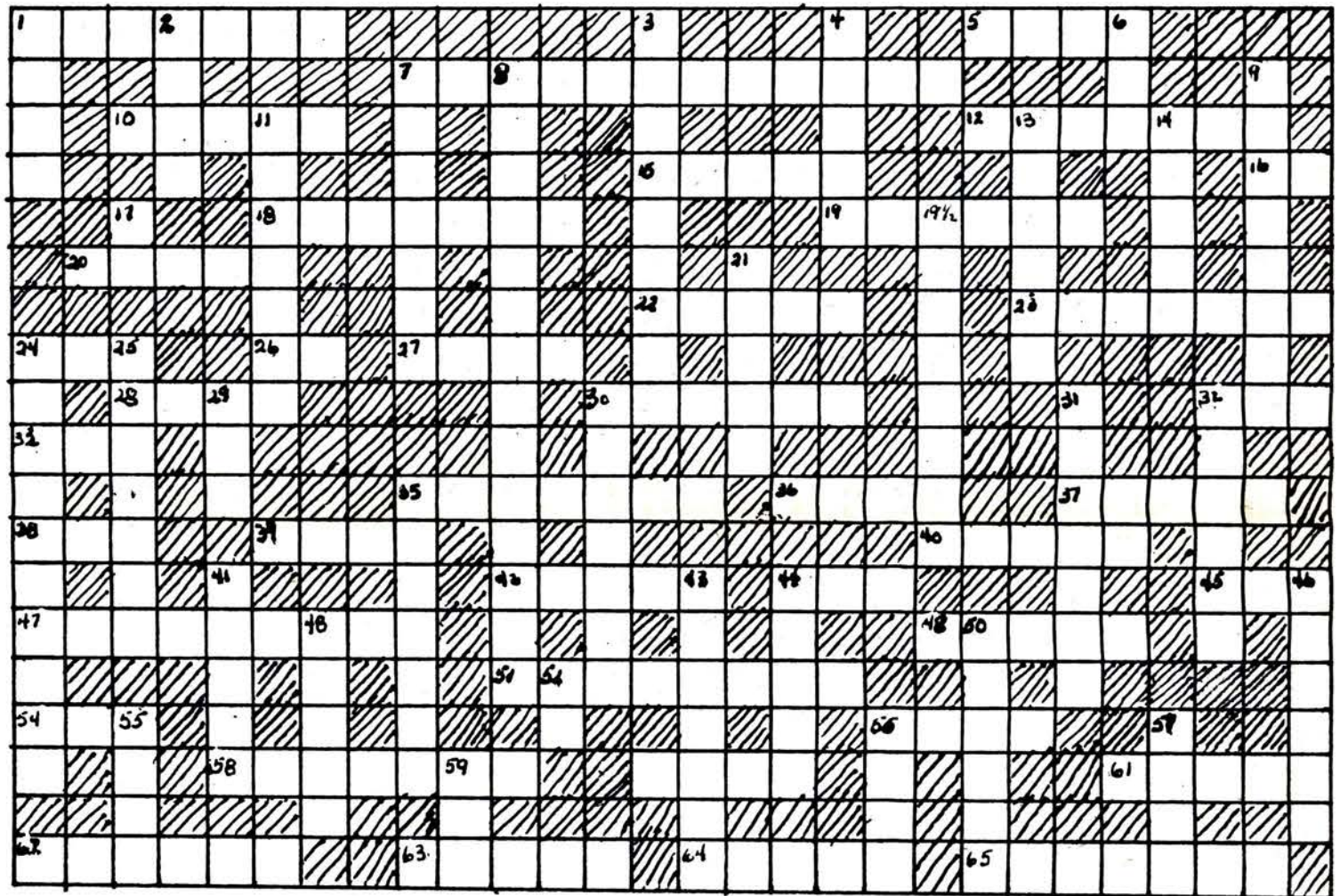
Just to keep Vietnam vets

from thinking all the social science research news is bad news for us: Dr George Knox of the Safer Foundation of Chicago reported that a study of prison inmates in the state of Illinois (where Vietnam veterans are over-represented) revealed that veterans were more likely

than other ex-offenders to benefit from readjustment programs for ex-offenders. The study also noted that, at least in Illinois the vets in prison were less likely to have committed a violent crime. Thank you, Dr Knox.

Dave Curry, PhD
Fed. Prisoner #02470-003

VETS WORD PUZZLE *Answers on page 16*



ACROSS

- 1 Kind of artillery round.
- 5 Bugler's farewell.
- 7 Man who wanted only 500,000 more troops to win the war.
- 10 Heroin
- 12 Helicopter
- 15 Where Hannah was from.
- 18 Name of the longest U.S. war.
- 19 Old name for Ho Chi Minh City
- 20 Kind of helicopter
- 22 Kind of artillery round much in demand at night
- 23 Pulled along by; end of a coat
- 24 What new LT's often had a hell of a job following
- 26 Regular Army (abbrev)
- 27 Specialist (abbrev)
- 28 Kind of helicopter
- 30 Kind of grenade
- 32 Top
- 33 North Vietnamese Army (abbrev)
- 35 Handy item for 9 down
- 36 Radio
- 37 Operational Control (abbrev)

38 Advanced Infantry Training (abbrev)

39 _____ for effect

40 He did the fighting

42 Kill all the _____ and let God sort them out.

44 Vietnam Veterans Against the _____

45 Killed in Action (abbrev)

47 The best, as in "GI _____!" Heard on the streets of 19 across.

49 Someone who wanted to stay in the military

51 What 48 across might try to persuade you to do.

54 Korean GI

55 Frontline hospital

58 The "bad" guys

60 There was no front _____ in Vietnam

61 The date we all looked for

62 The few, the proud....

63 For many, a description of 7 across; also, name (with "10") of radio

64 Look around

65 Type of grenade

DOWN

1 The "Freedom _____" back to the world

2 To walk through the boonies

3 Author of "There is nothing more precious than freedom and independence."

4 First American combat casualty in Vietnam

6 By the book

7 Head of the VA

8 First American combat casualty in El Salvador

9 The quick way to get rid of unwanted officers

11 First Air _____ Division

13 Most any building or tent you lived in in Vietnam

14 He was out in front

17 Forward Observer (abbrev)

19 1/2 Not friendly fire

21 A UH1H helicopter

24 Tribe of mountain people on

the Vietnam/Cambodia border

25 Variety of jet

29 For many of us the only day better than DEROS

30 A type of mine

31 Where 40 across spent his time

32 A source of light

35 _____ Motors, _____ Electric, _____ Westmoreland

41 Who to call when hit

43 "The summer _____ and the sunshine patriot shall, in time of crisis, shrink from the service of their country...."

44 To get rid of, to kill.

46 Something to avoid

48 An OP was an _____ Poppa

50 To put in a patrol or team or platoon

52 The opposite of officer

55 Kind of knife

56 Salute with bare ass

57 The A- _____

VETERANS REPORT!

News from Georgia

We participated in the October blockade of the Savannah River Nuclear Weapons plant and provided security for the overnight camp, the Saturday Rally and the Women's Peace encampment on the SRP grounds. Elton Manzione was a featured speaker at the rally along with a member of the National Association of Atomic Veterans which helped to build some bridges between AO vets and Atomic vets. We gained one new member at the rally.

November 6th Elton was again a featured speaker at a Central America rally along with a former Marine pilot who is doing refugee work. Rally organizers were delighted with our presence as we both spoke when a counter group of college Republicans arrived to redbait--Silver Stars and DFC's are great credibility builders with 19-year-old patriots. The Marine pilot is a possible future members.

Our latest actions have included counter tables on the

plaza at the University of Georgia when the Marine recruiters are present, and an attempt to be allowed to distribute counter-recruiting literature at the Government Jobs Fair to be held at

University of Georgia this month. (Wanna work for the CIA--join the Army or do code for NSA?

This is the place!) We got one new member as a result of joining with the New York contingent in Washington on November 12th.

I'm planning a drive to get as many of my vet contacts in as dues paying members as possible. We're going to try to get them to ante up 6 months of dues, and since we can probably get 20 or 30, it would be a sizeable boost

--Elton Manzione
Mid-Atlantic
VVAW



Wreath-laying at Chicago Vets Day

Milwaukee Vets Day

The traditional Veterans Day Parade was held in Milwaukee on Sunday, November 6th. Since 1978 VVAW has marched as an official unit of the parade; prior to '78, we marched on the sidewalk flanked by police.

We were joined by members of the Milwaukee Chapter of the GI Forum; we numbered 16 in all with our colors and banners: "U.S. Out of El Salvador, No More Vietnams," and "Test, Treat, Compensate Agent Orange."

We also did our cadences: "Reagan, Reagan, he's no good; Send him back to Hollywood," and "Reagan, Reagan, he's a con, U.S. Out of Lebanon."

We were a good contrast to the M-60 tanks, a self-propelled 155mm howitzer, a combat forklift, and a sortie of A-4's overhead. The crowds liked us--we got a lot of applause. We also seemed to make all those lifers on the reviewing stand squirm a little.

Chicago Vets Day

The first time I went to a Veterans Day event I was in my mid-twentys. An assorted crowd of about 20 yokels and other looney types meandered (you couldn't possibly call it marching) down the street and assembled to listen to a churchman and other "prominent" types support every administration that ever came down the tubes with a war. Any war--you name it--they supported. The half dozen or so old guys, stuffing their beer bellies into threadbare uniforms were there to represent something, I guess. And they did represent something to me, but I don't think it was quite what they had in mind. My God, I thought, is this it? Is this Veterans Day? Just another excuse to get together and support the rotten policies of the rotten administration in DC?

After the boring speeches the crowd wandered off. I went home disgusted: veterans

weren't served by Veterans Day, veterans issues weren't addressed; guys were starting to come home from Vietnam--they weren't represented there, and their problems, of which there were many, were not addressed. That day I was sure that I'd never go to another Veterans Day ever again.

But I did.

Chicago, 1983. In spite of a rocky start and much rushing around, and in spite of the windy, bone-chilling cold, Vets Day here was a great success.

The VVAW display and information booth was located in the Southwest corner inside Daley Plaza in the center of downtown Chicago. Many fine people stopped by for THE VETERAN, leaflets, VVAW's statement on Lebanon and Grenada, information about Agent Orange, or just to chat with one of the Chicago VVAW members at the information table. A list of about 60 new contacts was generated out of the four-day event.

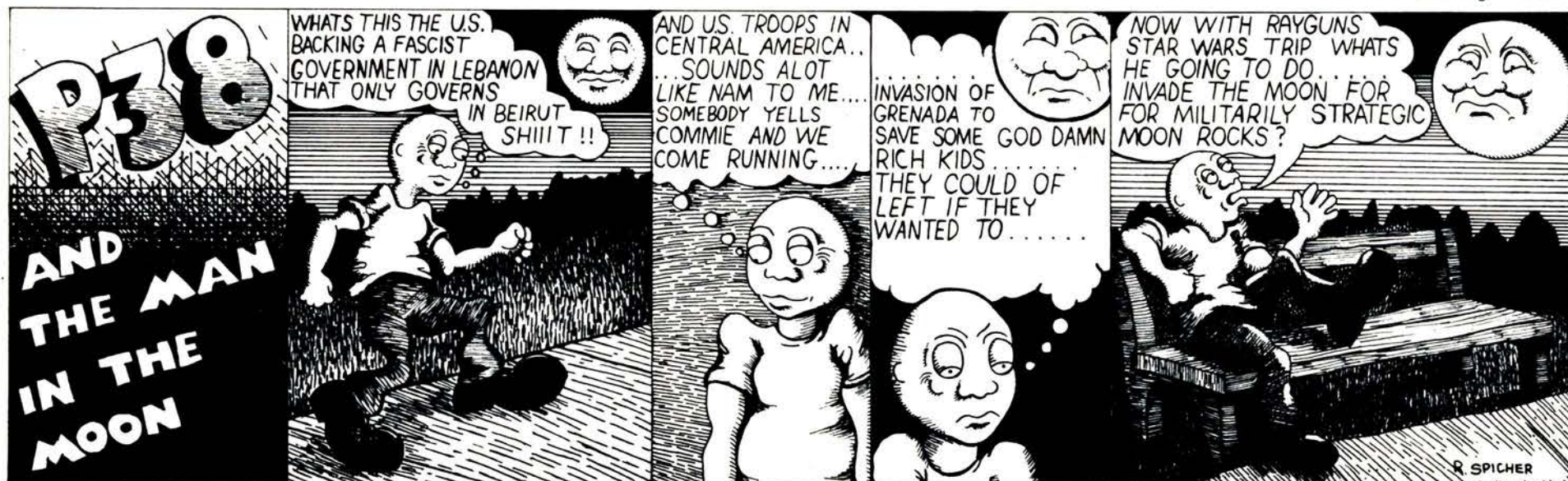
ABC television interviewed Barry Romo of the VVAW National Office on Saturday morning in front of the display; he defined the VVAW position on Lebanon and Grenada, and pointed out the lack of concern shown by the Reagan administration for veterans in general and Vietnam vets in particular.

Saturday at 11 AM the ceremony began with Pete Zastrow making a short statement and introducing the speakers: Alderman Danny Davis, Father Bob Bosse, and Barry Romo. Approximately 55 people attended the ceremony, and all marched out to the Eternal Flame for a wreath-laying ceremony and moment of silence.

In 1984 look for VVAW's Veterans Day display again at Daley Plaza with the ceremony at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fountain.

Thanks to VVAW for showing me what Veterans Day can be.

--Virg McFadden
Chicago VVAW



VETERANS DELEGATION

INTRODUCTION

(These articles are the result of an 8-day tour of Nicaragua by a group of 11 veterans; although mostly Vietnam vets there were other veterans of U.S. ventures, united by a desire to help prevent another military involvement in Central America. A number of different groups were represented as were all sections of the U.S. The following articles were written by the VVAW representative, Ray Parrish of Chicago.)

marked the transition from fact-finding tour to a campaign to demonstrate our solidarity with the people of Nicaragua and with the goals of their revolution. For me it was the beginning of a day that I will never forget.

We stayed up late the previous night discussing our feelings and observations, writing a press release and making the placards.

For the three days before the demonstration we interviewed many people. Nuns, an ex-priest, ordinary people, refugees, a newspaper editor, soldiers and government leaders. All that we had seen led us to a unanimous conclusion, simple to state but horrible to contemplate: The U.S. government is waging a war of terrorism against the people of Nicaragua.

This war being waged is not intended to change the policies of the Nicaraguan government or to topple it or to stop support for the Salvadoran rebels next door to Nicaragua. It is intended to punish the people of Nicaragua for having the courage and will to oust a U.S.-puppet dictator and to take their future into their own hands.

A LEXICON

The Victory: July 19, 1979, at the time the presidential palace fell; Somoza had fled the day before.

The struggle: The years leading up to the Victory. Some date it from 1927 when Sandino began his struggle.

The Revolution: The Nicaraguan people view the present as a revolution; not armed struggle but a concerted effort to restructure their society along more egalitarian lines.



Ray Parrish, VVAW, Giving Speech At US Embassy in Nicaragua

DEMONSTRATION

When we arrived at the U.S. Embassy there was already a crowd there. The American residents had held a rally two weeks earlier and hoped to make it a regular event depending on U.S. foreign policy. They made our vet delegation the centerpiece for this occasion, and had supplied us with poster material.

For some reason we all just lined up, blocking the Embassy gates; we hadn't planned our positions earlier. We could see the Americans standing on the inside, in civies with short hair. They didn't seem pleased to see us.

We delivered our prepared statement in both English and Spanish. We told the people of Nicaragua that they had impressed us all with their unswerving commitment to their revolution and national independence. We told them of our conclusion that the U.S. government was and is lying to the American people. We assured them that when told the truth, the people of the U.S. would condemn the actions of their own government and stand in solidarity with the people of Nicaragua. We urged them to continue their struggle for social justice and pledged our support for these efforts.

After the prepared statement we sang a few songs and a few of us made individual statements to the crowd of about 150 people. My own comments centered around the U.

S. government's continuing betrayal and abandonment of the GI's that it uses to carry out its militaristic policies. I reminded the people, including the plainclothes Marines in the Embassy compound of Agent Orange, post-traumatic stress disorders, and the multitude of other problems faced by GI's and veterans. I asked the international media present to talk to one of the vets with us, Anthony Guarisco, a victim of the atom bomb tests in the Pacific. Anthony is now organizing similar veterans worldwide.

Four of us wore VVAW buttons and patches. As we left the Embassy gates I turned and yelled, "Hey Sarge!" The biggest "civilian" with the shortest hair on the other side turned to me. I smiled and said, "See you in the VA hospital, assuming any are left when you get out." He stared at me with an uncertain grin on his face.

We left for the Honduran border right after the demonstration. A long trip like that tends to emphasize conversation and scenic snapshots. We were all nervous because the "contras" had been raiding the border area and trying for the umpteenth time to take and occupy Jalapa, our destination. They wanted to set up a provisional government and call for U.S. aid and troops. I heard somebody mutter "Hue." Our guide, an American named Colleen, couldn't understand the sudden silence, but she respected it with a confused glance.

The farmlands and savannah around Managua gave way to higher elevation scrub land and cattle. Soon the pine and rain forests took over. We got to Ocotal and discovered that we weren't going to Jalapa. A band of terrorists were working the road we would have had to take, in a military truck due to its roughness. We didn't argue, just asked for a different destination.

Los Manos was the safest and we got a small armed guard to take us there. Those among us with the experience commented on the "triple canopy" we were driving through. I could see the eyes of the Nam vets click into scanning mode. Our nerves grew even tighter when our jeep escort stopped and handed the lieutenant on our bus two more clips for his AK.

The border ran through the outskirts of the nearly deserted town. When asked why they remained in the face of such danger, the citizens pointed to the ripe coffee beans all around us. "Our soldiers will protect us and we need the foreign currency these beans will bring us." Their faces were solid and many of them were armed.

At the demonstration I was wearing a black beret and was the only one in camouflage. I was hoping that that would get the VVAW patch I was wearing in the papers. At Los Manos I felt like a bullseye. I walked alone up to the customs house on the Nicaraguan side of the border. One hundred yards a-

V VISITS NICARAGUA

way the Hondurans crouched behind sandbags and pointed their weapons at us. The others looked like tourists, enough to make me brave. I scrounged tacks and staples from the remains of a bulletin board and posted a VVAW patch. The CIA probably got it back to the States before we got back.

After talking to the militia and families there, we heaved a collective sigh and headed back.

We stopped at a militia training center a few miles inside the border. By now we all knew enough Spanish to tell people who we were and why we were there. The respect and enthusiastic camaraderie we received from our brothers-in-arms spread smiles across all our faces. We gave away the last of our American cigarettes and as much encouragement as one soldier can give another. I ripped my last VVAW patch off my jacket for their company bulletin board. We left there knowing that these men and women

We used our own mistreatment at the hands of the U.S. government as an example of what GI's could expect in their future. We stopped short of urging desertion, useless under the circumstances. However, we did give our brothers a lot of things to think about. Our comments were recorded to be rebroadcast once a new and more powerful transmitter was installed. We were also invited to send the station any records or tapes we could spare. It's not a bad idea at all.

As we travelled back to Managua that night many emotions ran through my mind. There was the love of a people for their nation and their fellows. There was the hate I felt towards the waste and death of such futile wars, and the pride a people feel when their courage gains their independence. And there was the shame I felt to know that my taxes go to help shatter their dreams. We shared with the Nicaraguans a mixture

The Revolution

We began the week talking to Justinian Liebl, a former priest and Wisconsin native who served in parishes throughout Nicaragua since 1955. Now he works in an agrarian education program. He explained the role that the church played in the Revolution.

Over two-thirds of the priests and half the bishops are non-Nicaraguan. These formed both the literal and the figurative heart of the "Liberation theology" movement. The Nicaraguans entering the church needed the patronage of the rich in order to enter and rise in the hierarchy of the church. As a result their biases were largely oriented to maintaining the power of their "patrons," not the peasants they were supposed to serve.

The foreign priests, nuns, and lay people brought in the rhetoric and ideas of liberty and equality. Today such ideas are associated with "communist" expansion in the U.S. since much of the vocabulary is used in Marxist rhetoric, especially in developing nations. It's ironic that 200 years ago we used similar words in our own revolution. Today's reality is a nationalistic movement striving for freedom from outside exploitation and repression. U.S. corporations don't view it in political terms: they now make only a 15% profit in Nicaragua, better than in the U.S. but nowhere near the 60% return they were getting under Somoza in return for some modest bribes.

On Human Rights

We discovered that there were several "Human Rights" commissions in Nicaragua. One is headed by Jose Espinoza Gonzalez. He released a list of 700 people who have disappear-

ed since the July 1979 Sandanista victory. An enterprising reporter found all but 60 of the people in Miami, Honduras, and Argentina. If all the 60 remaining people were killed during the final weeks of the struggle, then we should praise the embittered campesinos for their restraint. This was also the group which called for OAS intervention in Nicaragua.

We had a long talk with Mary Hartman, a nun, who works for the National Commission for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights, the most independent such group. After the victory 7,500 of Somoza's Guardia Nacional were tried. All but 2300 have served their time and been released; none have been executed.

We visited a prison honor farm where 40 ex-guards worked. There were no armed guards and the prisoners worked in their fields and shops to support themselves and earn money to send to their families. They were allowed to spend a week at home every 6 months; family visits were a weekly event. Some of them were serving sentences of over 20 years. Both the prisoners and the Sandanistas views the ex-guardias as victims of Somoza. They were working together to overcome the stigma and biases of their past.

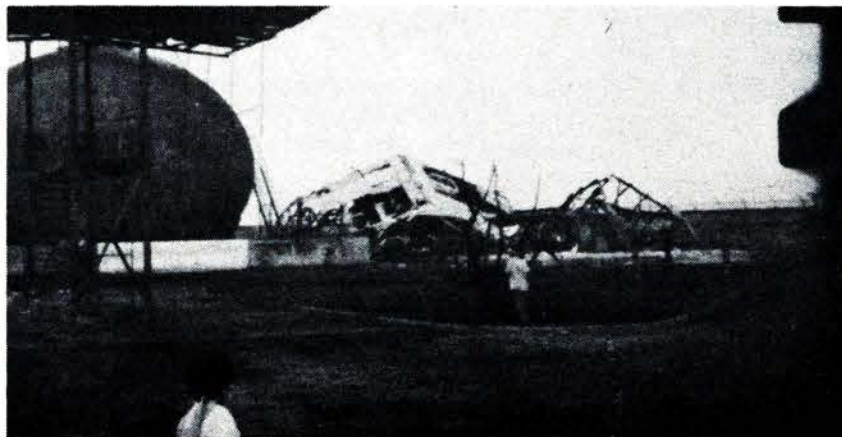


Downed U.S. helicopter, its insignia covered with mud. Washington claimed it 'veered' accidentally

wouldn't mistreat American GI's if such an opportunity should arise. They knew that it was the government, not the people of America who were the real villain.

Our last stop that day was back in Ocotal. We thanked our escort and visited Radio Segovia. It's a small station and the Hondurans were jamming it, but we were told that Americans stationed in Honduras could hear it. Five of us spent over a half hour telling of our experiences and emotions over the past few days. We addressed both Americans and Nicaraguans, and tried to construct a feeling of sympathy between the two.

of hope and despair when we contemplated what would be needed to end the U.S. war against them. But we also shared the resolve to do just that.



Port Corinto--destroyed by CIA and U.S. Navy gunfire

The Vets Delegation

Steve Clements from Veterans for Non-Intervention in Central America, from Seattle, Washington.
Gerry Condon, Veterans Against Intervention in Central America, Washington, DC
Bill Distler, from CISPES in Bellingham, Washington
Hank Erb, Vietnam Veterans Peace Project, Austin, TX
Tony Gonzales, La Raza Draft Counseling Center, Fresno, California
Anthony Guarisco, National Association of Atomic Veterans, Topock, Arizona
Larry Holmes, Peoples Anti-War Mobilization, New York City, New York
Tom LeBlanc, International Indian Treaty Council, San Francisco, CA
Job Mashariki, Black Veterans for Social Justice, Brooklyn, NY
Ray Parrish, Vietnam Veterans Against the War, Chicago, Illinois
C.J. Thompson-White, Women Veterans Information Network, San Francisco, CA

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

A National Veterans Organization Recognized as Tax Deductible.

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 warlike 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!

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

NATIONAL COORDINATORS

Bill Davis
(312) 386-1413

Barry Romo
(312) 327-5756

Peter Zastrow
(312) 561-3435

John Lindquist
(414) 963-0398

THE VETERAN
Vietnam Veterans Against the War

SUBSCRIBE
12 Issues \$6
Institutions \$15

Make checks payable to
VVAW

P.O. Box 25592
Chicago IL 60625

VVAW and THE VETERAN
are copyright; the insignia
is a trademark of VVAW, Inc.
All Rights Reserved.

VETERANS SELF-HELP GUIDE VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR Psychological Problems & Vietnam Vets

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS



A concise and non-technical
aid to understanding PTSD,
25¢ post pd.



THESE SOLDIERS ARE STILL AT WAR



A valuable organizational tool
designed to answer the most
common questions asked about
VVAW. 25¢ post pd.

STOP THE DRAFT BEFORE IT STOPS YOU NO REGISTRATION



VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR
We Won't Fight Another Rich Man's War

A digest of knowledge for those
with a choice from those who
were used and thrown away.
25¢ post pd.

Make checks payable to
VVAW
P.O. Box 25592
Chicago IL 60625

BUTTONS

three-color VVAW insignia
\$1 postpaid

REGIONS

East

Ed Damato
Box 74
Van Brunt Station
Brooklyn, NY 11215
(212) 748-6068

South

Elton Manzione
185 W. Washington
Athens, GA 30601
(404) 353-1218

Midwest

Ann Bailey
3422 n Fratney
Milwaukee, WI 53212
(414) 963-0398

West

Tom Wetzler
519 Everest
San Antonio, TX 78209
(512) 736-0901



SUSTAINERS

I would like to become part of
the monthly sustainer program. I will
contribute \$_____ a month. This
includes a subscription to THE VETERAN.

CONTRIBUTIONS

I would like to contribute \$_____
to building VVAW and the VETERAN.

Contributions to VVAW are Recognized
by the IRS as TAX DEDUCTIBLE !!

Make checks payable to
VVAW
P.O. Box 25592
Chicago IL 60625

**A Non-Profit Tax
Deductible National
Veterans Organization
Established in 1967.**

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.



Membership Form

P.O. Box 25592, Chicago, IL 60625

DATE _____

NAME _____ TELEPHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

DATES OF SERVICE _____ BRANCH _____ UNIT _____

OVERSEAS DUTY _____ DATES _____

MILITARY OCCUPATION _____ RANK _____

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.

Make checks payable to Vietnam Veterans Against the War

Signature _____

"THANK YOU AMERICA,"

from "VIETNAM: YOUTH 'N ASIA"

Thank you America, for letting me see the dawn's early light.
 Yeah, i seen the light alright in the form of rockets and
 mortars, trying to blow up my ass and everyone around me!
 Thank you America for giving me the opportunity.
 Yes indeed America, you was real slick, been leaning on my
 shoulder whispering in my ear every since i was a kid,
 you had the rap in all the school books, had my teachers and parents
 rapping the same shit.
 But you didn't stop there with your social and political grooming.
 You had to go and buy out Hollywood you dig,
 and had John Wayne coming out the tube whispering in my other ear.
 Yes, yes, you was real slick and you knew it....you been feedin' my head for
 a long time.
 But we all know that too much of a bad thing is good....ignorance is
 enlightenment. !
 But America, i was young and taught to trust...in you.
 I should have known when you asked me if i liked the great
 outdoors, mountain climbing, sleeping out and feeling close
 to nature.
 There i was your little sucker friend, unconsciously asking you for
 a combat situation.
 Then there was silence in your parlor of patriotism.
 The verdict....three years.
 America smiled...Uncle Sam eagerly got my gear together for me.
 Oh beautiful for spacious skies? For purple mountains?
 Naw man, the skies was filled.....with AK-47 rounds and beautiful red
 tracers from rockets
 shot from Ho Chi Minh's trail, that would turn a brown boy's face like mine
 pale,
 and the mountains was not purple Jack, they was green...and Charlie was not
 shedding his grace on me!
 Oh thank you America for standing behind me...with a political gun
 in my tender young back!
 Standing behind me....whispering in my ear again.
 telling me how patriotic i was
 telling me what a good American "boy" i was
 telling me "yours is not to question why, but to do or die!"
 Oh yes America, that's where you were...way behind me..back there
 in the world...contracting Penta-gonorrhea.
 Thank you America for the opportunity to see!
 I'm giving you credit, cause you pulled some jungle fatigues
 over me!
 Oh, let me not forget the haircut, the new shoes and my
 first M-16....when I was just seventeen.
 Thank you America, for the ride out to the hill
 what a thrill,
 when the chopper dropped me off I was scared to the bone,
 cause it was me and me alone
 who had to do the job..
 a job..
 your job!
 Yes indeed, since i was a kid you fed my head and fattened me up like
 i was some kind of cattle...
 who stood a good American chance of getting slaughtered..by
 a government of the people and for the people
 for which it thinks it understands, one nation under Nixon.
 Thank you America
 for the opportunity to see the world,
 and for the opportunity to go camping, hiking and being close to
 nature.
 Shit! ...i had no romantic notions out there in the bush!



But my man Charlie did.

He'd like to have gotten close to me,
 but i'm sure he'd love to have killed me.

But naw America, you didn't kill him
 cause with the rockets red glare and the bombs bursting in air
 it gave proof thru the night, that my legs were still there!
 That's right America, your little sucker friend made it back..
 walkin'
 talkin'

just a grinning right in your face.
 But thank you America, cause you did cure him of the
 John Wayne Hollywood Hero Habit
 But he America, what happened
 when i came home?
 You sure was cold! Acted like you didn't even know me.
 You used me and when it was over
 you couldn't even look at me or even talk to me!
 You just handed me a few dollars and some change and said
 "now go to school and forget about it"
 That's what it was!

Yes, when Johnny came marching home this time
 you were embarrassed...you had no interest.
 So you felt bad....and reached in your pocket
 and offered me a loan with low interest!
 But never again America!
 Will you dress this brown man in your War-drobe,
 nor will you send me to a foreign land to kill people.
 No thank you America!
 I'm not impressed with your technology and now effectively
 you can kill.
 I'm not impressed with your big guns or your five-hundred pound mobs,
 and let's not forget your napalm.
 You have scorched the soul of Humanity!
 What goes around, comes around
 thus you have only burnt yourself!
 Thank you America!
 For the opportunity!
 My eyes have seen the glory.....within myself.

Go along for the pride.



Juan Lara
 101st Airborne
 2/319th Artillery
 Hue, 1969

AGENT ORANGE

THE DEADLY FOG

Before the Meramac river rose from its banks, sending tons of water cascading through the streets of Times Beach, Mo., residents of that small Midwestern village were proud of their town. It was, they would tell visitors, a kind of Mom and apple pie place where people didn't worry about their children talking to strangers and doors were left unlocked, even at night. Unlike Los Angeles or New York the air was clean, water still tasted like water, and the family income could be augmented by hunting and fishing. No, it wasn't Paris, but at least it would always be there for their grandchildren--a permanent dot on the ever-changing American landscape.

In early spring 1983, the Meramac rose above flood level, receded, then rose again, washing over the town in great muddy geysers that left behind a thick, odoriferous residue. Like giant beetles cars lay stranded in the mud, and throughout the day and late into the evening one could hear the sound of chain saws and the lament of those made homeless by the vicissitudes of nature. Still, the people of Times Beach were not discouraged. Formidable as the task before them seemed, they were optimistic that they could clean up the damage and restore their town to its pre-flood serenity.

But in a matter of days optimism turned to despair, and the effort to salvage the flood-ravaged town was all but abandoned. Bewildered, angry and frustrated, the residents of Times Beach watched apprehensively as technicians from the EPA probed through the debris and removed soil samples in search of TCDD-Dioxin, the most toxic chemical known to science. Yet even after the technicians arrived in the village wearing moonsuits and carrying what appeared to be miniature vacuum cleaners, people did not give up hope. Perhaps, they said, health officials were mistaken in their belief that the soil in Times Beach contained high levels of dioxin. Or maybe the government knew a way of ridding their town of the contamination and their ordeal would soon be over. But when the re-

sults of the EPA's tests returned the news was devastating: so much dioxin had been found in the soil that the town would have to be evacuated and most of the household goods, including furniture, rugs, appliances and even cars, left behind. Times Beach, its residents soon learned, was about to become the first toxic ghost town in America.

Were Times Beach an anomaly in an otherwise pristine environment it might have been quickly forgotten by a media more interested in sensation than substance, but in the weeks following the evacuation of this small village, Americans discovered that dioxin is widespread, possibly even ubiquitous, in our environment. It has been found, for example, in several varieties of fish taken from Lake Ontario and the Hudson River, in the tissues of fish caught eight miles down river from a plant that once manufactured Agent Orange, and in carp taken from Michigan's Saginaw Bay. In Missouri, more than one hundred sites may be contaminated with dioxin, and scientists have discovered traces of the chemical in beef fat taken from cattle grazed on land sprayed with 2,4,5-T and in mother's milk from women living near areas heavily sprayed with dioxin-contaminated herbicides. In addition, the public learned, dioxin is found in certain herbicides, pesticides, disinfectants, detergents, and wood preservatives, products that can be purchased at most any hardware store.

The discovery of dioxin in Times Beach did more than substantiate that our air, water, and food chain are being inundated with deadly chemicals. It precipitated an intense and often acrimonious debate between those who believe dioxin-contaminated products should be banned and the environment swept clean of this chemical, and those who argue that in small doses dioxin is rather innocuous. In California and Oregon opponents of the use of 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T--herbicides that when mixed together in a 50/50 ratio form Agent Orange--are threatening to shoot down helicopters spraying these chem-

icals on or near their land. In Washington, DC, the Environmental Defense Fund, calling dioxin the most powerful carcinogen known to science, has established an emergency dioxin action plan to "combat Dow's 'information' campaign" and to force the government and industry to control dioxin contamination. And in New York lawyers for thousands of Vietnam veterans clash almost daily with attorneys from the chemical industry who deny that the veterans' illnesses are related to dioxin exposure.

While the National Cancer Institute, Public Health Service, EPA, federal and state health officials, and leading experts in environmental science throughout the world have verified dioxin's toxicity, the American Medical Association calls public concern over this chemical unwarranted. In a statement released shortly before I was about to embark on a two-week promotion tour for Waiting for an Army to Die, the AMA denounced what it called "hysteria over dioxin." Dioxin, said the association's executive council, is a victim of a witch hunt orchestrated by an ill-informed and irresponsible media. The nation's chief executive also rushed to dioxin's defense. "News reports about dioxin," said Ronald Reagan, "have frightened a good number of people unnecessarily." And to set the record straight Dow Chemical Company announced that it is mounting a \$3 million campaign to counter what it calls the "hysteria over dioxin." "This effort," said Dow's president, Paul F. Oreffice, "will seek, through sound science, to reassure those with concerns about dioxin." To reassure the American people, Dow would attempt to prove that "trace amounts of dioxin found in Midland, and in other communities with similar levels, pose no significant, long-term health problems." Neither the AMA nor Dow Chemical said they were planning to conduct long-term health studies of Vietnam veterans who were exposed to dioxin-contaminated herbicides and who have filed the largest product liability suit in the nation's history against

five war-time manufacturers of Agent Orange.

In every city I visited and on every radio or TV program people were very disturbed or angry about the AMA's statements and Dow's contention that there is no proof dioxin (a chemical scientists believe is 170,000 times more toxic than cyanide, 670 times more toxic than arsenic, and one million times more fetus-deforming than thalidomide) harms human beings. Many calls were from Vietnam veterans or their wives asking why, if dioxin poses no threat to human health, the government rushed its technicians to Times Beach, evacuated the town, and paid its residents \$33 million never to return. And if low levels of dioxin pose no long-term health problems, why did an Illinois jury award \$58 million to 47 railroad workers exposed to this chemical for a short period of time--the workers developed cancer of the skin and testicles, liver damage, neurological problems, loss of sex drive, and other symptoms that Vietnam veterans have been complaining of for many years. The American public, I concluded, is deeply disturbed but hardly hysterical over contradictory reports on the toxicity of dioxin.

On the final day of my tour I was accompanied by a former Marine who had spent 12 months in an area of Vietnam sprayed heavily with herbicides. Before Vietnam he had been in "perfect health" and had even planned on playing professional football when he returned home; but now, he explained, he can only hope that the cancer doctors discovered in one of his testicles and the lymph nodes of his stomach will not spread to other parts of his body. Because of an operation that rendered him sterile, he and his wife will never be able to have children and this often leaves him feeling depressed and angry. Did anyone know, he asked, that Agent Orange contained dioxin, and if so why hadn't they warned the troops who, like himself, spent months in "the bush" drinking water and eating food contaminated with herbicides?

As we waited to appear on a San Francisco news program, a technician rushed into the



room and suggested we accompany him to the nearest monitor where a Medal of Honor winner was speaking before a Congressional panel. Former Sergeant Sammy Lee Davis had served in Vietnam and had long suspected that his illnesses were related to exposure to Agent Orange, but the Veterans Administration hospitals, he told the panel, "had always found other explanations." Advised by a veteran's group to seek help elsewhere, Davis consulted Dr. Bertram Carnow of the University of Illinois School of Public Health, who told him that indeed his illnesses were directly related to dioxin-contaminated herbicides. His voice quivering Davis said: "I am an American, gentlemen, and therefore too proud and too bullheaded to beg you. But I humbly request that you do not break faith with those of us who answered the call that came from this building....I may be called away soon. I am 36 years old, gentlemen, and that terrifies me. But at the very least the darkness of uncertainty has passed and I can rest with the fact that I know what to expect."

To the AMA, to Dow Chemical and other manufacturers of dioxin-contaminated products, Sammy Lee Davis's testimony and the health problems of the Marine with whom I spent a day in San Francisco are merely "anecdotal"—admittedly disturbing and sad, but hardly scientific proof that dioxin harms human beings. There is, however, a curious and rather frightening irony in the chemical companies'

insistence that no correlation between human illness and dioxin exposure has been proven. Ironical, because in establishing the toxicity of any chemical to human beings scientists rarely use human guinea pigs, relying instead on a process of extrapolation from the effects of a particular chemical on laboratory animals to the possible effects a chemical might have on human beings. In test after test dioxin has proven to be a potent tumor promoter in rats, teratogenic (fetus deforming) in rats and mice, fetotoxic in a variety of species, and deadly to rhesus monkeys in doses as low as 2 parts per billion (one part per billion is the equivalent of one second in approximately 37 years). From the laboratory studies it seems highly probable that dioxin poses a hazard to human health and that the argument that it is innocuous in small doses is based more on politics than science.

Barricaded and deserted, Times Beach, Missouri, squats on the banks of the Meramac like a harbinger of America's future. Dioxin has faded from the headlines, the AMA has modified—one might almost say recanted—its statements about dioxin, and Dow Chemical's public relations teams receive hardly any notice as they scour the hinterland in search of an appreciative audience for their message that in small doses dioxin is harmless.

But for thousands of Vietnam veterans there is little consolation in the fact that the "hysteria" over dioxin has subsided. Sick, dying, bitter, they try to under-

stand why their health has deteriorated so dramatically since their return from Vietnam and why no one seems willing to help. If dioxin is not destroying their livers, damaging their nervous and immunity systems, and promoting cancerous growths in their colons, stomachs, testicles, and bladders, then what is? And if the chemical industry is so absolutely certain that dioxin does not permanently injure or kill human beings, then why have they not done group studies of Vietnam veterans to substantiate these claims rather than spending twenty million dollars to fight the veteran's class action suit?

The answers to these questions have serious implications for our future. For if, based upon the plethora of scientific studies showing dioxin to be carcinogenic, teratogenic, fetotoxic, and just plain deadly in laboratory animals, we cannot make a learned guess about its effects on human beings, is there really any basis for limiting or banning the production or marketing of any chemical or drug? The chemical industry's argument that dioxin is "innocent until proven guilty" is a dangerous reversal of the process whereby regulatory agencies attempt to safeguard the American public from toxic drugs or chemicals. To accept this argument would be to agree to market products first and remove the "suspected" killer from the market only when a substantial number of people had sickened or died.

"If dioxin were a human being," said Victor Yannacone, "it would be convicted in any

court in the land no matter who was sitting on the bench or whether it was a judicial or jury trial. Dioxin is a killer, and it will be convicted of destroying the lives of thousands of young men who served our country in Vietnam."

Mr Yannacone, of course, is mistaken. Were the jury comprised of members of the AMA's executive board or scientists from Dow, Monsanto, Uniroyal, et al, the charges against dioxin would be reduced from homicide to a misdemeanor. In spite of a number of reputable studies that strongly suggest a correlation between dioxin exposure and human illness, and regardless of Dow Chemical's own internal and, until recently, secret memos that state dioxin could prove "fatal" in human beings, the chemical industry continues to insist that "all the evidence is not in." And until it is, we should not be alarmed over the discovery of this chemical in Times Beach or, even, our own back yards. Accept the payment—perhaps we should say payoff—and move on, hoping that you might find haven from the most toxic chemical known to science. In a nation where dioxin has been found in fish, beef fat, and mother's milk, the real question is just where this hiding place might be.

(This article by Fred Wilcox, author of Waiting for an Army to Die; it first appeared in Grapevine, a weekly magazine from Ithaca, NY, and is reprinted by the kind permission of Grapevine and Mr Wilcox.)

Interview with Leader of Salvador Resistance

GUERMO UNGO

"This country is filled with a sickness," said Guermo Ungo, President of the Socialist Party of El Salvador. He was not speaking of his native land, but of the U.S. which he was touring in an effort to inform its citizens of how their tax dollars are being turned into instruments of death and torture in Central America.

"The widespread unemployment and lack of human services in the face of huge expenditures for military adventures abroad indicate the need for structural changes in this country," Ungo elaborated in response to THE VETERAN's question about what he had learned about the U.S. during his stay here. "The politicians offer the American people medicine for the symptoms of their problems, but a cure will have to involve changes in the structure of American society."

The interview had drifted in this direction when THE VETERAN had queried Mr Ungo about the Kissinger fact-finding mission.

His answer had been, "I know more about the U.S. than Henry Kissinger will ever know about Central America."

Ungo was quick to point out that the relationship between Vietnam and Central America was complex. "The fundamental difference is that there was Vietnam before the current crisis in Central America. During Vietnam, the U.S. did not have the events of Vietnam to use as a reference point. Furthermore, it is essential to separate the 'lessons of Vietnam' as they were learned by the American people from the 'lessons of Vietnam' as they were learned by the military and the policy makers. For the American people, the lesson of Vietnam was one of pain and suffering to be avoided in the future. For the experts, the lessons of Vietnam are just so many strategic errors which they must avoid in the future. For those who wish to 'win' in Central America, it is simply a matter of avoiding 'bad press' and not losing the



Victims of death squads linked to U.S.-backed government

support of Congress."

When THE VETERAN asked him about what he foresees for his nation, Mr Ungo lamented, "The struggle for freedom has

lasted so much longer than we could have ever anticipated. President Reagan wants to 'win'. He sees his credibility depending on a decisive victory. He has brought unbelievable military might to bear on the situation. The U.S. fleet surrounds

us. Your soldiers are in our country backed up by even more in Honduras. Some, more liberal, policy makers might want to see us socialists as window dressing for a fascist regime. We must continue to struggle for true democracy no matter how difficult that may be. All that I hope is that my visit to your country can achieve some degree of solidarity with those of your who want to know the truth."

for
vietnam
era veterans

help
without
hassles

- free, direct services
- Vietnam-oriented
- professional staff
- extensive resources
- nationwide locations

get the help you need
... without the hassles.

Stop by or call

Vet
Center

Consult phone directory in your area



Batik by Lisa Kokin

**"OUR FORM OF FOREIGN AID FOR
EL SALVADOR DOESN'T BRING DEATH AND
DESTRUCTION, IT BRINGS LIFE AND HOPE"**

—Charlie Clements, M.D., M.P.H.

Join Dr. Charlie Clements and the

Salvadoran Medical Relief Fund

in providing medical care to the civilian population of El Salvador. Over \$150,000 was sent in 1983. To double our form of foreign aid this year, we urgently need your tax-deductible contributions...

☐ Yes, I want to contribute.
Here is my tax-deductible contribution for: _____

☐ I want to be a monthly sustainer.
I pledge: _____

____\$15 ____\$25 ____\$50 ____\$100
____other

Name: _____

Address: _____

zip _____

Phone _____

This space paid for by friends of S.M.R.F.

Salvadoran
Medical
Relief
Fund

P.O. Box 1194
Salinas, CA 93902
(408) 758-4001



I'm a
Vietnam Veteran

ORDER FROM THE VVAW

**BUMPER STICKERS
SECOND PRINTING**

The original red &
yellow collector's
item now on sale.

**\$2.00 each or
\$15.00 for 10**

LETTERS TO VVAW

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.

Dear VVAW,

Enclosed is a money order for a subscription to THE VETERAN paper and 4 "I'm A Vietnam Veteran" bumper stickers. I would also like to know more about membership requirements.

I too would like to see an end to war and all that it stands for. I'll never understand why man had to turn to violence to achieve peace. It's crass, the whole idea of it. The money I saw going up in smoke, with each exploding bomb in Vietnam would have fed hundreds of starving people.

I pray for a day when peace will be throughout the world and love and understanding will be each person's goal.

W. M. L.
Milwaukee, WI

Dear VVAW,

My high school history class has been assigned a research project. I have selected your organization. I am very interested in what your cause is. It sounds very worthwhile. Maybe your organization could help my generation prevent a war from ever getting started. Could you please send me all the information you can regarding your organization....

Mary L.
Coventry, RI

Dear Editor,

All Americans are with Vietnam vets. The bastards in Washington should have been sent to the Vietnam war zone. It's the bastards in Washington that should be gone after as they love to see young men sent to war while they eat and drink away in Washington.

Anne Pawilak
Cicero, IL

Info Wanted

New Hampshire writer would like to interview anyone involved in Operation Phoenix. If interested, call or write Doug Valentine, 118 Public Street, Manchester, NH 03103; phone: (603) 669-7193.

Dear VVAW,

I am a disabled American veteran that recently came across your publication and would like a subscription to it. The direct approach and slight sarcasm included could not be more honest. Like everyone else I wish I had never been subjected to the military and its "life is cheap" policy. It seems as though crippled and abandoned is the American military's way of saying thank you. Sometimes I joke about doing it for apple pie and baseball; but the joke was on me. I haven't enough teeth to eat pie, nor the shoulders to play baseball anymore and feel that the benefits and compensation were and still are

unsatisfactory. My life has never been the same since.

A "saying" I remember from high school English class comes to mind when I think about it, which is often:

"A sorrow's crown of sorrows,
Is remembering happier times."
Thank you for your concern.

Sincerely yours,
Richard Helm, Milwaukee
P.S. My boys won't go!

Dear VVAW:

I am requesting any information you have regarding the Vietnamese conflict. Any information will be appreciated. I am studying this conflict and am trying to get as much information as possible to find out about the Vietnam War and why it was an unpopular war. I am 12 years old and want the whole story. Thank you.

Sean
N. Merrick,
NY

PROPOSED NAME CHANGE

Vote to Keep the "the"

At the VVAW National Meeting in September, 1983, the National Office proposed that the organization change its name by deleting the "the" from our name to become Vietnam Veterans Against War. This change was put to a vote of the membership and the vote was solidly against the change. We thus remain Vietnam Veterans Against the War. A few of the comments from individuals and chapters are reprinted below:

"I am 100% in favor of changing the organization's name to Vietnam Veterans Against War.

"Who the hell is for war? Of another WWII type situation every comes up we could (maybe) support it (i.e. stopping a Hitler type) but still be against war as a basic principle, goal and concept.

Combat vets, Vietnam vets and our society must start deglorifying war. By changing the name it would also be helpful to open discussion in the VETERAN about Russia's aggression against Afghanistan etc, China's aggression in Vietnam, Vietnam's aggression in Cambodia, Cuba's aggression in Latin America and, of course, our aggression in Leba-

non, Grenada, Central America and other locations.

As an organization we should not be biased in our opinion and outspokenness of aggressors. All aggressors and war mongers should be treated equally--i.e. exposed for what they are.

The name change is a great idea!

Scott Moore
Pennsylvania

A proposal has been made to drop the "the" from VVAW. There has also been a proposal to drop both the "Vietnam" and "the" from our organization's name. I am adamantly opposed to both proposals.

Our country has been trying to forget Vietnam and Vietnam War veterans since the time our government began sending us to Vietnam to fight and die. Our country has done a pretty good job of forgetting Vietnam until the last couple of years when some people began to remember. However, many people, including the President, apparently would just as soon have everyone forget Vietnam--put Vietnam out of our country's collective memory--to get on with business as usual as if there never had

been a Vietnam. To drop "Vietnam" from our organization's name is to buy into the process of trying to forget a war, its victims, its survivors, and its lessons which we have fought so hard to make our country remember.

And the "the" cannot be dropped either. We are still fighting the Vietnam War and we have been and are presently fighting against Vietnams regardless of the name of the country in which our nation's next Vietnam (or Vietnam's) could take place.

The name could be changed despite my objections--but as long as I am a member of our organization I shall always be a Vietnam Veterans Against the War.

Marv Freedman
Madison, WI

I have mulled this question in my mind for two months preceding the initiation and organizing of Veterans Against War....

Because we are Veterans Against War our organization is truly theirs (the members) in name and deed. No one has to feel ashamed or out of place because they're not a Vietnam vet in our group. No one has to explain that vets of all eras can join. The name deals with that plain and simple....

Tampering with the proud tradition of VVAW's name is or should not be a difficult one if building a fighting veterans organization is what we are all about. VVAW being a force for change should be able to cope with this change that will only help to build the organization and the vets movement. I believe that "Vets of all Eras Unite!" is the right slogan to raise now to unite as many veterans against the war that Reagan and Company are doing and planning more of. The name change proposal gives VVAW the opportunity to truly make that slogan a reality, not just in words (the name) but in deeds (our program).... I hope people will give thought to this letter and also let all chapter members read it before passing judgement on the name change--not just dropping the "the" from the name, but also "Vietnam." The bottom line is for all of us change for a better world....

Walter Klim
Ypsilanti, MI

I do not belong to a local VVAW Chapter so here's my personal opinion regarding the proposed name change: Let's be positive, let's be for real: Vietnam Veterans for Peace.

Ed Valeska
Cincinnati, OH

RECOLLECTIONS

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

The war in Vietnam had a strange effect on the Vietnamese economy. It turned mothers into prostitutes, Saigon officials into drug-pushers, and children into explosive's "scavengers."

In our unit we used to pay 100 piaster (about \$1) for unexploded rounds brought in by the local population. It was well worth the money because the VC could turn our junk into deadly mines and claymores which we would have to face later on. And the kids from the local village could also use the extra funds to buy rice. As a consequence, almost every morning young children would show up at the barbed wire with 105 rounds, claymores and other "duds" to trade for cash. The only problem was that many of these "duds" were ready to explode.

As a Battalion S-2 I had a helicopter at my disposal to reconnoiter the area of operations for what we called "targets of opportunity." On this January morning, however, I would not be involved in a sight-seeing mission.

A Vietnamese girl of about ten was bringing a white phosphorous round to the base camp. Just outside the wire, it exploded. Whether other children were around and disappeared in the smoke or not is debatable but this girl lived, her entire body burned and burning. I directed the command and control helicopter to the area and picked her up.



She was a beautiful child; her face was untouched but her body was crisp. She was not screaming but whimpering in terrible pain. I wrapped her in a poncho, put her on the helicopter floor and we took off for the hospital at Chu Lai.

I had to hold her as she was rolling in pain and I was afraid she would roll out of the chopper. I probably increased her pain but there was nothing else to do.

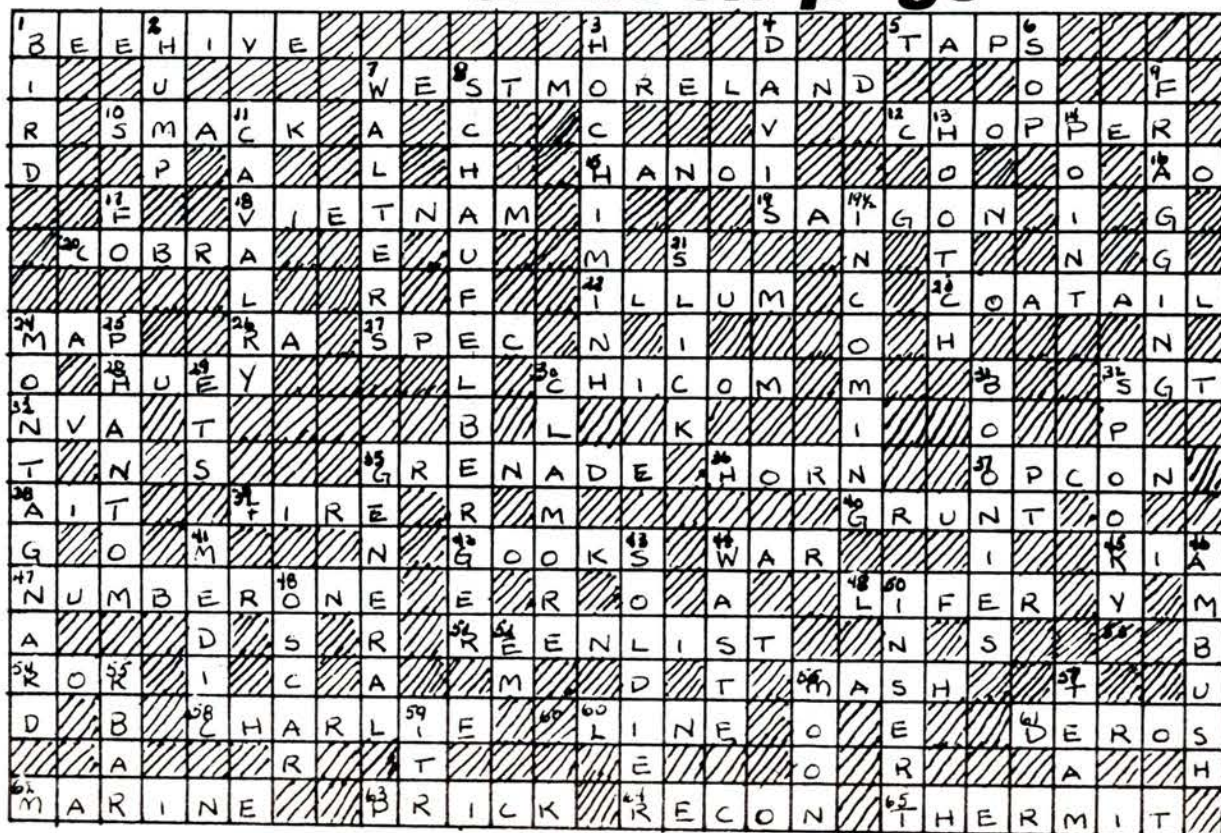
We landed in the hospital compound and doctors and medics ran to the chopper, but when they saw it was a Vietnamese child, they waved us on. I could not believe it, but was informed that Vietnamese nationals could not be treated here and that we should take her to a missionary hospital at Tam Ky.

I was still holding her as we took off north; it seemed like hours but it was probably only 15 or 20 minutes until we sighted the hospital. We landed, I gave the child to someone and we left. I never learned what happened to her.

A year later I went to see John Wayne in the "Green Berets." At the end, Big John tells a Vietnamese child, as he looks into the sunset, "This war is all for you, for your future" (or something like that). The war was also for the child I held for an hour in I Corps.

--Barry Romo
VVAW National Office

Answer to Puzzle on page 6



VETERANS SELF-HELP GUIDE VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR

Defining Agent Orange CHEMICAL TIME BOMB IN VIETNAM VETERANS

Over a few decades ago, the United States military sprayed a chemical called Agent Orange over large areas of South Vietnam. The chemical was used to defoliate the jungle and to destroy the enemy's supply lines. It was a powerful herbicide that killed the trees and plants. The chemical was also used to clear the land for military operations. The chemical was also used to clear the land for civilian use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for agricultural use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for industrial use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for residential use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for commercial use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for educational use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for recreational use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for religious use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for cultural use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for historical use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for scientific use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for artistic use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for literary use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for musical use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for theatrical use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for cinematic use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for television use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for radio use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for newspaper use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for magazine use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for book use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for record use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for film use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for video use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for audio use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for visual use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for tactile use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for olfactory use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for gustatory use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for auditory use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for visual use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for tactile use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for olfactory use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for gustatory use. The chemical was also used to clear the land for auditory use.

25¢ post paid

Make checks payable to
VVAW

P.O. Box 25592
Chicago IL 60625