

25th Anniversary of VVAW



North Vietnamese war veteran Nguyen Ngoc Hung presents plaque symbolizing friendship between former enemies to National Coordinator David Cline. Photo by Dayl Sage Wise. Story Starts on Page 6.



THE VETERAN Vietnam Veterans Against the War

Anniversary Issue

Volume 22

50¢

United for Action

Vets Against Aids



VVAW contingent at "United for AIDS Action" March.

DAVID CLINE
NATIONAL COORDINATOR

"Black, White, Gay, Straight--AIDS Does Not Discriminate" On July 14, chants like this rang out on the streets of New York City when over 50,000 people joined in the largest and most diverse demonstration ever held to demand governmental action to combat the growing AIDS epidemic.

While the Democratic National Convention was meeting several blocks away, the United For AIDS action march and rally demanded that the next President of the United

Homeless Vets "Stand Down"

JESS JESPERSON
MIDWEST COORDINATOR

The Stand Down has come and gone and the results are filtering in. We are trying to come up with final figures on how many vets have followed up with any of the services that were offered. While the final tally is not in yet, I can give you the following information. There were several referrals to the V.A. Hospital for further medical treatment. One vet was admitted to the psych unit and one vet did not want to be admitted. The word on the street is that the Stand Down was not a sham or lip service and we look for more participation(unfortunately) at next year's event. It is nothing short of a national disgrace that we have to provide this type of service for veterans while pleading our case with the state Legislature to provide the money to fund this type of service to the homeless veterans.

But, back to the point of this article as I could go on and on about the political implications. So far, 16 vets have been to Job Service to seek employment. This number is going up weekly, so the final figures aren't in yet. But it shows clearly that the majority of these vets want a job. I can't swallow the argument that these people are homeless by choice. I did not meet one veteran out of the 97 vets seen that wanted to live on the streets. Where this type of mentality comes from I can only guess. The vets I talked to all wanted a job, medical care, and a place to live. There has also been some medical follow up by an organization called Health Care for the Homeless. Some vets are utilizing this health care option over VA care. I can't blame them. With the history of the VA, it comes as no surprise. However, this is one time that the VA deserves a big thank you. They opened the hospital and its services to our group. Also, the event couldn't have happened without their help. They came through for us when we needed them and my hat's off to those dedicated VA employees who volunteered their time and expertise to the Stand Down.

We have money left over from our original event and are considering a mini-Stand Down for some time after the holidays. We still have plenty of clothing to give out and a stash of blankets so winter won't be quite as hard on our comrades. This event would be a one day affair. If any VVAW Chapter is interested in sponsoring an event like our Stand

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FRAGGIN'

Bill Shunas



'Now, let me get this straight. We've got the Comeback Kid against Family Values in this election. I'm not sure why Clinton wants to be known as the Comeback Kid. What's he coming back from? Maybe it's a philosophical comeback from opposition to an unjust war in Vietnam to support of an unjust war in the Gulf.

Maybe Clinton is using Comeback Kid because it sounds like the name of a Walt Disney movie, and Walt Disney movies are associated with Family Values. It's something Dan Quayle would appreciate as the title of his own biography. After all, he's come back from the pot smoking, Vietnam avoiding, law school cheating young man to become a fine upholder of values. (Maybe we should cut Dan Quayle a little slack in our criticism of his excessive patter about family values. Considering that his wife is the brains behind his career, he owes a lot to his family.)

Personally, I haven't seen a Disney movie since I went to protect Family Values in Vietnam and fight for the right of Southeast Asians to watch Leave It To Beaver. I must admit confusion, however. I'm not

exactly sure what these Family Values are. Isn't there an economic factor in here somewhere? Unless Uncle Sam provides things like universal health care, quality education and child care, Family Values are available only to wealthy and semi-wealthy. If you have the money, you can have this ideal family: Father goes off to work at a nice \$70,000 a year job every day. Mother stays home, looks pretty and raises 2.5 kids and a dog. And everyone votes Republican.

There is one good father in Washington who is upholding his family values. George Bush is always looking out for his sons. When Neil ripped off a savings and loan, Daddy made sure he got a slap on the wrist and told not to do it again. When George Jr. needed a little cash,

daddy helped his little ole oil company sign a deal with the government of Bahrain and reminded him to sell off his shares just before daddy started the Gulf War. Then like a good Dad, every once in a while he gathers the boys together, and they sit around in the video room in the

White House basement drinking soda and watching Top Gun again.

How about our real life Top Guns? Did you check out the Tailhook convention in Las Vegas last year? That's where the best and brightest of our junior naval aviators had a little party that became famous because they got a lot drunk and stripped and/or groped any young woman who happened to walk by.

The party and convention became well publicized because some of the women complained. This confused the Navy which thought that boys were supposed to be boys and girls were supposed to understand that boys were to be boys. And it confused the aviators who thought they were just upholding the esteemed Tailhook tradition.

In the aftermath of the Tailhook convention, a team of sociologists interviewed the men involved in the orgy. It was inconclusive as to whether Family Values or the lack thereof had a causal effect on this behavior; 52% came from stable families, 46% from broken homes, 2% had only a mother and one aviator appar-

ently did not have a mother. The survey also found Ross Perot was a favorite with Tailhook. However, with Perot out of the race, 78% said they would vote for Bush. The sociologists also found that 81% would support Family Values in the 1996 election. Also, when they grow up 57% will make a career in the Navy, 32% will become Yuppies, 11 will become Congressmen, 2 will become Senators, 1 will become Vice President, 7 will be convicted of drug running and 4% will tune out of society.

As far as the elections are concerned, there is the usual dilemma of trying to decide whether or not to vote, or whether to vote for some third or fourth party or whether a vote for the Democrat will get you a small break on the environment or health care or child care or maybe a semi-decent Supreme Court appointee. This year the Democrats are running their Yuppie Ticket. Maybe that would be good for the White House. We'll get a sushi bar next to the Oval Office, ferns growing on the porch, a BMW in the driveway and maybe the left wing will get rehabbed.'

Vietnam Nightmare

Vet Shot During Flashback

The Associated Press N.Y. 6/24/92

Dundee--A former Marine captain who survived two years in the jungles of Vietnam was shot to death by police after a blow to the head induced hallucinations that he was back among the enemy.

Dennis Bastin, described by relatives as "a gentle, loving man," was killed Saturday by a gunshot to the chest after firing a single load of buckshot at state troopers, police said.

Bastin, who served during Vietnam War with the 18th Reconnaissance Unit, was plunged back into wartime last Wednesday when he was hit by a rock in the forehead and knocked unconscious while mowing his lawn, police said.

He woke up speaking Vietnamese and attacked ambulance attendants and medical personnel trying to help him, said Yates County Undersheriff Richard Ackerman.

"It took eight of us to get him in the ambulance and then we had to tie him down," said an ambulance worker who asked not to be identi-

fied.

Bastin, a registered nurse and licensed physician's assistant, was restrained, and then received stitches and medicine at Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hospital in Penn Yan.

By late Thursday, he appeared to have overcome the episodes: he had no memory of being hit by the rock or of his violent behavior, according to his wife, Tobin. But 24 hours later, the ex-Marine became aggressive again.

Early Saturday, Ackerman said Bastin covered himself in camouflage paint and clothing, wrapped a banana around his head and a rope around his chest, and began speaking Vietnamese.

Armed with a 16-gauge shotgun, a 9mm pistol, a machete and a supply of ammunition, he went to the wooded area 55 miles south of Rochester where he later was killed during a standoff with state police.

"He was the perfect picture of Rambo, right down to the rope around his body," said coroner Gary Boardman.

SUPPORT NEEDED

Gulf War Resister

I thank those who have been part of the great support I have received so far! Please pass copies on.

My name is Paul E. Cook, and I am a Conscientious Objector in the Marine Corps Brig, Camp Le Jeune, NC.

My parole evaluation won't be complete for a few weeks. I'm humbly asking for letters supporting my parole, sent to my parole coordinator.

I'm gathering addresses of fellow Gulf War Vets who also have stories and photos from the war. Recently I've come in contact with at least two graphic videos from the war. We plan to get these out in the public eye, where they belong!

My own story includes becoming against needless killings and destruction in U.S. wars after being in Panama with my Marine Unit in 1989.

I was told that my beliefs were too political for C.O. status in 1990.

I got orders to Saudi Arabia during the time of war in February of 1991. In going to Saudi Arabia I refused to have a weapon or contribute except with my radio skills for medivac and

troop support.

In Saudi I was denied the use of chemical protective gear and desert uniforms. I was the only Marine singled out to wear targeting green uniforms. I was the only Conscientious Objector who spoke out in my unit.

I was forced onto the Kuwait Border where I was kept for four days "in the presence of the enemy" without the proper protective gear and uniform.

Then, as if to help justify my treatment (or to cover it up), I was charged with "failure to do the utmost to engage the enemy", which holds a max sentence of life in prison.

I plan to do all I can to support justice and peace, when I'm able to be released.

As many letters supporting my parole, as can be sent, would be greatly appreciated!

Parole Coordinator
Marine Corps Brig
Camp LeJeune, NC 28542

Please support Rep. Ron Dellums's '92 C.O. Bill.

Native Americans' Treaty Rights



'If you don't like it here in America, why don't you go back where you came from?'

DAVE KETTENHOFEN
NATIONAL COORDINATOR

As the ice melts in Northern Wisconsin the issue of the Chippewa Indian treaty rights is once again in the news. Since 1983 when the federal courts upheld the 19th century treaties in which the Chippewa retained hunting, fishing, and gathering rights on lands ceded to the U.S. in the northern third of Wisconsin, the Chippewa have been exercising their right to spearfish walleye. Each year they have been met by protests which have included racial taunts, rock throwing, and death threats.

The U.S. Constitution recognizes treaties, which are legally binding agreements made between two nations (the U.S. and the Chippewa Tribe in this case), as the "supreme law of the land." Article 5 of the Treaty between the U.S. and the Chippewa Nation of Indians made on July 29, 1837 states: "The privilege of hunting, fishing, and gathering the wild rice, upon the lands, the rivers, and the lakes included in the territory ceded, is guaranteed to the Indians, during the pleasure of the President of the United States." At that time the tribes were respected as sovereign governments and dealings took place under the guidelines of international law. Today the tribes, though no longer fully independent, maintain certain powers of sovereignty just as state governments do. The Chippewa retained their right to secure food and other necessities on ceded lands for future generations; they did not sell it nor was it granted by the federal government. Also, the 1924 Citizenship Act, which granted U.S. citizenship to Indians in addition to their Indian nation citizenship, did not void these property rights. As

evidenced by the fact that the percentage of Indian troops serving in the Persian Gulf War was almost double the percentage of Indians in the general population, they have not shirked their duties as U.S. citizens.

Contrary to environmental concerns voiced by some of the anti-treaty protesters the Chippewa have been working hand in hand with natural resource agencies to ensure proper management of the off-reservation resources. They have harvest regulations, biological programs to restock waters, and wardens to monitor compliance to regulations. Of the 7431 Chippewa in Northern Wisconsin only 200 to 400 participate in the spearfishing season - they are not wantonly depleting the walleye population.

Treaty rights may also prove to be beneficial to all people in the area when it comes to long term environmental concerns. Multinational corporations are targeting Northern Wisconsin for copper sulfide mines, cyanide leaching plants, and dumpsites for radioactive nuclear waste. The Chippewa are using the treaties to slow or block these projects that are destructive to the environment. The mining pollution would endanger fish, game, and wild rice, thereby violating their rights to obtain food and ultimately everyone's.

The anti-Indian, anti-treaty movement has been extremely vocal in Northern Wisconsin. The organizations involved have names that suggest concern with resource protection and human rights but their real aim is to dissolve the treaties and terminate the reservations. The many regional groups fall under a national umbrella organization called CERA (Citizens' Equal Rights Alliance). Each year they show up at the boat landings to protest the spearfishing. Chippewa fishermen have been hit with rocks and their boats swamped. Some of the written and verbal taunts include: "Timber nigger"; "Save a walleye; spear a squaw"; "Spear a pregnant squaw; save two walleye";

and "Custer had the right idea". Many Indians and their supporters have been threatened with violence and assaulted and battered. As a result, large numbers of law enforcement officials have had to patrol the areas to assure the safety of the fishermen. Since 1987 the state has spent \$6.2 million on enforcement and arrested more than 200 protesters in 1989 and 1990. The protesters have cost taxpayers \$49.83 for each walleye speared by the Indians since 1985!

On January 8, 1992 Federal Judge Barbara Crabb permanently banned spearfishing opponent Dean Crist and his group, Stop Treaty Abuse/Wisconsin, from interfering with Chippewa spearers; he is appealing though. This decision coupled with the somewhat smaller crowds last year have led the state to dramatically cut back on its projected peacekeeping force for the 1992 season. However, many people feel this action may be premature.

Members of the Midwest Treaty Network, an alliance group which supports the Chippewa treaty rights, will be on hand at the landings to serve as nonviolent witnesses to the activities. They will document protest actions and offer a peaceful counter-presence as in previous years.

Update

In early May I had the opportunity to observe the Chippewa spearfishing season near the Lac du Flambeau Indian Reservation in Northern Wisconsin. As a participant with Witness for Non-Violence I went to the boat landings to observe and record any anti-treaty protest activity that may occur.

Fortunately for the Chippewa there was very little protest activity this year. They were able to go about their business peacefully without outside interference from drunken racists. The Department of Natural Resources and the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission had wardens at the landings to record the fish taken and to insure that there were no violations on the part of the spearfishermen. Activities went on as they were meant to.

The Chippewa appear to have won the battle for now. The Department of Natural Resources spent only \$41,939 patrolling the lakes this year compared to \$204,000 last year and \$517,500 in 1990 so the taxpayers won too. However, a number of chambers of commerce and individuals are currently raising thousands of dollars to finance the appeal of federal court injunctions against the protesters. The struggle goes on.

For the last 500 years the powers that be have pushed and shoved the Indians to the most barren and remote lands that could be found and they are still not satisfied. The multinational mining corporations and those looking to dump nuclear waste now want those lands too. First they tried treaty rights and failed. What will be the next front? The Indians and their supporters and better not become complacent because there will certainly be more attacks.

Casualty of War Incarcerated Veterans Not Just a Statistic

The United States government and most of the general public at large do recognize the obvious casualties of the Vietnam Conflict (War). This includes such casualties as the over 58,000 Vietnam veterans who lost their lives, and the hundreds of thousands who were either wounded or disabled during the Vietnam War. However, there are numerous other casualties of the war that tend to be only recognized by the Vietnam veterans and families of Vietnam veterans. The VVAW and other veterans' organizations are in constant struggle to make the general public and our government aware of these casualties and to take action to deal with the problems.

Take for instance the over 2,400 POW/MIA's still unaccounted for in Southeast Asia, as well as in Russia, if the information we have recently obtained is true. Then you have the families of these POW/MIA'S who live in constant emotional upheaval, as they wonder and worry daily if their loved ones are still alive and suffering somewhere in southeast Asia and/or Russia.

Of course there are the families who will never be able to fill the void left behind by the loved ones who gave their lives in Vietnam.

How about the Vietnam veterans and their offspring who have been adversely affected by Agent Orange. Some of whom have already died. Drug and alcohol abuse run rampant and are common among Vietnam veterans. Some acquired their habits while still in Southeast Asia. Almost all Vietnam veterans suffer from PTSD in one form or another. Those who suffer severely with PTSD either end up being hospitalized or in extensive psycho-therapy programs. Then there are those who seem to have adjusted to their re-entry to society quite well on the outside, yet are haunted daily by ghosts and experiences they encountered while in Vietnam.

You have homeless veterans, not only from the Vietnam era but World War II, Korean Conflict (War), Panama Conflict and even Desert Storm, who for whatever reason find themselves in appalling conditions and circumstances. This is shocking as this is the richest and most powerful nation in the world. These men fought so very hard in far away lands, that the people of those countries would not have to endure what they now find themselves having to endure right here in the United States of America.

I believe with all my heart that the incarcerated Vietnam veterans are as much casualties of the Vietnam War, as are the POW/MIA's. You must always remember they gave all they had once for all of us.

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The Veteran

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AIDS

States provide the country with positive leadership in the fight against this deadly disease by providing adequate healthcare for those affected, and intensive research effort to find a cure, a massive grassroots educational campaign to prevent the further spread of HIV and federal legislation to end discrimination against those who have AIDS.

The march was a massive display of outrage from those affected by the epidemic and those who care. Contingents of community groups marched along with labor unions and church groups. ACT-UP had a contingent of 1000. Gay, health care and women's groups joined in. And VVAW was there.

AIDS began epidemic proportions around 1980, the year that Ronald Reagan began his first term as President. For the 8 years that he was in office and throughout George Bush's administration, the record of federal government (in)action has been dismal. It took Reagan almost 4 years to even acknowledge that there was a problem and there are still no meaningful federal programs for healthcare, research or prevention. Instead we have received a barrage of rhetoric about "traditional values" aimed at blaming those who suffer while the Center for Disease Control conducts useless studies much like they have done about Agent Orange.

Meanwhile thousands continue to die and more are infected daily. Since 1981, over 140,000 Americans have died from AIDS. That's more casualties than the number of GI's killed in the Korean, Vietnam and Persian Gulf wars combined. AIDS

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Homeless

Down, contact: JESS JESPERSEN, 3217 N. MARIETTA AVE., MILWAUKEE, WI 53211 414-961-1253 We can provide the organizational plans for an event such as the Stand Down. Hopefully, this plan will help reduce the labor that goes into a Stand Down by providing a blueprint so you won't have to start from ground zero. The event has also brought a diverse groups of veterans service organizations which is a must for smooth operation and it gives people from different organizations the chance to meet and work together. The importance of that is obvious. If we are to keep our benefits we must band together and fight the common enemy; an apathetic Federal government that wants us to die off and leave them alone to waste more lives and money. It's time we looked for commonalities among us rather than a bunch of small groups hung up on differences. We've been working at cross purposes long enough. ALL VETERANS MUST UNITE AND KICK ASS WHERE NECESSARY!!!!!! Respectfully submitted, Jess Jespersen, Midwest Regional Coordinator VVAW



Section of National AIDS Quilt in memory of VVAW leader Clarence Fitch

who died of AIDS in 1990.

is now a worldwide epidemic, spreading rapidly in Africa, Latin America, Europe and now Asia. It is estimated that in the next 8 years there will be 10 million AIDS cases and 40 million men, women and children infected with HIV throughout the world.

When AIDS first came to public attention, many looked the other way because it was "only" affecting gay men. Now the virus is spreading among all sections of the population. Increasingly hard hit are the Black, Latino and working class communities where the disease is often spread through intravenous drug use. The number of HIV positive women is skyrocketing from sexual relations with infected partners.

Coming from these communities,

many of us see the ravages of this disease every day. And many veterans have contracted the virus as a direct result of their Vietnam combat experiences. A large number of GI's came home addicted to drugs and others, suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress, turned to drugs as a means of "self-medication". Now an abnormally high number of veterans are suffering from AIDS and many lie in VA hospitals, often abandoned by family members and friends due to the stigma attached to this disease.

Although the veteran community has been hard hit, veterans groups have been slow to respond. VVAW was the only vets organization to join the United For AIDS Action demonstration. At the march, hundreds came up to express appreciation for our presence. A number of Vietnam,

WWII and more recent vets marched in contingent.

We marched on July 14 in memory of Clarence Fitch and all the other brothers and sisters who have died and we marched to raise our voices in unity to demand action for those still living. There is a struggle for justice taking place in this country today, and the fight against AIDS is one of the battlefronts.

Vets of Vietnam

Korean G.I.'s Die of Agent Orange

From Summer 1992 **Vietnam Today**-Newsletter of the US/Vietnam Friendship Association.

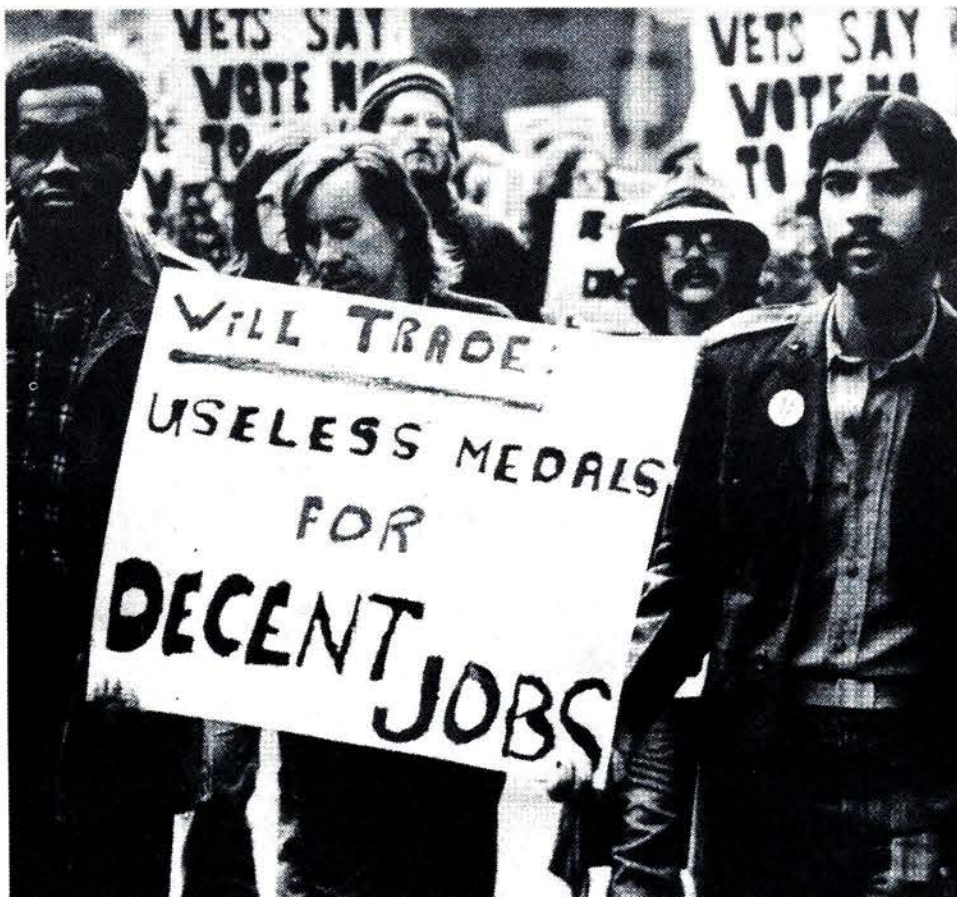
The South Korean Veterans of Foreign Wars Association reported April 28 that over 50 veterans of the US war in Vietnam died from exposure to the Agent Orange herbicide used by the Pentagon during the war.

According to the Association, since January 512 veterans have reported that they were suffering from various diseases they believed were caused by exposure to Agent Orange.

Among the reported symptoms were weakness of the limbs, skin disorders (chloracne), numbness and partial paralysis, but medical treatment has been poor because their illnesses were not properly diagnosed. Dr. Lee In Ho of the Veterans Hospital said he believed at least another 500 Korean veterans were suffering from exposure to the defoliant.

Under US pressure, some 312,000 South Korean troops were sent by their government to fight in Vietnam, alongside Americans and other allied forces during the war; defense ministry figures in Seoul signify 4,624 were killed in action.

US veterans have been seeking compensation for their Agent Orange-related health problems, but with little success.



For Peace & Justice

Why I am Fasting



Dave Dellinger address the VVAW 25th Anniversary luncheon. Photo by Dave Kettenhofen.

by Dave Dellinger

On September First I am starting a water-only fast that will continue for at least 21 days. On September Twenty-First I will take stock and decide whether to continue longer, as my colleagues Brian Willson, Scott Rutherford, Karen Fogliatti, Teresa Fitzgibbon, Don Cunningham and Jack Ryan plan to do. They plan to fast until October 12, "Columbus Day." Like them I am fasting to reflect on--and call attention to--what five hundred years of the greed-oriented Columbus Enterprise have meant, and still mean, to the people and ecology of the United States and the world. And like them I fast to remember and draw strength from those who have resisted injustice and tried to live in tune with Mother Earth and their fellows. Meanwhile, here are some of my preliminary reflections on the context and purposes of the fast.

A lot of people wonder how things can be so bad in this country and so little is being done to change them. But in reality there is a lot more rebellion and experimentation with positive ways of relating to one another than meets the casual eye or is given proper attention by the media. The military-corporate elite and its two do-nothing political parties are sitting on a volcano of public discontent that is bound to erupt. More accurately, they are sitting on a whole series of fault lines beneath the surface of today's society. And the time is approaching when one of the inevitable eruptions

will start a whole series of explosions, as when the refusal of Rosa Parks to go to the back of a segregated bus led to the Montgomery Bus Boycott, sit-ins, Freedom Rides and the unexpected explosions of the Sixties.

Unlike the Sixties, which set the artificial standards by which most people judge today's degree of activity, no single demand dominates today's rebels or attracts public attention the way that civil rights and then opposition to the Vietnam War dominated the revolts that took place from 1956 to 1973. Instead, the areas of activity have grown until, like Heinz, there are fifty-seven varieties. Not everyone goes to the same city on the same weekend to shout the same slogans and this makes it easier for the media to claim that "the days of social revolt are over." But to understand the media's reasons for saying this, consider that they intoned this message all through the Seventies when the women's movement was gaining energy, recruits and momentum. And when the beginnings of a dynamic movement for the rights of Lesbians and Gays were visible, a movement that by now is gaining increased public support and winning at least a few ordinances in defense of their civil rights. But the media had learned in the Sixties that it is dangerous to their interests and the interests of other corporate entities for people to believe in the power of non-violent that goes beyond voting, lobbying and writing letters to Congress. Ever since, they have worked to convince the public that

there is no hope that demonstrations and civil disobedience will effect any major changes in the society. A few new Band-aids, yes, but no fundamental shifts in power and policy.

Now that the Soviet Union has collapsed, what are we going to do about the United States? Will we accept the propaganda of our power elites that "our system is triumphant" and should be established all over the world, with the U.S. as Superpower? Or will we admit that our system has failed too, depriving millions of their basic human rights, from food, housing, health care and jobs to a safe and healthy environment? From meaningful work that can support a family to an honest government and realistic participation in the decisions that affect their lives? During the period in which the Soviet Union was falling apart, The U.S. had a doubling of billionaires and of the homeless. Shall we pretend that the children of billionaires and the children of the homeless are "born equal" and that this is a democracy? Between 1980 and 1985 more children died from diseases related to poverty than the total number of U.S. combat deaths in the Vietnam War. And in the United States, the rate of Black incarceration is six times that of whites. Shall we conclude that Blacks have a proclivity for criminality in their genes? Or that the economy, culture and system of "justice" are criminally racist? And what of the Gulf War, the Iran-Contra scandal and U.S.-trained death squads in Central America?

I could continue with a whole carload of examples. But I won't, because at one level of their consciousness most people know these realities--and much, much more along the same lines. The real question is what are we going to do about them? When will the volcano that the government is so fearfully sitting on erupt, as the Soviet volcano erupted, because people will no longer tolerate such conditions?

One of the purposes of my fast is to encourage the development of nonviolent movement that will have the power of a volcano without its mindful destructiveness, a life-giving movement that will be thoughtful, empowering, and productive. I will be rededicating myself to some principles that were enunciated by Martin Luther King Jr. in the last few months of his life. His espousal of these principles marked a dramatic new stage in his awareness and activities. They made him so dangerous to the established power elite that elements within it arranged for his assassination. Here are the principles and insights as King articulated them and as I have selected them from a number of his last talks and articles.

"For years I labored with the idea of reforming the existing institutions... a little change here, a little change there. Now I feel quite differently. I think you've got to have a reconstruction of the entire society, a revolution of values... Power must be relocated, a radical restructuring of power must take place... We can't have a system where some people

live in superfluous, inordinate wealth, while others live in abject, deadening poverty. From now on, our movement must take on basic class issues between the privileged and the underprivileged... The evils of capitalism are as real as the evils of militarism and evils of racism... We... must work out programs to bring the social change movements through from their early and now inadequate protest phase to a stage of massive, active, nonviolent resistance to the evils of the modern system.

Nonviolent protest must now mature to new level... mass civil disobedience... There must be more than a statement to the larger society, there must be a force that interrupts its functioning at some key point.

The movement that we need must include both the kind of nonviolent resistance to the status quo that King called for and imaginative experiments in positive forms of human relatedness. We must develop programs and institutions that are based on respect for the dignity and ultimate sanctity of every human being, regardless of race, age, sex, sexual orientation, abilities, skills and whatever mistakes or crimes that some people may have committed. Even crimes? Some of society's victims do terrible things that are deplorable even though they harm far fewer people than the crimes of our present society and its rulers. But as Judge David Bazelon has written: "Society should be as alarmed by the silent misery of those who accept their plight as it is by the violence of those who do not."

In a similar vein, *The New Yorker* wrote concerning the April, 1992, riots in Los Angeles: "But what, as a nation, did we really expect? The residents of our inner cities have for many years now been unable to lay claim to our sense of common humanity and simple decency. On what basis can we expect to suddenly lay claim to theirs?"

Finally, Martin King once said to me: "we don't have to like everyone but we won't solve our problems if we don't love them." From time to time during the fast, my colleagues and I will attempt to spell out some of the concrete steps through which we think that these principles--and that kind of love--can be implemented. But the task is one that will require the combined trial-and-error efforts of many hearts, minds and lives, with many experiments in applying the principles within one's own community and in one's own relationships as well as in programs for the overall society. To those who are already involved in such efforts, I say "thanks and Godspeed. Let us do our best to work together, whatever our differences on details of strategy or tactics." To those who have yearned for the kind of society that King had in mind but have held back for lack of hope that it can be accomplished in today's world, I invite you to join us in these efforts. As I once heard a wise person say: "If you tell me that what I propose will take a thousand years to accomplish, that's all the more reason for starting this afternoon."

Remember VVA

by Joe Miller, N.O. Staff

Tears and laughter, joy and pain, mixed with fond memories and new resolve at VVAW'S 25th Anniversary celebration in New York City during the last weekend in May. Months of hard, often frustrating preparation culminated in a near-flawless series of events that reconnected many former comrades and established new friendships.

I will report on what I witnessed at this gathering, and since everyone came away from New York with different stories, I would encourage other participants to submit pieces for future publication during this 25th year of VVAW's existence.

For me and for the group I traveled with, it began as we boarded a train at Chicago's Union Station on Thursday evening, May 28th. Our group included John Lindquist, Annie Bailey, Dave and Pat Kettenhofen (from Milwaukee), Bill Branson, Barry Romo, Maude De Victor, Mike Woloshin (from Chicago), and me (from Champaign, Illinois). We had at least thirteen hours on the train ahead of us, so we quickly got down to socializing in the club car following dinner. There was a real mood of celebration among us, though at times we would show our apprehension about the upcoming events by wondering aloud how many would actually show up. This minor fear passed, pushed aside by the friendly banter and friendlier drinks, and we felt part of a great adventure.

Most of us didn't get much sleep on the train; we were rather excited by our self-generated party atmosphere---even through breakfast. By the time the train pulled into Pennsylvania Station, we knew we were going to have a wonderful time with old and new friends over the next couple of days.

All except John and Annie squeezed onto a limo which took us to The Vista Hotel---command and control central for the weekend. There was a minor hitch when we arrived, in that the rooms for many of us were not yet ready, so Jack McCloskey volunteered to lead us to a neighborhood pub. We certainly needed more to drink after closing down the club car the night before...some of us.

It was a fairly long walk, but we all made it. As soon as we stepped inside, it was apparent that this was not the most desirable place to have a drink and talk. There were loud arguments going on around us, and it seemed as if fights were going to break out any moment. We attempted to establish a small oasis of calm as we ordered our various beverages; we just wanted to clear out of the place as soon as possible.

On the way back to the hotel, I



Top: NYC VVAW members Joe and Donna Cross conduct Native American Purification Ritual at the Vietnam Veterans memorial. Photo by Dayl Sage Wise. **Middle:** Vietnam's Ambassador to the United Nations Nguyen Can addresses the Anniversary luncheon speaking about the special friendship between the Vietnamese and Vietnam Veterans. Photo by Dayl Sage Wise. **Bottom:** Ed Damato MC's the Anniversary luncheon. Photo by Joe Miller.

Congratulations from City of New York Office of Mayor

May 30, 1992

Vietnam Veterans Against the War
101 West 31st Street
New York, NY 10001

Dear Members, Families, Friends,
and Comrades of Vietnam Veterans
Against the War:

I am proud to be able to welcome you on behalf of all New Yorkers to this 25th Anniversary Celebration of the Founding of Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW). Appropriately founded here in New York City in 1967, VVAW was the first organization of Vietnam Veterans established to oppose the war in Southeast Asia. Some of the most memorable actions to demonstrate that vigorous and courageous dissent occurred here in New York City.

VVAW enabled Vietnam veterans to participate as full partners in the broad spectrum of opposition to our nations' involvement in that tragic war, and to do so with pride and honor. Through its activities, VVAW engendered the recognition by members of the peace movement that opposition to unjust government policies should not result in disavowing support for the soldier.

In the aftermath of US involvement in Southeast Asia VVAW remained in the forefront of the veterans' movement. It was the first organization to call attention to the effects of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and the health problems related to exposure to Agent Orange and other herbicides. VVAW has continued to work for peace and social justice at home and abroad, promoting civil rights, environmental issues, Native American sovereignty and justice for veterans and conscientious objectors; to seek reconciliation with the peoples of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia; to work against military intervention overseas from Grenada to Nicaragua, El Salvador, Panama, and the Middle East; and to act in solidarity with anti-war and progressive veterans and conscientious objectors in South Africa, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Israel.

As the Mayor of New York City I extend congratulations to you for your groundbreaking efforts and wish you continued vibrant health as a progressive veterans' organization. It is important to this city and nation that your voice continue to be heard.

Thank you for being there, and here, and have a great weekend in New York City.

Sincerely,

[signed]

David N. Dinkins
MAYOR

Peace and Recommitment at VVAW's 25th Anniversary

chatted with a couple of early VVAW members who had traveled all the way from Santa Cruz to join in the celebration. They told me how pleased they were to make the trip. Originally, rather apprehensive about what they would find when they arrived, they had decided that, if they strolled into the hotel and found a bunch of scraggly, beer-bellied vets, wearing cammies with POW-MIA patches on them, they'd turn right around and head back to California. It was clear they hadn't kept up with VVAW over the years, but they were glad to make the reconnection, and to find that the organization still stood for the same things more than twenty years later. This feeling was a continuing theme throughout the weekend's events.

After we got back to the hotel to find that our rooms were indeed ready, those of us who had not yet settled in took our bags upstairs and prepared for the informal reception that was to take place a couple of hours later. There were many jokes made about the top quality rooms we were given; they were very plush. And, those of us who were fortunate enough to be situated on the 21st floor learned that we had open access to a VIP lounge one floor below. All we had to do was sign in, jot down our room number, and get free drinks and various munchies (for breakfast, coffee and rolls). Not being used to this sort of "high class" living, there was some reticence about using these services--some of us felt: "There must be some mistake. They're going to toss us out of here any moment." But it never happened, so we invited those "less fortunate" than us, those who weren't located on the 21st floor, to partake of all these goodies along with us. The people who worked in that lounge were very gracious toward all of us--as were the staff throughout the hotel. We were not looked down upon or mistreated in any way. All in all, we felt very welcome.

The reception was scheduled to start around 8:00 pm Friday, so after a free drink or two, we began to wander over to the restaurant. The weather was great, so these various walks we had to take were quite pleasant. As our group arrived at O'Hara's, some of the New York/New Jersey people were already there. Ed Damato and Terry Selzer were there to greet us--many hugs and handshakes all around. Soon the place began to fill. People who had not seen each other for many years reestablished friendships. Others became new friends. One welcome surprise for me in this was the opportunity to reconnect with a couple of old friends who were not Vietnam vets, but people I worked with in the Australia-Vietnam Society

while I was teaching in Australia during 1979-1983. Ben Kiernan and his wife Chanthou Boua, specialists in the study of Cambodian politics and society, came down from New Haven for the celebration. In fact, Chanthou was going to give one of the twenty-five toasts to VVAW at Saturday's luncheon. This was one of the great moments of the weekend for me, seeing these friends after so many years.

Bill Ehrhart is another friend who showed up at this reception. I have only known Bill since we participated in a conference together in 1988, but I have been reading his poetry since 1972. Among the new friends, was Fritz Efaw, the Vietnam war resister who was nominated for the Vice-Presidency by Ron Kovic at the Democratic convention in 1976. Fritz and I chatted for some time, along with another new friend, Dave Ewing, an early VVAW member and now a veterans' rights advocate with Swords to Plowshares in California.

This is the way the evening went. Pleasant conversation with old and new friends, some food and drink, and a lot of laughter. This proved to be a great portent for the rest of the weekend; we were all keyed up to make this anniversary a great celebration. By this time, we were hearing that nearly three hundred people had signed up for the next day's luncheon--we all looked forward to Saturday now.

There were four major events scheduled for Saturday, May 30th. First, we were to collect at New York's Vietnam Veterans Memorial for an interdenominational service to honor the dead of all nations resulting from U.S. military involvement in Southeast Asia, Central America, and the Middle East. Following this, we would march to Battery Park for a Peace and Justice rally where we would hear remarks from a range of people on the theme "Fight for the living, give voice to the powerless!" Next, we would hold our celebration luncheon, with twenty-five toasts to VVAW, at St. Francis Xavier High School. Finally, that night, a benefit concert was scheduled, with Country Joe McDonald as a featured performer. So it looked like we would be very, very busy.

Saturday morning, around 9:30, those of us staying at the Vista stepped off in a ragged walk-march toward the New York Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Since the memorial is located south and east of the New York Stock Exchange (we all took wry note of this fact) it didn't take very long to get there from the World Trade Center.

As we approached I was a little surprised. I had always thought that the memorial was situated right in the heart of the busiest section of the city, right on the street. On the

contrary, it sits well off the street and is surrounded by a large plaza.

The memorial itself is made of glass blocks which have taken on a sort of olive drab hue over the years. All around the massive structure are carved words from letters that GI's wrote from Vietnam. As you read these words from the past, it is easy to feel the fear, confusion, anger, and idealism that were a central part of that war for many of us.

More people were beginning to crowd into the plaza for our memorial for the casualties on all sides caused by U.S. interventions from Indochina through to the Persian Gulf.

The flags of nearly twenty countries were held by VVAW members as a living backdrop for the speakers. There were the flags of Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Grenada, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Libya, Lebanon, Iraq, and the U.S., among others.

In front of this line of flags was a huge banner commemorating the twenty-five years of VVAW's existence. My buddy Dave Carr (Pittsburgh) who had been with VVAW in 1971 during Dewey Canyon III was one of those holding this banner. Also set up next to the microphone was a large black coffin.

The crowd had grown to at least a couple of hundred by this time. Old friends were greeting each other with hugs and handshakes. I noticed Dave Dellinger ambling through the crowd, and I walked up to say hello. We had not seen each other for a few years. He greeted me early, and we chatted for a few minutes before the service began. I had heard Dave had been very ill, but that he was determined to be here on our anniversary as he has long been a solid supporter of VVAW. In fact, the commemorative journal produced for this 25th anniversary starts off with some remarks Dave made in 1966 concerning the need for an alliance between the civilian peace movement and the young people sent off to fight in Vietnam. We in VVAW hold Dave in very high regard.

About this time, Dave Cline, a VVAW National Coordinator, called for people to move in a little closer so the service could start. This began with a blessing and prayer from a Native American couple--he had served in Vietnam. After his remarks, his wife addressed the crowd about the importance of women, particularly women of color, in our continuing struggle for peace and justice. We also heard from a Gold Star Mother whose son died in Vietnam. She expressed her joy at being a part of this anniversary, to remember her son and others who died in U.S. sponsored wars.

A Black Muslim minister, also a Vietnam veteran, talked to us about

being brought to VVAW by Clarence Fitch, our comrade who died in 1990. He reminded us of the day-to-day struggles of people of color, such as the L.A. rebellion, for peace and justice in this country. Daniel Berrigan, longtime antiwar activist priest and poet, read from some of his antiwar writings. We also heard words of welcome from Peter Mahoney, VVAW member, who was instrumental in getting the New York Vietnam Memorial built.

A particularly moving moment for many of us was when former North Vietnamese Army soldier, Hung, stepped to the microphone to thank us for being there and for our continuing efforts toward peace and reconciliation with Vietnam. He then presented VVAW with a piece of handicraft as a gift from the people of Vietnam. This seemed to encapsulate just what the memorial service was meant to be.

The service ended with each of those holding flags walking up to the black coffin where VVAW members John Ketwig and Maude De Victor stood. The placards with casualty figures were handed to John and Maude, who read off the number and placed the placards, one by one, inside the coffin.

We were then asked to line up behind the flags for the march to Battery Park. We were a colorful and lively group as we made our way down Water Street. People on the street and in cars along the way strained to see what we were about. Our banners and flags drew many friendly smiles from passersby, and supportive honks sounded from cars along the route.

It took a while to get everyone into the park and situated in front of the stage set up facing the Statue of Liberty across the harbor. Annie Bailey, the rally's M.C., got everyone's attention and started the parade of speakers and entertainers. These included Christine Kelly and Country Joe, both of whom were to be central performers at the benefit concert that night. Barry Romo spoke of the history and continuing relevance of VVAW in these days of Bush's "New World Order." Bobby Muller, of the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation and early VVAW member, drew cheers and applause with his acknowledgment of the central importance of VVAW in antiwar efforts and the fight for reconciliation with Vietnam. Dave Dellinger brought everyone to their feet when he loudly declared, "VVAW has always been at the cutting edge of the peace and justice movement!" The crowd also heard from VVAW member and Special Forces vet, Greg Payton, who added his voice to the call for support the struggles of

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Bob Muller speaking at VVAW rally in Batty Park. Photo by Dayl Sage Wise.

people of color for real justice. We heard from many other speakers during this noontime rally. The energy of their words was transmitted to and reflected in the attentive crowd. This was not simply the stuff of remembrance, but of a recommitment to the original goals of VVAW, for which we have been fighting continuously since 1967. I was standing off to the side of the crowd with Ben Kiernan, Chanthou Boua, and their small son. Ben and Chanthou expressed strong admiration for VVAW in their comments to me as one speaker after another sang the praises of the organization.

That afternoon, after a short break, we made our way to St. Francis Xavier High School on Sixteenth Street, for the National Celebration/Reunion luncheon. In many

ways, this was the centerpiece of the weekend's events. Nearly three hundred people--veterans, family members, and political friends of VVAW--participated in this luncheon.

As I walked into the hall, I saw many of the people who were with us at the morning memorial service and the noontime rally. In addition, other friends were already there, preparing to make this a memorable event for all of us. There were tables set up toward the back of the hall with an impressive range of souvenirs from the anniversary. This area was the first stop for many of the participants, buying t-shirts, sweatshirts, videos, and other items of remembrance.

Dave Carr and I located a spot just forward of the middle of the area

where we thought we'd be best able to see the speakers clearly. The long tables set up for lunch were filling up quickly. More kids were running around than at the earlier events. This was clearly a family event, the "family" of VVAW and the family members of VVAW comrades and friends.

The ever-present video cameras were set up just in front of the speaker's platform (anniversary organizers had arranged for every minute of the weekend's events to be videotaped). Brightly-colored banners from various VVAW campaigns were spread across the walls as a backdrop for the speakers. There were kegs of beer and other free drinks along one side of the room, there was a lot of thirst in this crowd, which had done a great amount of walking earlier in the day.

Here again, people who had not been at earlier events were meeting old friends. Family members were being introduced to old buddies for the first time in many cases. I saw Bobby Muller sitting up in front of the stage chatting with Jan Barry. I first met Bobby at a conference on Vietnam that was held in Wales in 1988. After the comments he made about VVAW during the noon rally, I had to go up and say hello and thank him for being there. As a VVAW member since 1970 who had not really had the opportunity to participate in any of the most historic events, I must say I was feeling a little overwhelmed with the atmosphere of "history" in the hall that afternoon.

More than this, we were not simply a collection of breathing (some barely) historical relics. Most of us in the room had been politically active for more than twenty years; the energy level was still high. The continued comradeship, through all the various twists and turns of our political activism, was still evident. We continued to be thorns in the side of the status quo; we were baptized (with a nod to the Mother Cabrini Brigade) into social and political activism during one of the most intense periods of U.S. history. We were not going to fade away---this was clear on that Saturday afternoon.

Ed Damato announced that the meal was ready, and people began to enter the chow line. The organizers put together a great meal; the atmosphere was like a huge indoor family picnic.

As people were finishing lunch, Barry Romo began the series of twenty-five toasts to commemorate this anniversary. I do not recall the exact order of speakers and I will try to reconstruct as much as I can about the toasts.

Country Joe led us off with a song. This was an enthusiastic sing-along, and it got everyone into the spirit of the event. Jan Barry, one of the founding members of VVAW, also greeted all of us, congratulating us (and VVAW) on our longevity.

One of the early speakers was the Vietnamese Ambassador to the United Nations. While each toast was limited to five minutes (since we had so many), the Ambassador's

remarks went on for about fifteen. Some in the audience began to get a little agitated, but we were generally polite. What else should one expect from a career diplomat? I thought! Romo's view was that the Vietnamese people had suffered nearly fifteen years of U.S. aggression, so we could surely put up with fifteen minutes of diplomatic speechmaking.

We were all greeted by Abe Weisburg of *The Guardian*, Arthur Kinoy of the Center for Constitutional Rights, Bobby Muller, Florence Volkman Pincus (PTSD pioneer), Elena Schwolsky-Fitch (widow of Clarence), Coca Crystal of the Emma Goldman Brigade, Fritz Efaw, Dave Dellinger, Bill Ehrhart, Chanthou Boua, Bill Davis, and Maude De Victor, among many others. I must say a little about Maude's comments.

Maude, who had helped blow the lid off VA efforts to hide Agent Orange effects, moved everyone in the hall with her kind words about VVAW. As she recalled those awful days after she had been fired from her VA position for whistleblowing, she spoke about how VVAW members in Chicago were always there for her. She remembered when she had no work and VVAW was there to provide her and her family with groceries. As she thanked VVAW for efforts in her behalf, we were remembering Maude's efforts on behalf of Vietnam veterans who had been poisoned by their own government through herbicide use in the war. She thanked VVAW for saving her life during those dark days. As she finished speaking, we all stood up cheering and applauding to thank Maude for attempting to save many of us from government neglect and denial and for continuing to speak out about mistreatment of veterans by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Before we ended the afternoon with a huge cake decorated with the VVAW symbol, we once again stood up as a body to thank the organizers of the weekend's events and the workers who had put together the meal. Singled out for our particular appreciation was Laurie Sandow of New York who nearly singlehandedly pulled this whole celebration together.

It was late in the afternoon before many of us managed to get back to the Vista. Some went off to see the sights, some went off to seek out a place for dinner before the concert that night, while many of us just went back to our rooms to take a short rest from a very busy day.

The benefit concert was scheduled for eight o'clock at Wetlands Preserve, halfway between the World Trade Center and Greenwich Village. The featured performer was to be Country Joe McDonald, who had been with us for every event. In addition, Christine Kelly and her group were to perform, as were a couple of former members of Blue Oyster Cult backed up by a local New Wave Band.

A small group of us walked from the hotel to the club. Though rain had threatened earlier in the day, the weather remained pleasant, so the

VVAW 25th ANNIVERSARY ORDER FORM

	QUANTITY	(\$)	ITEM TOTAL
<input type="checkbox"/> Buttons (Black and Red)	\$ 1.00 each		
<input type="checkbox"/> Stickers (Black on Silver Foil)	4 for \$1.00		
<input type="checkbox"/> T-Shirts	\$12.00 each		
Black (___ Small ___ Large ___ X-Large)			
Red (___ Small ___ Large ___ X-Large)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Sweatshirts	\$22.00 each		
Black (___ Small ___ Large ___ X-Large)			
<input type="checkbox"/> 25th Anniversary Journals	\$10.00 each		
<input type="checkbox"/> Frisbees	\$4.00 each, 3 for \$10.00		
<input type="checkbox"/> Winter Soldier Investigation (1972) videotape	\$25.00 each		
<input type="checkbox"/> Free Fire Zone—Short Stories by Vietnam Veterans (1973) Edited by Wayne Karlin, Basil T. Paquet and Larry Rottmann	\$5.00 each		
<input type="checkbox"/> DeMilitarized Zones—Veterans After Vietnam (1976) Edited by Jan Barry and W.D. Ehrhart	\$5.00 each		

SHIPPING AND HANDLING
ORDERS UNDER \$50.00 — \$2.50
ORDERS OVER \$50.00 — \$5.00
SPECIAL ORDERS — PLEASE INQUIRE

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Telephone—Home (_____) _____
Work (_____) _____



VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR, INC.
25th ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE
P.O. Box 408594, Chicago, IL 60640
(312) 327-5756

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



L to R, David Cline, Greg Payton and Maude DeVictor at NYC Vietnam Veterans memorial. Photo by Gene Glazer.

walk was enjoyable. The club was decorated in a sixties motif, with day-glo posters in the downstairs rooms. This was not just for us in VVAW; it was the permanent style of the club and was quite a treat.

People were buying drinks and munchies and listening to Christine Kelly's group when we arrived. Everyone was having a great time, young and old alike. This was a real party atmosphere—not much talking of politics here, even if you could hear what the other person was saying. Jack McCloskey was helping Country Joe sell souvenirs, in between drinking and dancing. More hugs and handshakes as new groups of people arrived.

The entertainment was perfect for such a high-energy day and evening. The place was packed very soon, so those of us who were into the music just stood in a mass and jumped up and down. Ben and Chanthou brought their young son, and they had great time dancing in the small corner we had.

By the time Country Joe came on, we were all ready for him. He sang all the favorites, including "Fixin'-to-die Rag" and "Kiss My Ass," as well as new stuff off his latest recordings. It was a massive sing-along and dance-along. For many of us in our mid or late forties, we did not feel our age at all. This was an anniversary party, after all, though to see us all bopping around, you couldn't tell that we had been around for twenty-five years. Who needs Ger-

itol? Political activism and comradeship can keep you young. Even Dave Dellinger was hopping around a little that night; I think he was trying to show us up.

Around 12:30 or 1:00 am, some of us decided to head back for the hotel. There was still one more event Sunday morning. While most of the group I traveled with from Chicago were going back on an earlier train, I wouldn't be leaving until Sunday evening. I told Barry that I would go to the session on "Reflections" to see what happened. This would help me to tie up the whole weekend, I felt.

This final event was scheduled to begin at 10:00 am on Sunday morning. Dave Carr and I decided we would go, so we each checked out of our rooms early and met up at St. Paul's Chapel. The skies had finally opened up after holding back for us all day Saturday. It was pouring.

When we arrived at the Chapel, the video crew was setting up, and only a very few others had arrived. Eventually, around 50 or 60 of us filled up the first few pews.

Country Joe was there, as were Annie Hirschman, Annie Luginbill, Laurie Sandow, Joe Bangert, Peggy Kerry (John's sister), Bill Ehrhart, Jack McCloskey, Dave Cline, and Ben Chitty, among many others. Jan Barry acted as facilitator for the meeting, and he started us off with a brief history of VVAW.

As the discussion opened, a recurrent theme was the importance of

VVAW to each individual in that chapel. This was expressed in the poetry of Bill Ehrhart and two other veteran-poets. It was also movingly expressed by Jack McCloskey when he said "VVAW saved my life!"

Jack went on to point out that VVAW was needed even more today, that the organization's existence proved that Vietnam vets are sane. This feeling was echoed by Annie Hirschman and Mike Bukovchik from New York. Mark Kiselicka from California sobbed as he stood and thanked VVAW for being there for him. After his comments, he was surrounded by fellow vets who hugged him and shook his hand.

Others spoke of people-to-people efforts between vets and the people of Vietnam. A wide range of grass roots projects organized and run by vets were described to us. Joe Bangert talked of his dream of establishing a hot dog stand in Hanoi, and he suggested that Vietnam might be a great place for vets to retire to. So, as well as reflection on the past of VVAW and its continued relevance, the theme of reconciliation with Vietnam resurfaced as it did so often during the weekend's events.

I was in Chicago for VVAW's 20th Anniversary, and my son and I enjoyed it immensely, but, I must say that my participation in this 25th anniversary celebration will stay with me for the rest of my life. Riding home on the train that night, I reviewed everything that I had witnessed, and it made me proud to be associated with this most important of veteran's organizations. Happy Birthday, VVAW!

Thank You

With thanks, appreciation and love: Laurie Sandow, Denis Lund, Boyd Masten, Pete Poccia, Sierra Goodale, Jane Fuller, Jean Muri, Arlene Wege, Ed Damato, Mariann Selzer, Nga Selzer, Terry Selzer, Nick Calderazzo, Vinnie Muscari, Christine Kelly, Albert Bouchard, Joe Bouchard, Country Joe McDonald, Cathy Raffaele, Rev. John Bucki, S.J., Jan Barry, Barbara Webster, Steve Geiger, Ann Hirschman, Brian Matarrese, June Svetlovsky. In Memoriam: Clarence Fitch and John Janus.

Again

Dear Laurie, Ed & Everyone,

I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for all the work that you put into the 25th Anniversary Celebration. It was an emotional, powerful, rejuvenating weekend for me. I was proud to be a part of it, and so proud of VVAW.

All I can say is thanks to all of you.

Yours in peace and justice;
Bill Ehrhart

25th Anniversary

DAVE KETTENHOFEN
NATIONAL COORDINATOR

VVAW members, friends, and supporters from around the world gathered in New York City on May 29, 30, and 31 to celebrate VVAW's 25th Anniversary.

The weekend wasn't all fun and games though. Earlier on Saturday morning a memorial service honoring the dead of all nations resulting from U.S. military involvement in Southeast Asia, Central America, and the Middle East was held at the Vietnam Memorial. This was followed by a short march to Battery Park for a rally reaffirming VVAW's commitment to the struggle against injustice. Discussions on VVAW's legacy, the peace movement, and personal, political, and spiritual growth closed out the weekend on Sunday.

The organizing committee has put together a journal that poignantly captures the spirit of VVAW's 25 years. It is a short but comprehensive look at its history through photographs, essays, and poetry. The journal is a real gem, a collector's item!

Concern for peace and justice formed a common bond among the wide array of people assembled for the anniversary. With the power brokers in this country flexing their muscles and goose stepping, it was reassuring to be in the company of so many who haven't bought their line.

Now, more than ever, there is a need to teach the lessons learned from past experiences. The American people are constantly bombarded with lies and propaganda. History is being rewritten to make it appear as though the U.S. was the victim in Vietnam. Veterans are living in the streets and dying from Agent Orange poisoning, AIDS, and neglect, while the media pretends that we have all been happily assimilated into the middle class. The U.S. continues to wage political and economic war on Vietnam while propagating the POW/MIA myth and propping up the Khmer Rouge.

Bush sold the Persian Gulf War, New World Order, and "might is right" line but VVAW didn't buy it. Extremists on the religious right relentlessly attack America's civil rights and freedoms under the guise of morality while its children are starving for food and healthcare and their parents for jobs.

The list is endless and of course VVAW doesn't purport to have all the solutions. We can, however, continue to act as a source of rich experience which will strengthen the whole movement for peace and justice.

The cast of characters assembled at the 25th Anniversary was very impressive to say the least. The combined knowledge, experience, and talent was unbelievable. These talents, effectively employed at the grassroots level, can have a significant impact on the future of this country. The real message of the anniversary was up in VVAW and fight on!

"FORGOTTEN" REPRESSION

HAITI

BEN CHITTY
EAST COAST COORDINATOR

Last September 30th, the Haitian military threw out Jean-Bertrand Aristide--the nation's first democratically elected president. The coup was universally condemned. The United States organized a trade embargo. The Organization of America States (OAS) sent delegations to Port-au-Prince to negotiate a return to constitutional government. Yet seven months later Father Aristide remains in exile. What's up?

Haiti was run by the Duvaliers, father and son, for almost three decades. Francois (Papa Doc) Duvalier ruled through the Tontons Macoutes, a semi-clandestine terrorist organization which brutally repressed all opposition. Jean-Claude (Baby Doc) Duvalier inherited the government from his father in 1971. Nothing changed. By 1986, the church, the upper classes, even elements within the Army, were alienated from the regime. When the Haitian people took to the streets to fight Tonton Macoutes thugs, the regime evaporated. Baby Doc was airlifted into exile, along with much of his wealth.

Most Haitians agreed the Duvaliers had to go, but not on what came next. For the Army, the revolution meant a new division of spoils. For the anti-Duvalierists among the upper classes, it meant an opportunity to enhance their own economic interests--this time without the arbitrary, capricious rule of a single family, "Duvalierism without Duvalier." And everyone of importance--the upper classes, the Church hierarchy, the Army--wanted quick elections and a quick return to business as usual.

For the people who had done well under the Duvalier regime, the revolution meant ruin. The Duvalierists slaughtered hundreds of voters in the first election (Novem-

ber, 1987), and the next four years saw a carousel of successive governments as first one then another temporary coalition of factions played musical chairs for power. In 1990, Roger Lafontant, one-time leader of the Tontons Macoutes, returned to Haiti to campaign for president in a new election. In January, 1991, he attempted a coup. Again the Haitian people took to the streets by the thousands, and the coup failed. Then Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide announced his candidacy for the presidency.

Father Aristide had been active for years on behalf of Haiti's poor. A charismatic preacher, he survived several assassination attempts, and lived what he preached, even giving away his paychecks. His campaign was a surprise. He was not the candidate backed by the United States. He had no organized political party. His reforms threatened every established interest. He was incorruptible. But he was loved by the people, and walked away with the election.

His government broke with Haitian tradition. Tax policy, the break-up and redistribution of monopolies, land reform--all were opposed by the wealthy Haitians whose parties dominated the National Assembly. His attempts to stop the Army's customary extortion and smuggling brought many officers into opposition. But his administration did not control the bureaucracy or the judiciary, or especially the Army. When the coup came, it was led by General Raoul Cedras, the man Aristide named to carry out his military reforms, and it was unopposed. Aristide himself refused to call for violent resistance.

Will the coup succeed? The various factions among the Army, the Church hierarchy, and the Haitian upper classes (both pro- and anti-Duvalierist) have only one goal--

the removal of Father Aristide, a genuine threat to the political and economic arrangements which made Haiti the poorest nation in the Americas for almost two centuries. As long as Aristide is not president, the coup succeeds. The interim government has played a waiting game, offering compromise after compromise, insisting only that Aristide not return. The embargo is far from universal and poorly enforced. The military's repression is brutal and extensive. Early in June, Marc Bazin, formerly of the World Bank and the US-backed candidate in the presidential election, was installed as Prime Minister.

But the situation has not stabilized; the coup is not yet a "done deal", for three reasons. First, Aristide's exile does not solve the dilemma of the Haitian elites. The economy remains collapsed. The Army remains corrupt. And the Tontons Macoutes and their Duvalierist supporters still wait for a chance to return Haiti to a rule of terror.

Second, the US itself is home to a large Haitian community--often called Haiti's "10th Department"--which supports Father Aristide in about the same overwhelming proportion as the people living in Haiti. Their activism in New York and Miami, along with support from Americans already involved in Haitian relief (mainly through churches) or active on behalf of the Haitian refugees unconstitutionally detained in Florida camps, keeps alive the question of Haitian democracy.

Finally, White House policy has been inept. US enforcement of the embargo was late and lax. US negotiators finally got Aristide to agree to a compromise in which he accepted new limitations on presidential power and an indefinite exile; the interim regime rejected even that. Then there are the refugees--thousands of Haitians fled their homeland. The White House declared them economic refugees, not eligible for temporary entry into the US. At first the Coast Guard picked them up and processed them in camps in Guantanamo; most were returned to Haiti. Still the refugees fled, some for a second (or third) time; President Bush directed that they be returned directly to Haiti.

His rationale is not hard to figure: with a tough election coming up, the President cannot afford to alienate his political base by admitting thousands of poor black people to the United States. But every day the economic refugee fiction grows harder to maintain.

And the policy may backfire: by shutting down the escape route, the Bush administration has raised the ante for the Haitian people. Resistance and repression alike have accelerated. May 18, a plane drops leaflets over Port-au-Prince, then undisturbed makes runs over Leogane, Gonaives, and Cap Haitien. May 23, two soldiers killed, two wounded by assailants using Uzis, standard Haitian Army issue. May 25, a group of soldiers give an interview on clandestine "Radio Solil" declaring "we want to be on the side of the people." May 26, police go into the State University Hospital to kill a wounded man, remove another from surgery, and bring Georges Izmerly, a prominent businessman who backed Aristide, to the morgue--his body still warm, his heart still beating. May 29, a barracks is torched. June 2, soldiers attack the Izmerly funeral procession. The residents of poor neighborhoods in Port-au-Prince count their dead every morning; fisherman catch corpses with cement blocks tied round their necks.

So, the President may yet be "forced" to reluctantly intervene. For three weeks in May the US conducted Ocean Venture 92 in the Atlantic and Caribbean, a joint forces exercise involving 30,000 personnel in "a realistic multi-threat scenario." The multiple threats are Cuba and Haiti. The US has already begun to discuss a peace-keeping force with the OAS, stepped up criticism of Aristide's human rights record, and floated a story that Navy SEALs had rescued Aristide supporters earlier this year in a commando raid personally authorized by the President. If US intervention is in the works, its mission will be to stabilize the situation, confirm Bazin in place, keep Aristide out of power, rattle the Cubans, and showcase a President whose domestic and foreign policies have--truth to tell--been one disaster after another.



VVRN began "transmitting from liberated territory (VVAW Firebase KC), behind the lines of hypocrisy and revisionism (Missouri Country)" in July of 1989: within eighteen months VVRN was being transmitted from community, university, and non-commercial radio stations in the U.S., Canada, and Europe; and now, VVRN is being transmitted around

the world via Radio For Peace International (RFPI).

Dedicated to Peace and Justice, RFPI is the only station of this kind in the world...an independent, non-commercial, and world-wide short-wave radio station broadcasting (since 1987) to the global community from the campus of the University of Peace (created by the United Nations) in Santa Ana, Costa Rica. RFPI's programming (English, Spanish, German and more to be added) covers a wide range of topics, including: Conflict resolution; peace education; personal growth and development; environmental issues; world hunger; social justice; and human rights. The following are a few examples of RFPI programs:

*New Dimensions Radio features interviews with the foremost think-

ers, social innovators, spiritual teachers and visionaries of our time.

*Amnesty International Reports monthly on it's investigations of human rights abuses throughout the world, and conducts and "Urgent Action Campaign".

*Earthcare encourages participation in healing the planet by presenting inspiring examples and practical information.

*WINGS, the Women's International News Gathering Service, provides programs by and about women.

*World Citizen's Hour is a weekly open phone forum.

*Outlaw for Peace is presented

twice weekly by Willie Nelson and Friends.

*The United Nations presents daily news and other programs concerning it's global activities.

RFPI broadcasts VVRN's transmissions on Wednesdays at 1530 and 2330 Military Time (that's 3:30 pm and again at 11:30 pm Central Standard Time for you FNGs out there, and/or 2130 and 0530 Universal Coordinated Time on the following frequencies: 15.030 AM (24 hours); and 7.375 AM (24 hours).

Be heard around the world ... all VVAW members and friends are urged to send their thoughts on any topic (using audio cassette or reel-to-reel tape) to VVAW/VVRN, 7807 N. Avalon, K.C., MO 64152.

LETTERS

Thank You

Dear Ed:

I can't thank you enough for the most wonderful weekend of my life! I never thought I'd see all of you again in my life.

And thank you for my promotion to Vice President of VVAW!! I love it!

My Very Best,
Shelly Ramsdell

by their own hand, suicide, than were killed in combat."--Bill Mahedy in the TV documentary, "Out of the Night"

That was just one of the statements that caught the attention of 150,000 people who watched the premiere broadcasts of "Out of the Night" in Seattle and Portland on June 21st. The TV Special broadcast on KOMO-TV and KATU had a powerful impact on its viewers. We did well in the ratings. We were second in Seattle following "Sixty Minutes" and fourth in Portland. That's a great record for a TV documentary! And it only cost us 16 cents a viewer.

I have been overwhelmed by the response we've had to the special. I was on the phone for over a week talking to vets, their wives, relatives and friends. Both stations and our narrator Dick Foley had many calls and letters. I've had more calls on "Out of the Night" than from any special I've ever produced. One wife

said, "It's been 20 years since he was in Vietnam, and he's still living it like it was yesterday." Another vet said that this was the best film that he had ever seen on the aftereffects of Vietnam.

We produced "Out of the Night", on an exceptionally low budget. We couldn't have done it without the generous help of KOMO-TV. They provided budget for film, processing, video transfers, and gave extensive post production support. We did the rest for a little over \$25,000. (A full financial report is available upon request.) That's unheard of in professional media budgets that range between \$2,000-5,000 or more a minute. I can assure you that we have been very responsible with our budget.

The good news is that we have completed the film and promoted the first two premieres within this tight budget. But at the end of July we are out of funds. We have no funds to take this important message to other parts of the Northwest and other cities in the USA.

We have prepared a special Audio

Visual version in VHS format of "Out of the Night." The video comes without the commercial breaks and is 47 minutes in length. The special is copyrighted by KOMO-TV and this version is provided with a license for public and educational use. It's available for \$50.00. Let us know if you can use it.

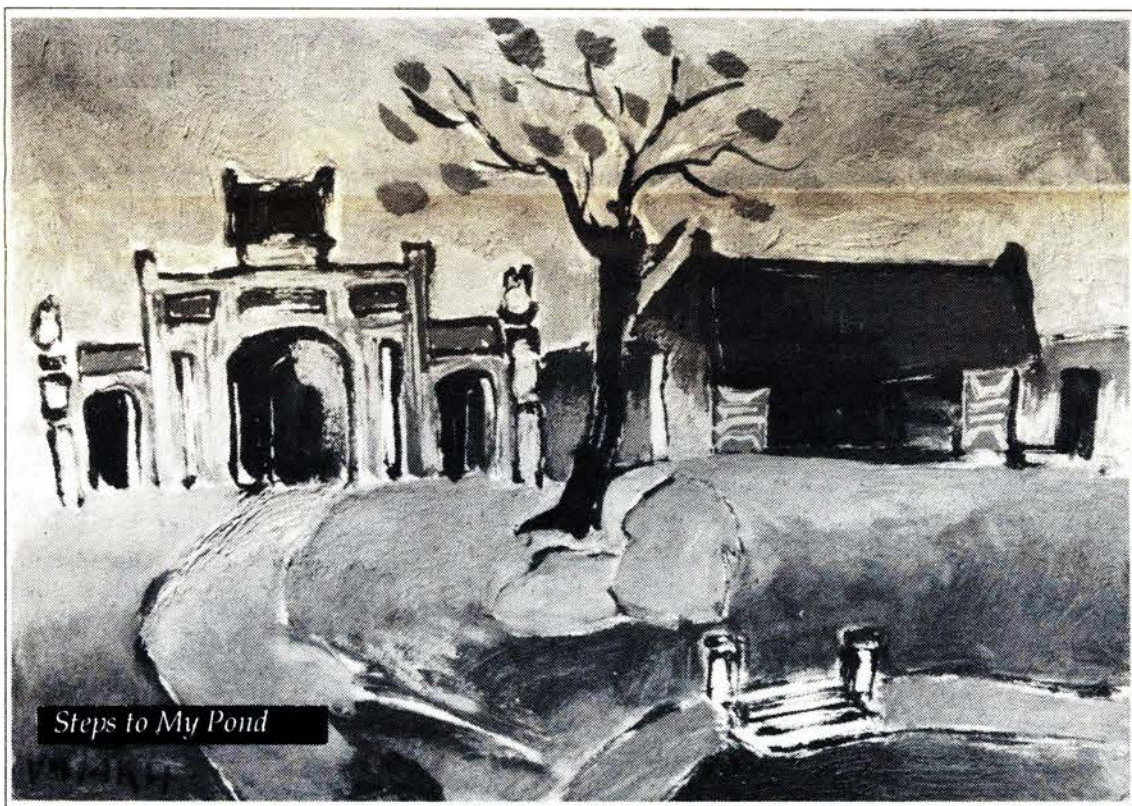
J. Graley Taylor,
Executive Director, IBC Religious
Broadcasting Commission
500 Wall Street, Suite 415
Seattle, Washington 98121
206-441-6110

New Video on 'Nam Vets

Special Report on the Premieres
"Out of the Night"

"One of the more horrifying aspects of Post Traumatic Stress, is the fact that we are now certain that more Vietnam Vets have died

Images of Vietnam Greeting Cards



Steps to My Pond

The Village Gate

Artist: Vi Kien Thanh

The Indochina Project, a program of Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, is pleased to offer 12 full-color, fine art greetings cards featuring contemporary graphic images by Vietnamese artists. The Indochina Project is publishing this fine art as part of its effort to promote cooperation and understanding between the peoples of the United States and Vietnam. Proceeds support humanitarian assistance programs as well as the Indochina Project's art and cultural exchanges.

These cards are 4 1/4" x 6 1/4", and are printed on recycled paper and come with recycled paper envelopes. Cards are available in sets of 12 (one of each 12 images). One full color image is available as a screen printed, 100 percent cotton pre-shrunk t-shirt in adult sizes: M, L, XL.

These cards are a great fundraising resource and are being offered at special wholesale rates to interested organizations that wish to order 500 or more sets. For details please contact the Indochina Project.

If you would like to receive a free full color catalog depicting all images, prices and information on how to order these cards and t-shirts please write:
Indochina Project, 2001 "S" Street, N.W., Suite 740, Washington, D.C., 20009.
Telephone 202-483-9222 or Fax 202-483-9314.

Indochina



Project

V.F.W. for Peace

Dear Comrades:

Thank you for your latest issue of THE GUIDEON. As you may know, over half of our membership is from the Vietnam era. Many of us are also members of chapter 11 of the Veterans for Peace-U.S.A. one of seven chapters in Calif. incl. the recently organized Chap. in the S.F. Bay Area (Vets Speakers Alliance).

Post 5888 aka The Bill Motto Post is known as the "Rebel Post" because of our radical position which got us suspended from the Natl. VFW in 1984-'85. Now, despite the Quake of '89, a court case for use of Vets Memorial Bldg. and a 90 day suspension from State VFW for minor financial problems, we are still THE POST FOR PEACE. Our 20' Banner says WAGE PEACE, carried in local and out-of-town parades.

Our post was the first to hold public forums in the Persian Gulf "crisis" and our speakers have been to most public schools & colleges in the county (and San Jose). We don't have a typical Ladies Auxiliary and call Associate members FRIENDS OF BILL MOTTO (he was a decorated Vietnam Vet, a medic who is deceased). Among our far-flung activities: building a clinic in Vietnam, Vets Peace Action Teams in Nicaragua and the Big Mtn. reservations, Medical supplies to Vietnam and Cambodia, and Local Homeless feasts & Toy giveaways at Thanksgiving and Xmas, and help for jobless vets.

We are in line for a grant from the Peace Dvlp. Fund-"education for Peace."

Best wishes, Robert S. Hall, Adj.

Request

Did you serve with
LT Jeffrey Gurvitz,
killed Feb.29, 1968
while serving with
Co.B 2nd Bn. 1st Inf,
196 LT Inf Bde?

If so please contact his widow
who is making a film documentary.
Barbara Sonneborn
P.O. Box 9347
Berkeley, CA 94709
(510) 526-9106
fax (510) 526-0641



VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR WHERE WE CAME FROM WHO WE ARE, WHO CAN JOIN

National Coordinators

David Cline
(201)963-3380
Dave Kettenhofen
(414)444-7781
Barry Romo
(312)327-5756
Pete Zastrow
(312)761-8248

National Staff

Bill Branson
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Joe Miller

Regional Coordinators

East
Ben Chitty
(718)826-1789

Midwest
John Zutz
(414)372-0749
Jesse Jespersen
(414)961-1253

South
Elton Manzione
(404)369-0546

Pacific
Jack McCloskey
(415)826-9310
Eric Schwartz

West
Tom Wetzler
(512)824-4017

Vietnam Veterans Against the War, Inc. (VVAW) is a national veterans organization that was founded in New York City in 1967 after six Vietnam vets marched together in a peace demonstration. It was organized to voice to the growing opposition among returning servicemen and women to the still raging war in Indochina, and grew rapidly to a membership of over 30,000 throughout the United States as well as active duty GIs stationed in Vietnam. Through ongoing actions and grassroots organization, VVAW exposed the ugly truth about US involvement in Southeast Asia and our first-hand experiences helped many other Americans to see the unjust nature of that war.

VVAW quickly took up the struggle for the rights and needs of veterans. In 1970, we started the first rap groups to deal with traumatic after effects of war, setting the example for readjustment counselling at Vet Centers now. We exposed the shameful neglect of many disabled vets in VA Hospitals and helped draft legislation to improve educational benefits and create job programs. VVAW fought for amnesty for war resisters including vets with bad discharges. We helped make known the negative health effects of exposure to chemical defoliants and

the VA's attempts to cover-up these conditions as well as their continued refusal to provide treatment and compensation for many Agent Orange Victims.

Today our government is still financing and arming undemocratic and repressive regimes around the world. Recently American troops have been sent into combat in the Middle East and Central America, for many of the same misguided reasons that were used to send us to South East Asia. Meanwhile many veterans are still denied justice-facing unemployment, discrimination, homelessness, post traumatic stress disorder and other health problems while already inadequate services are being cut back or eliminated.

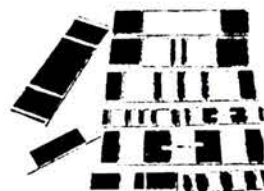
We believe that service to our country and communities did not end when we were discharged. We remain committed to the struggle for peace and for social and economic justice for all people. We will continue to oppose senseless military adventures and to teach the real lessons of the Vietnam War. We will do all we can to prevent another generation from being put through a similar tragedy and we will continue to demand dignity and respect for veterans of all eras. This is real patriotism and we remain true to our mission. JOIN US!

Fighting for Veterans, Peace & Justice since 1967

**National Office
P.O. Box 408594
Chicago, IL 60640**



**Stained Glass Service Ribbons
or Sandblasted Unit Insignia...**



**will warm any window
in your home.**

Small: 2" x 7" ... \$10 (\$3 S&H)
Large: 4" x 14" ... \$20 (\$4 S&H)

Order any single ribbon
or whole sets.

**TO ORDER SEND CHECK
OR MONEY ORDER TO:
DMZ PRODUCTIONS
3217 Marietta Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53211
414-961-1253**

Membership Form

Vietnam Veterans Against the War, Inc.

National Office

P.O. Box 408594, Chicago, IL 60640

Membership Application

Name _____
Address _____
Phone _____
Dates of Service (if applicable) _____
Branch _____
Unit _____
Overseas Duty _____
Dates _____
Military Occupation _____
Rank _____

Membership in VVAW is open to all people who want to build a veterans' movement that fights for peace and justice. Most of our members are veterans of Vietnam era, but we welcome veterans of all eras as well as family members and friends to our ranks. The initiation fee is \$20.00, sent to the National Office (not required of homeless, unemployed or incarcerated vets).

VVAW is a democratic organization. Chapters decide on local programs and projects under the general guidelines of the national program. Chapters elect local leadership and representatives to annual national meetings where major organizational decisions are made and national coordinators elected. These coordinators are responsible for the day to day organizational leadership of VVAW and issuing national publications.

Signature _____
Date _____

(Make checks payable to VVAW. Contributions are tax deductible)

INSIGNIA

U.S. Military Assistance Command (MACV) [official design by the Institute of Heraldry, U.S. Army]. Under this insignia 60,000 Americans and 2 million Vietnamese died.



"Yellow and red are the Vietnam colors. The red Ground alludes to the infiltration and aggression from beyond the embattled yellow 'wall', (i.e. The Great Wall of China). The opening in the wall through which this infiltration and aggression flow is blocked by the white sword representing United States military aid and support. The wall is arched and the sword pointed upward in reference to the offensive action pushing the aggression back."

It was first issued to the 12,000 "advisors" in Vietnam in March of 1963

INSIGNIA OF VIETNAM VETS AGAINST THE WAR



We took the MACV patch as our own, replacing the wall with the upside-down rifle with helmet, the international symbol of Soldiers killed in action. This was done to expose the lies and hypocrisy of U.S. aggression in Vietnam as well as its cost in human lives. As with all the propaganda put out by the government to justify U.S. intervention in Indochina, the MACV insignia also put forward lies. The U.S. military was not protecting the Vietnamese from invasion from the People's Republic of China, but was instead trying to "save" Vietnam from itself and for our exploitation. Our insignia has come to represent veterans fighting against new "adventures" like the Vietnam War, while at the same time fighting for a decent way of life for veterans and their families. Our insignia is 20 years old. It belongs to VVAW and no other organization or group may use for any reason without permission.

BEWARE OF "VVAW AI"

This notice is to alert you to a handful of individuals calling themselves the "Vietnam Veterans Against the War Anti-Imperialist". Their activities are centered mainly in Seattle, San Francisco and New York City. They often claim to be part of our organization and their most recent antics include burning American flags at demonstrations.

"VVAW AI" is not a faction, caucus or part of VVAW. They are not affiliated with us in any way. "VVAW AI" is actually the creation of an obscure, ultra-left sect called the Revolutionary Communist Party and is designed to pimp off of VVAW's history of struggle and continued activism. Their objective is to create confusion and deception in order to promote themselves. We urge all people and organizations to beware of this bogus outfit. Don't be fooled, they are not what they claim. Forewarned is forearmed.