

Soviet Inspired and Backed Aggression **VIETNAM INVADES CAMBODIA**



Cambodian freedom fighters must now fight again.

Support for the liberation forces in Indochina was one of the foundations on which VVAW was built. We fought against U.S. aggression in Vietnam with every ounce of our strength and energy, taking on the police, getting arrested and finally adding our contribution to the victory of the peoples of Indochina. We have watched, with growing alarm, the leadership of Vietnam growing closer and closer to the Soviet Union. With the invasion of Kampuchea and the installation of a puppet regime there, Vietnam has now taken the same path of aggression that we condemned the U.S. government for taking.

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THE VETERAN

Vietnam Veterans Against the War

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VOL. 9 NO. 1

VETS OF ALL ERAS, CLOSE RANKS!

WINTER 1978-79

Vietnam Vet Wins Disability Before Death **VET DIES OF AGENT** **ORANGE POISONING**



On Veterans Day, November 11th, 1978, members of VVAW joined with vets from city colleges in New York City to demonstrate that vets need something more than a day, a parade, or some pious words from politicians; tired of being used once and then thrown aside, New York City vets demand testing and treatment for the effects of Agent Orange.

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Paul Reutersham, Vietnam veteran from Stamford, Connecticut, died on December 14th from abdominal cancer at the age of 28. Though seriously weakened by disease, he continued through his final days to fight the government for recognition that he was a victim of Agent Orange poisoning. Reutersham's quote, "I was killed in Vietnam and didn't even know it," has been used many times by veterans who, like him, are fighting to get testing, treatment and disability compensation for the effects of exposure to the deadly chemical spray.

On Reutersham's behalf, a New York attorney, in early January, filed a class action suit directed at several chemical companies to force these manufacturers of the defoliant to create a fund which would pay the costs of those who are sick as a result of their exposure to Agent Orange.

As a result of his tireless struggle Reutersham finally won his 100% disability rating from the V.A. a few days before his death. Though his victory came too late to help him, it is a tribute to his struggle which will be long remembered by veterans everywhere

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



VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR



Vietnam Veterans Against the War is a national veterans organization which began in 1967 and which mobilized tens of thousands of veterans to fight for an end to the Indochina War. Our members are veterans not only of Vietnam, but vets from all wars and all eras.

"Used once and thrown away" summarizes how VVAW sees the situation of veterans. We were used once to fight a war for the profits of the rich. And despite all kinds of promises, we were thrown away once

we got out of the service--thrown away with high unemployment, an inadequate GI Bill, a VA hospital system that is next to worthless.

Both through our own experience, and the history of the struggle of veterans in the U.S. going back to the end of the Revolutionary War, we know that none of these abuses of vets are going to change if we just lay back and wait--that's why VVAW takes to the streets or does whatever is necessary to fight to improve the conditions of vets.



Having been in Indochina, many of us began to learn that we had more in common with the supposed "enemy" than with the rich class of people who sent us there. Because of what we experienced there and because we see the danger of a new rich man's war, we take every opportunity to bring to the American people our slogan, "Fight the Rich, Not Their Wars."

We don't see ourselves as being unique in fighting for a better life. We support others in their struggles--such as striking coal miners or postal workers, and we support the liberation struggles in Southern Africa.

Our experience has also shown us that vets, as individuals, can do little to improve our situation, but that a group of vets, united to struggle as one, makes a difference. VVAW emphasizes the need for organization and works to build a fighting veterans' movement. We aren't talking about being another American Legion which has a large membership, but has a leadership which pushes a boatload of backward ideas.

We bring together organization and action in our national program, in the fight for Jobs or Income Now, for Decent Benefits for All Vets--regardless of discharge; we take on specific campaigns such as Extend and Expand the GI Bill, particularly the 10-year limitation on the use of the Bill; and Decent Healthcare for all Vets--testing and treatment and compensation for victims of Agent Orange, for in-

stance.

VVAW is a democratic organization; organizational decisions are made, as much as possible, after local chapters have discussed them and provided their input. Regional and national meetings are held to bring together VVAW members from across the country to make plans and decisions for the national organization. Day-to-day coordination is provided by an elected National Office which also puts out THE VETERAN, our national newspaper.

You are invited to join VVAW and we welcome all who want to build a real veterans' movement which will fight for the needs of vets! ■



Veteran throws back his Silver Star during Operation Dewey Canyon III in April, 1971.

FRAGGIN' (Continued Page 9)

GRENADE Of The Month

The GRENADE OF THE MONTH goes to Nguyen Ngoc Loan. He's the former South Vietnamese general who became famous for drawing a revolver and executing a suspected "guerilla" with a shot to the head in Saigon ten years ago. A photograph and newsreel of the incident was shown around the world.

Now Loan is managing a restaurant in Virginia. He's in the news again because the U.S. government is talking about trying to deport him on the grounds that he is a war criminal for shooting the man without a trial.

A lot of people have come to Loan's defence saying that Loan is just another victim of the war and will be executed if he is sent back to Vietnam. They say that in the confusion of the Tet Offensive, what he did was acceptable. They say let bygones be bygones. After all, they say, he killed the enemy and that was his job.

But is Loan a victim of the war? Not at all. He was one of the people in a position of responsibility who caused many others to be victims. General Loan was Director of the National Police and high up in the political organization of Nguyen Cao Ky, some-

time president. And as Director of National Police, Loan was in charge of counter-insurgency operations.

To finance the counter-insurgency operations and the Ky political machine, Loan used some interesting fund-raising methods, most of which can be seen on late night re-runs of the "Untouchables." Sale of government jobs. Graft, kickbacks, bribes. Theft of goods and payroll fraud in the U.S. financed military.

These enterprises picked up some revenue, but the big money-raiser was heroin. General Loan was the man in charge of the operation that supplied the opium dens of Saigon. After the supply of poppies from Turkey dried up, the heroin on the streets of the U.S. cities came mostly from Southeast Asia and General Loan. When U.S. soldiers got hooked while in Vietnam, the heroin came from General Loan's operation.

Does General Loan deserve a break? Only if it's both arms, legs, and his neck. Shooting a man in cold blood isn't nice, but it's one of the least of his catalogue of crimes. Ask the survivors and families of those hit by the Phoenix assassination program, the hundreds of thousands tortured in his investigations or imprisoned at Con Son Island in the torture camp there. Ask the vets or their families--the ones hooked on cheap heroin to support Loan's political ambitions--ask them what he deserves.



Soviet Backed and Inspired Aggression

VIETNAM INVADES

CAMBODIA



Women of Kampuchea work in the fields but carry rifles on the alert for enemy. Their dedication to the cause of freedom and independence will beat back the new imperialist invasion.

It has been three and a half years since the Cambodian people threw out the U.S. puppet Lon Nol and his U.S. backers. The Khymer Rouge had beaten back two U.S. sponsored invasions, survived the most tremendous bombing known to man and utterly defeated a U.S. puppet who had the direct support from the U.S. military, and financial and political support from the other superpower, the Soviet Union.

Today the people of Cambodia have gone through another invasion and another puppet. This time the invasion force is made up of 100,000 Vietnamese troops with armor and air support, and some 10,000 of their Cambodian puppet troops. The Cambodian patriots have abandoned the cities and gone back into the countryside, melting into the jungles, mountains and populace from which they emerged victoriously three years ago.

Meanwhile, the Vietnamese and their Soviet backers announce proudly that the terrible regime--the Pol Pot government of Cambodia--has been overthrown and that a new era has been ushered in to Indochina. The U.S. condemns the invasion but at the same time echoes the charges about the inhuman Pol Pot regime. Many forces have been in play in Indochina since the U.S. was thrown out.

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN INDOCHINA

The U.S. jumped into the footsteps of the French in Indochina where, after their defeat at Dien Bien Phu, the French dream of holding on to their colony was ended. The U.S. took a Vietnamese, who was not even in Vietnam at the time, and placed President Diem at the head of a government in Saigon. In 1956 when elections were scheduled, Diem called them off. His reason was simple: Ho Chi Minh, leader of the North Vietnamese, would, in the words of then U.S. president Eisenhower, have won "by more than 80% of the popular vote."

The people of South Vietnam, under the leadership of the National Liberation Front, fought. The U.S. rushed in with recognition and funds, later followed by advisors, and finally more than 4 1/2 million men and billions of dollars. In vain the U.S. tried to stop the Vietnamese people from throwing out the puppet regime in Saigon. They invaded Cambodia to hit sanctuaries and trails; they dropped more than 3 1/2 times the amount of explosives used in World War II on an area the size of California; they carried out, through the CIA, the Phoenix assassination program which killed more than 100,000 Viet-

namese village chiefs, elders and teachers; and, in the process, they sacrificed 55,000 American lives. The U.S. imperialist role in Indochina found much opposition and little support around the world, and was opposed by the American people. Even GIs and Vietnam veterans opposed the war, rising up in revolts in Vietnam and throwing away their medals in Washington. In the end, the U.S. was defeated on the battlefields of Indochina and in the streets of America.

INDEPENDENCE

The Indochinese peoples faced difficult problems after kicking out the U.S. invaders and their puppets in Phnom Penh and Saigon. They had to rebuild their war-torn countries and immediately faced the enormous problem of how to feed a hungry population.

The Vietnamese immediately looked for help from the outside. Their problems were not so great as those of Cambodia because, despite the terrible bombing of North Vietnam, the northern half of the country had been free for 20 years developing its agriculture and industry. Still, they turned to the USSR. Signing "Treaties of Friendship," they joined the Soviet controlled COMECON (an economic grouping) which placed their resources and workforce under the tender care of Russian "international division of labor" (a concept whereby the Soviets import raw materials, make finished products, and sell them back to the original countries at high prices--if this sounds like imperialism, that's because it is!) and even allowing Russian troops to be stationed in Vietnam.

Cambodia (renamed Kampuchea) set out to build back its country by its own efforts, determined not to trade one imperialist, the U.S., for another, the USSR. They faced almost insurmountable problems. Starvation, disease, lack of housing, a capital city crowded by refugees from the countryside, attempts by U.S. backed forces to regain control all added to the problems. As the U.S. could see liberation approaching, it deliberately cut in half food brought into the city of Phnom Penh by airlift planning that, after liberation, the starving population would overthrow the revolutionary regime and let the U.S. back in. The situation called for drastic measures; to feed the people, stem possible

epidemics and prevent a possible U.S.-backed uprising, the government moved the population to the countryside where the food was--which the people understood. They did not become rich overnight or have lots of consumer goods. They did have food, housing, a beginning of education, and were starting to rebuild their war-ravaged country on their own--not tying it to either superpower.

Not liking this situation at all, the U.S. carried out a propaganda blitz against the new government of Kampuchea. It ignored years of bombings, the slaughter of innocent civilians, the use of toxic chemicals, the systematic extermination of the population whether through free fire zones (where U.S. troops killed anything or anyone who moved), or Operation Phoenix. It attacked the Indochinese for trying to feed their people by evacuating the cities. The blitz geared in on Kampuchea, leading up to a point where ex-dove George McGovern called for an "international invasion force" to go into Kampuchea.

As the war against U.S. aggression faded and the countries rebuilt, changes began to take place. The Kampuchean people began to build up their industry and agriculture to the point where they were exporting rice. Their army remained a "peoples' army" whose members worked in the rice paddies along with the peasants, and in the factories with the workers; they built dams and irrigation projects.

Vietnam also began to change. The Soviet presence and influence began to have an effect. Officials began to see themselves as heroes and began to accept favors the way the Saigon officials did from the U.S. in the past. They began to persecute the minority Chinese population in Vietnam. They claimed land belonging to Cambodia, the Philippines and China. They began to eye their neighbors as weak, saying that they alone had expelled the foreigners. A change also took place in the military. Many of the units which had fought against the U.S. were disbanded. New units were built up with recruits who have never fought before, or with former Saigon troops who were being "re-educated" by serving in the Vietnamese military; this was especially true for units stationed along the border with Kampuchea.

Vietnam began to demand closer cooperation between itself and Kampuchea. It tried to intimidate its neighbor to give

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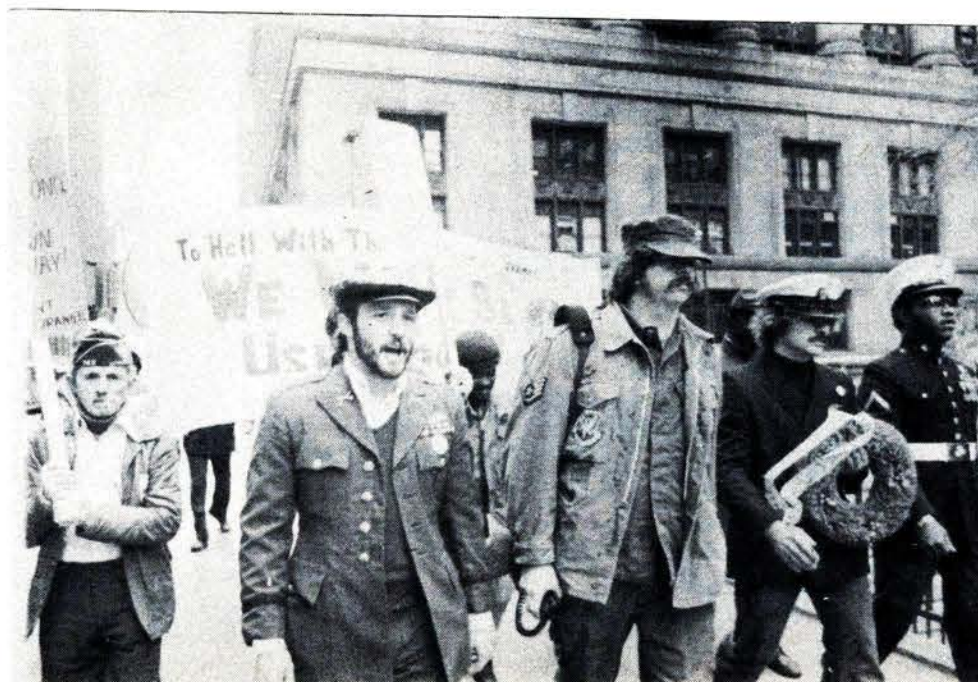
Veterans Day demonstrations were again held by VVAW chapters across the country, marking the eighth year that VVAW has taken on the system on the day set aside to "honor vets." As in the past several years, VVAW raised the slogan, "To Hell With Your National Honor, We Won't Be Used Again!"

In San Francisco, traditional vets organizations such as the American Legion and VFW did not even hold their usual ceremonies for fear of once again being confronted by VVAW. They cited "lack of funds" as their reason, but VVAW has consistently built demonstrations without funds--except for money out of the pockets of the vets themselves. In fact VVAW has held demonstrations in the Bay Area since 1971, consistently building greater and greater support for the real plight of vets unlike the phony call to "honor vets" or build support for wars, whether in Indochina (when VVAW first marched on Vets Day) or, as happened last year, when the Legion tried to drum up support for their reactionary position on "our" Canal in Panama.

In the Twin Cities of Minneapolis/St Paul, VVAW went to the local American Legion/VFW event. As their ceremony was coming to an end, VVAW members rose, demanding that VVAW be allowed to speak in order to represent the real situation among vets today. With support from the audience, made up primarily of older vets, VVAW got up and talked to the crowd, hitting at the phony "day" set aside for vets. They brought up the question of Agent Orange and how vets were dying as a result of exposure to the defoliant--and were getting no help at all from the Veterans Administration. They also took on the leadership of the Legion and VFW for siding with the rich and pushing their wars. At the close of the speech, VVAW members were met with applause and even requests from Legion and VFW Posts to speak to their membership and show a CBS special film on Agent Orange and "Only The Beginning," a film based on the experience of vets in Vietnam and the fight against the war back here in the U.S. Once again VVAW found out that though the leaders of the Legion and VFW back the system to the hilt, the membership, the rank and file of these organizations, share with Vietnam vets many of the same problems, and are deeply concerned about solutions which apply to vets of all eras.

In Milwaukee VVAW held a demonstration near the official ceremonies, held at the Woods

WE DON'T NEED HONOR, JUST A DECENT LIFE! VETS' DAY ACTIONS HIT PHONY HONOR



VVAW members, representing each branch of the service, march in Chicago on Veterans Day (left); in New York City, Gold Star mother tells how her son died in vain fighting in Vietnam (right).



National Veterans Cemetery. As a representative of VVAW spoke, some of the traditional leaders shouted, "Shut up you commies," and "Go home you bums." Meanwhile, others shook their heads and said, "Ah leave them talk." And talk they did, saying "There is no honor in being cannon fodder in a rich man's war--the hell with your national honor. If we have our way about, this would be the last generation even to have a Vets Day."

In Chicago VVAW marched on the official ceremony, holding one of their own. Kept from the Legion-sponsored ceremony by the police, VVAW marched to the "Eternal Flame" after the Legion and VFW had left a red, white and blue wreath there. Instead, VVAW placed an orange wreath with the slogan, "We Won't Forget, We Won't Forgive," pointing directly at the system which says it will "honor" vets, but which will do nothing to treat vets exposed to Agent Orange. At the close of their ceremony, VVAW joined in a demonstration sponsored by Iranian students protesting the vicious regime of the Shah of Iran and U.S. involvement there, chanting "Death to the Shah," and "U.S. Out of Iran!"

In New York City, VVAW and the New York City Community College Veterans Clubs united to build for the day. More

than 40 people, including several women vets marched behind a banner proclaiming "We Won't Be Used Again!" along with demands centering on testing and treatment for Agent Orange, against V.A. red tape, and no cuts in medical care. The vets marched from the war memorial at Madison Square to Herald Square where Gimbels and Macys were holding special "Veterans' Day Sales." At the Square vets from VVAW as well as NYCC, Brooklyn and Queens colleges spoke. A Gold Star mother also spoke pointing out that her son had died in vain in Vietnam, fighting a war for the profit of the rich and voicing her support for the fight of vets today to secure a decent life.

There was a time when only vets organizations that pushed "patriotism," Americanism and support for wars could be heard on Veterans Day--that was the purpose behind the day in the first place. But that time no longer exists. Veterans themselves are standing up to be heard. They are pushing aside leaders and organizations that paint a rosy picture of either war or of the way that vets live today. This Veterans Day is both a reminder of the past as well as a testament to the future.

DIFFERENT CADENCE

The following songs and chants were used around the country on Veterans Day by VVAW chapters, marching to a different cadence!

Oh there they go,
They're at it again,
Preparing for
Their next big war;
They make us fight,
For their rich sums
While people here
Must live in slums.
To honor vets
This day is for,
That's why they cut
Our benefits more.
Oh profit is
Their holy word,
They kill us all
To make some more.
The moral of
The story is:
Let's fight the rich
Don't fight their wars!

It's the same all over the land,
(It's the same all over the land)
Jobs or Income's our demand.
(Jobs or Income's our demand)
(refrain)

Am I right or wrong?
(You're right!)
Are we weak or strong?
(We're strong!)
Are we movin' on?
(Right on!)
Keep on keepin' on.
(Keep on!)

Unemployment, it ain't funny,
We need jobs and we need
money.

We Can Tell Carter Who Vietnam Vets Are NEW UNKNOWN SOLDIER



Piously proclaiming all Vietnam vets are "unknown soldiers," President Carter unveils a plaque to be part of a monument to Vietnam vets in Arlington National Cemetery. At the same time vets around the country were saying give us decent healthcare instead.

On November 11th when VVAW was demonstrating in several cities to show anger and disgust with the way Vietnam vets are being treated, President Carter chose to "honor" Vietnam veterans in a way that only added insult to injury.

The headlines read, "Vietnam Vets New 'Unknown Soldiers.'" In essence, he was saying that since Viet vets got the short end of the stick, a 375-pound bronze plaque at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery makes it all O.K. now. Right, guys? Not "No," but "Hell No!"

As a result of our modern technology, none of our buddies or brothers who were killed in Vietnam remained unidentified.

This is the same technology that can't seem to identify Agent Orange poisoning in vets or clear up the red-tape foul-ups in the V.A.'s rotten system.

At any rate, left with no unidentified bodies of us, Jimmy Carter decided to make us all "unknown soldiers." Big deal! We've known this crap all along.

We were all "unknown" to the rich, like Jimmy and his cronies who sent us off to die in Southeast Asia, "unknown" to these same bastards who managed to keep many of us in unemployment lines, and "unknown" in the waiting rooms and lobbies of badly understaffed V.A. facilities across the nation.

While Jimmy and his crew have tried to make us "unknown," Vietnam vets continue to make ourselves the "known" soldiers. Carter and the others who went before him tried to pretend we didn't exist when we stormed the Capitol time and again--to throw back the useless medals they handed us, to demand an end to the war, to demand amnesty for our brothers, or when we seized the Statue of Liberty twice, the Vietnamese Embassy in Washington, and practically every major V.A. facility in the country. Now with the potential of a couple of million vets being infected by defoliants sprays used during the war in Indochina, Carter and the rich backers of his system would prefer we remained "unknown." But vets don't intend to sit by and take this new attack any more than we have in the past.

Throughout his speech, Carter constantly referred to Vietnam vets in the past tense as if the system which runs this country had succeeded in driving us into the ground. Quite the contrary: "Spit in our face, sucker, and we'll hit back." One Chicago vet's reaction was, "We don't want no bronze bullshit--we'll take it in cash."

Capping off his disgusting tribute, Carter, like the Legion and VFW, used Vets Day to plug the next war, saying: "I pledge a military force so strong that no enemy will ever dare attack us."

Well Jimmy, your last war for profits didn't go all that well for you and your kind, and the "unknown soldiers" you hope to bury on Vets Day won't stand by and watch you send our brothers and kids off in another war.

Carter--Take your plaque and sit on it!■

Magic, Statistics and Sleight-of-Hand CARTER 'ENDS' VIET VET UNEMPLOYMENT

As reported in the summer issue of THE VETERAN, a stroke of bureaucratic wizardry will soon lead to the end of unemployment among Vietnam and Vietnam-era veterans. In April, the Labor Department let out the fact that they had made a major decision: anyone who had been out of the service for more than 48 months could no longer be considered a Vietnam veteran when they try to get a job or enroll in job training in any of the many programs sponsored by that Department. A Texas Congressman investigating the situation found that, in one day, unemployment among Vietnam vets in his state had dropped by 66%, from over 30,000 to just over 10,000.

This sort of statistical magic--and no magician could make an elephant disappear more completely than the Labor Department attempted to eliminate unemployed Vietnam vets--is a big aid when President Carter, in his October message to Congress about the state of Vietnam veterans, could say, "Our review has found personal and family median incomes are substantially higher than similar aged non-veterans, and their unemployment rates have been lowered.... It is fair to say that most Vietnam-era veterans have moved

into the mainstream of economic life...." Or at least, as Carter did not add, off the rolls of the government statisticians!

But even this sleight-of-hand is only a part of the statistical game-playing that is directed at the army of unemployed vets. The statistic that Carter quoted was that unemployment among Vietnam-era vets was, at the time of his speech, 4.7%, below national average. These statistics come from state and local employment agencies; they are based on the number of vets on the rolls--that is, the number drawing unemployment. But even the Department of Labor, which adds up the figures, admits that as many as 30% of the veterans on their rolls are dumped without getting a job or getting training that can lead to a job. Another 3-4% of all workers are underemployed--looking for a full-time job but unable to find one. And there are no statistics on the number of vets forced into bare survival jobs at minimum wage in order to continue to exist. Adding up the figures, unemployment among Vietnam-era veterans may be as high as 1.3 million--13%--a long ways from "moving into the mainstream of the American economy."

So what are these turkey

politicians and their statistical gnomes up to? Playing upon the real needs of vets, making a little political mileage out of being a "friend of the vet" has always been good politics. If Carter, or anyone else, can come up with a program that may employ a thousand veterans, his "contribution" looks much larger if the total number of unemployed vets can be slashed. Pressure around the disgusting situation of unemployment among Vietnam vets forced the government to do something; the phoney job programs, which often benefit nothing more than a handful of career veteran bureaucrats with their own title and office, have accomplished so little that the only solution the government could find was to play these statistical games. In short, it's do-nothing and try to look as good as possible.

Of course being declared a "non-Vietnam-era vet," or being dropped from the statistics doesn't change the situation of the vet looking for a job, any more than trying to ignore the many problems of Vietnam vets has made vets go away. And this newest charade trying to mislead vets and the American people as a whole will not serve to keep vets silent. Vets will continue to demand jobs or income now!■

A Victory for U.S.-Chinese People's Friendship

U.S. RECOGNIZES CHINA

As the New Year began, the U.S. government finally recognized what the rest of the world has known for a long time, that the largest country in the world was in fact the Peoples Republic of China, not a small group of renegade Chinese who seized control of a small offshore island almost 30 years ago and, with the support of the U.S. declared themselves the "legitimate government of China." The U.S. media occasionally likes to call them "free China." The dictatorship in Taiwan, controlled with an iron hand by Chiang Kai-shek and his rich cohorts, a position handed down to his son, has never been "free," and it certainly had no control whatever over the vast majority of the people of the country of China.

The Carter administration's decision to recognize the People's Republic was greeted by loud outcries of pain by the right wing in the U.S., with the Neanderthal Senator Goldwater in the lead, screaming about "the most cowardly act in the history of the American presidency," and the whole right wing yelping at his heels. With all their attempts to turn the clock back to 1945 when the U.S. sat comfortably on top of the world, these right wingers did hit on one truth as they whacked away at Carter's decision--the U.S. government did in fact back down on every important point in the negotiations with China.

Since 1949 when the Chinese people under the leadership of Mao Tse-Tung and Chou En Lai successfully undertook the revolution which threw Chiang Kai-shek and his rich cronies and their foreign backers off the mainland, the U.S. government has attempt to ignore or subvert the people's government out of existence. During the early 1950's when millions of Chinese soldiers joined with the North Koreans to stop U.S. intervention in Korea, tirades against the Chinese reached a fever pitch. But the government of the people in China persisted, carrying forward their program to modernize and create a better life for the hundreds of millions of Chinese whose history had been full of foreign domination and wretched poverty for all but a small handful of rich landowners and others who worked hand-in-hand with foreign powers to keep down the aspirations of the people.

By relying on the people of

the country, the Chinese government passed through a number of difficult periods, constantly searching for the best ways to move the country forward. It became clear, even to those like the U.S. government who didn't want to believe it, that the communist government was not about to disappear, that their influence not only in their own country but around the world was continuing to grow. Seeing their growing ability to inspire liberation fighters around the world and, at the same time, fearing the growing power of the other imperialist power, the Soviet Union, the U.S. government decided, back in 1972, that they

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Chinese buy extra editions of the People's Daily: Hopes for wider contacts

Gov. Sets Older Against Younger Vets

PENSIONS 'UP' GI BILL 'DOWN'

Anyone who is, or has contact with a veteran of World War I or, more and more, World War II, is aware of the financial squeeze which traps many of these vets. Prices gallop along while Social Security payments and pensions move at a slow walk. For older vets warehoused in decaying V.A. facilities, the situation is constantly critical, and often these veterans are unable to do anything to change their situation.

Veterans of all eras join to applaud increase in pensions for these vets and for the recently passed 7.3% increase for the over 2 million vets with service-connected disabilities, many of them older vets. In the same bill there is even a provision which might finally straighten out the situation where vets now get social security increases in July only to find them taken back from pension payments in January; instead, the bill will set a constant level with automatic cost of living increases. While the income will still be far from what's needed, at least vets will not be faced by an income which bounces up and down during the year.

Once the new pension plan goes into effect it will increase V.A. pension costs by \$10 billion over the next five years.

But the V.A. and the government

which it belongs to are using this pension increase as one more spear to stick it to younger vets, particularly vets of the Vietnam-era.

Vets making use of the GI Bill in order to survive while they are in school face some problems similar to older vets--the same rising costs for everything from food to school tuitions to books. While the Veterans Affairs Committee of the Senate had projected a 5.5% increase in the GI Bill (not enough to come close to covering inflation but better than nothing), these plans were stuck on the shelf. The reason, according to a staff worker for the Committee, was "strong congressional pressure to give higher priority to pension reform for older veterans. The older veterans have the political clout with Congress," he said.

It's the same tactic that the system uses time and time again--pit older vets against younger vets, turn Black against white through devices like the Bakke decision, set vets preference against jobs for women: the list goes on and on, all pointing toward the single goal of keeping people fighting among themselves so they will not turn their anger toward the cause of our problems.

The V.A.'s budget request

for next year lists \$9.5 billion for pensions and compensation; \$2.1 billion for "readjustment benefits" (the various forms of the GI Bill and vocational rehabilitation training); the total budget is \$18.3 billion--which is a hellacious chunk of cash. How many of these bucks are actually helping vets as opposed to filling the pockets of bloated bureaucrats it's hard to say. But if the V.A. can't squeeze out another nickel to improve the GI Bill, then it's time to look elsewhere--the defense budget, for instance, or the missing billions that the General Services Administration has squandered filling the pockets of chummy contractors, or even the billions that are sent to help prop up tinhorn dictators like Marcos in the Philippines or the Shah of Iran. There's no reason to help one group of vets at the expense of another.

Of course Carter and the V.A. will point to the figures that show how somewhere around 72% of Vietnam-era veterans have used the GI Bill, the highest percentage ever. But as always when the government starts quoting its statistics, you'd better grab for your wallet because

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Reflections on WW I and Vets' Fight

'I'VE BEEN FIGHTING FOR MY DISABILITY SINCE 1922.' Black Veteran



Black troops in the trenches during World War I (left); as the first U.S. troops to reach the Rhine to bring an end to World War I, Black troops had an honored position in victory parade in Paris.

(The following interview was done by THE VETERAN with Preston Slider, a VVAW member in Chicago and a Black veteran of World War I. As a member of the all-Black 92nd Division, Preston was in France at the time of the Armistice, November 11th, 1918 (which was declared as Armistice Day, later changed to Veterans Day). The interview, of which we are reprinting only a part, deals both with the way that Black soldiers were used during World War I and how they were thrown away once that war was over.)

THE VET: Tell me about where you were from--what were you doing when you went into the army?

Preston: Well, I was inducted into the army from Chicago. The 365th Infantry (regiment), in Camp Grant. I went from Camp Grant to World War I by way of Long Island. We went from Long Island on the British ship "The Olympia." We landed in Brest, France, in 1918. And from there we went on out to a little place--can't think of the name--and from there to Metz in the Argonne Forest.

The Americans lost 1 division up there--they couldn't take it. So the 92nd Division was pulled up there--known as "The Buffalo Division"--all colored. We went up there in the Argonne Forest sector and we took that Argonne Forest sector. We had about 10 miles of soldiers--3 abreast. We went over with 258 men in my company and only 105 got back. The 367th and 368th (regiments, other regiments in the division) all got wiped out up there completely. But we busted the German line, the "Toul" line. ...

(Armistice Day, 1918)

So the General told us the

Armistice was going to be signed the 10th--November 10th, 1918. (Just before the Armistice) them shells were falling on them boys like showers of rain. And so finally they quit shelling. I came back on top (of the trench) and another boy was lying there. I looked at my watch. I said we got ten more minutes before the whistle blows (signifying the Armistice).

So that boy was standing up the parapet in the trenches. Me and him were standing there talking. I happened to turn my head around and a big shell came right by me just like that! And I went to duck and I told the boy, I said, "Duck!" When I ducked and then I got up and looked and his head was laying over here and his body down there. I said "Oh my God, look at here," and before I got done talking, the whistle was blowing.

And them Germans jumped up all around me. I was right in a nest of them and didn't know it because we were in high sage grass. And those Germans jumped up and patted me on the shoulder and said "Wake up Sergeant." I was just trembling and I said, "What'd you say?"...

We stripped buttons off one another for souvenirs and changed helmets and all that.

THE VET: You mean you had to take this action even though everyone knew the war was going to end the next day?

Preston: That's right. They knew the Armistice was going to be signed tomorrow.

THE VET: Did you talk to a lot of German soldiers?

Preston: Oh yeah. I talked to a lot of them after the Armistice, son.

THE VET: What did they think about the war?

Preston: They said the war was no good. Those boys that got captured. Those Germans asked us, "What are you all fighting for? This is a white man's war." I said, "We got to go by our government." He said "We ain't fighting you all. We got no grievance against the Black man. This is a white man's war...." And those Germans said, "We all are just like you. They say fight. We got to fight. But we don't want to fight."

And all those colored boys that got captured in Metz--they said "Man, I don't care if the war never ends. We were living like kings. Those white boys were painting their faces black.... The Germans weren't hard on none of them Black soldiers."

THE VET: Were the units completely segregated?

Preston: They were segregated in the United States. We had only one colored division in the U.S. That was our 92nd Division. It was built up out of nothing but colored. Everything in the 92nd Division was colored but from major to the general--they were all white.

THE VET: What did you think of the war at the time you were fighting it?

Preston: We didn't know nothing about it until after we got out and we came back and saw how they treated us. Then we knew that the war was nothing. When old Hoover got in there and then the soliders marched down on Washington, DC, for the pension--bonus--they threw gas on them....

(During the first campaign of the 92nd Division, Preston was hit in the knee by shrapnel; despite a swollen knee, he was sent back to the front. As vets from wars both before and after

World War I have discovered, we are "used once and then thrown away.")

THE VET: What did the government do for your knee after the war?

Preston: Nothing. Nothing. Ain't done a doggone thing. I've been fighting for it since 1922. And he told me you only got ten % disability.

THE VET: That was in 1922 they told you that?

Preston: Yeah. And they told me that up until now.

THE VET: Was that the V.A. that told you that?

Preston: Yeah. Ever since I've been going there it's been 10%, 10%, 10%. And out at Hines (a Chicago V.A. hospital) 40 some years ago they told me that it set into the marrow of your bones from that wounded knee.

THE VET: That's arthritis.

Preston: This is arthritis. It's in the marrow of your bones. Comes from that wounded knee. The doctor showed me an x-ray of it. Just like spider webs, moved up from the knee.

THE VET: This was 40 years ago?

Preston: Forty-five years ago. The doctor said there's no way in the world I could get rid of it. Just have to live with it. I've been fighting here since '22. And that doctor at Hines told me that if I could get it through, they are supposed to pay me back from 1922 to the present time.

THE VET: At what rate? 10%?

Preston: No, he said I'm worse than 10%, but they won't give me more than 10%.

THE VET: Did you get any money at all?

Preston: No. Not until I jumped on Metcalfe (a Chicago Congressman). Metcalfe must have told them, "Give him a little something to keep his mouth closed."

They gave me my disability check--\$35. I carried it back over there and I threw it in the supervisor's face and said, "You take this check and stick it you know where!" He said keep the check. There was a mistake. They gave you 10% from your knee down. This is from my knee up. He said you're supposed to get 40% from your knee to your hip. He said "File it back again and keep the check."

Later I went back and told

Continued on Page 15

AGENT ORANGE, Chemical Time Bomb in Vietnam Veterans

VETS DEMAND CARE, HIT BLA

Agent Orange is the name of a defoliant used in Indochina from 1963 up until Indochina was liberated in 1975. The U.S. government says that it stopped spraying the defoliant in 1970. In Vietnam that meant turning over the spray, providing the planes, and giving direction to the South Vietnamese troops to do exactly what U.S. troops had been doing earlier, but being able to proclaim innocence.

Many vets know about Agent Orange and some of the deadly effects it has had on Vietnam vets as well as on the peoples of Indochina. Many more vets don't know about the potentials for their being affected since the government, the Veterans Administration and, with a few exceptions, the national media have not publicized the issue.

In fact the government and its agencies are now making a concerted attempt to cause Agent Orange to disappear, just like they tried for years to ignore the situation of Vietnam vets. For instance:

*When Wisconsin's Senator Proxmire was pushed by members of Milwaukee VVAW to inquire of the Veterans Administration concerning their plans around Agent Orange, the V.A.'s response said, in part, "Every veteran who presents a claim that he has some form of illness which he believes may have its origin in an exposure to herbicides will receive careful and sympathetic consideration (???) and full documentation will be established of all facts. At the present time, however, the Veterans Administration has no conclusive data incriminating the ... herbicides as causative agents of any known category of disease or chronic symptoms. Nor is there persuasive evidence that the herbicides may increase the incidence or enhance the harmfulness of any naturally occurring disorders...."

*A quickly called Congressional hearing, taking place in the final week before Congress recessed, heard testimony from the Air Force, the Pentagon and the V.A. (none from concerned scientists who have been working on the problem for years, nor anything from affected Vietnam vets). Among the "facts" presented by an Air Force General were: Agent Orange was sprayed only in "remote areas." Of course that is exactly where hundreds of thousands of Indo-chinese people lived and where

U.S. troops fought; further, thousands of vets saw Agent Orange being used on the perimeters of U.S. bases and along roads. Second, the General said that "only 6% of the defoliant ever reached the ground." The figure may be true in triple canopy jungle where it was sprayed only once, but the U.S. government sprayed areas repeatedly; and, with something as potent and lethal as Agent Orange, 6% is more than enough to infect those on the ground.

A third point the General let slip was the "fact" that the symptoms which are showing up in Vietnam vets are caused by "an ideology, not Agent Orange." He did not explain exactly how an "ideology" causes liver cancer or deformed children. But his aim was clear--try to set up the situation so that, as the battle to win treatment for Agent Orange continues, the V.A. can say, "It's all in your heads!"

*Finally, Dow Chemical Company hit the scene with a new report from their scientists. Dioxin (one of the most deadly chemicals known to man and a by-product of one of the two ingredients in Agent Orange), they discovered, occurs naturally. It comes from any kind of combustion (like lighting a cigarette) and therefore cannot be considered to be any of their responsibility. (It's like saying that if you shoot someone it's not your fault because lots of people die naturally.) Dow Chemical, manufacturer of Agent Orange and the less-concentrated varieties now being used in the forestlands of the U.S., is clean and pure as the driven snow according to its own bought and paid-for scientists!

As was the case with the atrocities of the Vietnam War, the attempt to bury the crime that Agent Orange represents has proved a flop.

When VVAW first heard about Agent Orange in late March, we had a good idea of how the VA would react. They would do anything they could to keep from spending a nickel for anything which doesn't turn them and their bosses a profit--especially if it concerns Vietnam vets. Vets in Milwaukee went to the VA to get tested for Agent Orange poisoning, but it turned out to be a phoney test. After this, one official said, "The VA will move around this issue only when forced to." We were beginning to see that a long fight was ahead of us. That



Protesting the way veterans are being dealt with around Agent Orange exposure, vets in New York City (top) demand CBS show Agent Orange film, hit the streets on Agent Orange Day in Milwaukee (middle), speak out on the same day in Chicago (bottom left) and speak in San Francisco.

fight continues.

Picket lines, demonstrations, confrontations with V.A. officials, work with the media, showing of the film "Agent Orange: Vietnam's Deadly Fog"--all these things have helped to get out the word about how Vietnam vets poisoned by Agent Orange have been ignored, how the government and the V.A. is trying to sweep these vets under the rug. As the struggle grew, vets discovered there were millions of allies, that groups which were particularly concerned with the quality of our environment had been fighting the pollution caused by U.S. versions of Agent Orange for years demanding that the Environmental protection Agency (EPA) ban the use of Agent

Orange in the forests of the U.S. On Spray Day, October 2nd, a number of these groups joined in San Francisco for a rally followed by a march to the EPA offices.

A Black ex-Marine, exposed to Agent Orange while serving in a Marine artillery unit spoke for VVAW during the rally. He told of his own symptoms of Agent Orange poisoning--rashes, hypertension, inexplicable outbursts of rage--and how the V.A. and the government refuse to respond to the needs of veterans since there is no profit to be made in treating vets or their families. He pointed out that his own experience had taught him how vets have been used once and then thrown away; the

Par

ACKOUT

audience cheered loudly when he said that vets will fight for what we need--and we will not fight another rich man's war!

As he stepped off the podium, a vet with tears in his eyes embraced him, and many of the people there told him how they appreciated his words; vets thanked him for being there and speaking for vets. Finally, the rally moved to the EPA offices to demand a ban on chemical sprays using ingredients in Agent Orange and presenting a petition to EPA officials demanding immediate suspension of the use of 2,4,5-T.

Spray Day and the coalition which sponsored it dramatized the widespread use of 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T in the U.S. today. The chemicals, originally developed at the Army's Chemical and Biological Warfare Center, are effective in getting rid of undergrowth, making them highly profitable for lumber and paper-making companies, to say nothing of the huge profits which pour into corporations like Dow Chemical, one of the companies producing the herbicide. And as in Vietnam, the fact that people may be destroyed, comes in as a poor second in the headlong race for profits.

On October 21st, as set up by the National Meeting of VVAW, chapters of the organization in a number of cities held "Agent Orange Day," a time for us to get out to publicize the situation that vets face and to demand that the Veterans Administration publicize, test for, treat, and compensate victims of Agent Orange poisoning.

Vets took to the streets in San Francisco, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, Ann Arbor, Chicago, and New York City; friends and supporters of VVAW helped out in other places by writing letters to local TV stations demanding that they publicize Agent Orange

and by talking to Vietnam vets.

In San Francisco VVAW held its Agent Orange Day at the main downtown recruiters' station, getting out the word to potential veterans that the military would deal with them the same way we were dealt with--promise us anything but only provide the fighting, none of the benefits. In Twin Cities in Minnesota, vets went to the V.A. hospital to demand treatment for Agent Orange. In Milwaukee a car caravan through the city ended up at the V.A. After phoney tests for Agent Orange, given when the V.A. still hadn't decided what it was going to do about the situation, vets in Milwaukee had a special reason to be angry. But their anger brought results--see the article about "retesting" in this issue of THE VETERAN.

At the same time, at the Times Square recruiting station in New York City, New York City vets were taking out the same demand to the people of that city, talking to vets and to some of the millions of non-vets also concerned about the situation of veterans. In Ann Arbor, members of VVAW went to the V.A. hospital there to demand treatment. In Chicago, members of the chapter unrolled a banner demanding treatment for Agent Orange at Daley Plaza in the middle of the downtown area. Vets were soon moved off the Plaza by the police whose bosses decided that such a protest was not what they wanted people coming to a ceremony on the Plaza in honor of the new Pope to see. Vets held their picket line and rally across the street, finding hundreds of passers-by who had heard of Agent Orange and who agreed with VVAW that the V.A. had the responsibility for finding a solution to this problem faced by vets.

Nine months after the story of Agent Orange poisoning first hit the front pages, the V.A. has done little to provide vets with what is needed to test for and treat the effects of the defoliant. But the protests of veterans--activities like Agent Orange Day--the spotlight being shined by environmental groups, and the concern voiced by many people are backing the government and the V.A. into a corner. Their reaction so far has been refusal, then attempts to plaster over the holes in their story. But it is only because vets and others have not allowed the issue to die that they have been forced to go this far and to begin to at least talk about developing a program for testing and treatment. The fight to get what we need, especially with the help of victims of the poison, will force the V.A. and the system behind it to give in and treat Agent Orange! ■



Part of crowd at Bay Area Spray Day

FRAGGIN'

Sp 5 Willy(Ret.)



Down in the Southwest the U.S. Air Force has created a little bit of controversy. F-15's flying out of Holloman Airforce Base, New Mexico, have recently expanded their area of operations. This has brought cries of protest from residents of Texas where the F-15's are now overflying.

However, the Air Force does have its supporters in the area--the local cattle population. It seems that sonic booms have a good effect on the animals' sex lives. One of the ranchers observing the phenomenon said that old bulls lying around while an F-15 flies over will stand up and say, "What was that?" While he's up, he'll go on over and get it on with one more cow.

The cattle aren't the only ones happy with the F-15 flights. The ranchers are happy because livestock production is up.

If you stop and think about it, this discovery has far-reaching implications. Take the Pentagon budget for example. A lot of people complain that the Pentagon spends too much money. Some malcontents like to point out things like the Navy buying 65,000 aviator glasses for 33,000 aviators each year or the 24 Coast Guard admirals who authorized government-paid trips for their wives. The F-15 can help them cut the budget and get the critics off their backs. You see, since the F-15 helps increase livestock production, the F-15 program can be taken out of the Pentagon budget and given to the Department of Agriculture. This would cut back a few billion dollars and the Pentagon would be able to claim its first budget cut in years.

Another great possibility is the scientific implication of the F-15. For centuries and centuries, scientists have been looking for an aphrodisiac, and this could be a breakthrough. At this point the only known successes have been with experimental animals (the Texas cattle), but some day millions of people may have the F-15 and its sonic boom to thank for a happy sex life.

So let's hear a great big MOO for the Air Force and its sexy F-15's.

* * * * *

Five years after Vietnam the U.S. military seems to be itching to get going again. At the NATO maneuvers in Europe, 20 people got killed, including 7 civilians in these "peace-time" maneuvers. Then, out in California, Navy fliers dropped 32 bombs outside the town of Wonder Valley. These were A-6 Intruders and A-7 Corsairs off the U.S.S. Ranger aiming for the bombing range at 29 Palms. These were the same guys who had blown a tugboat out of the water off San Diego earlier in the year. Fortunately, no one was killed in either incident.

The Navy hasn't explained these incidents or placed the blame on anyone, but I can make a couple of guesses. These are probably some of the pilots in Vietnam who used to take target practice on water buffalo and farmers in the fields. Or maybe they're the pilots who dropped their payload on us when they were supposed to be aiming for the "V.C." Or maybe they just had defective aviator glasses, and that explains why the Pentagon orders so many every year.

* * * * *

Members of Congress have the privilege of using the U.S. mail free in order to conduct their business as legislators. Sometimes they get accused of using the free postal service for business other than their work in Congress.

Take Representative Daniel Flood of Pennsylvania for example. He recently used his mailing privileges to send out the six-page American Legion bulletin on National Security and Foreign Relations. I guess this is what is meant by abuse of mailing privileges.

What interests me about this is why the American Legion can't pay its own postage? Why do the taxpayers have to foot the bill? Isn't this the patriotic veterans' organization that stands for decency, honesty, justice and equality for all?

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Cont. from p.6

CHINA-U.S.

could no longer afford to ignore the Peoples' Republic. The result was the now famous Nixon trip to China made not because Nixon was any champion of the people but because he had little choice but to recognize the reality of the Chinese influence around the world.

The same is true of the Carter decision to formally recognize the Peoples' Republic. Recognition was held up for years over the question of Taiwan--the U.S. saying it would never desert its "ally." Chinese leaders pointed out that Taiwan has been historically one of the provinces of China; even the Nationalist government on Taiwan agreed with that--in fact, they said (even if no one believed them) that they were ruling China from the province of Taiwan. Carter, too, said in his talk announcing formal recognition that Taiwan was part of China. He dropped U.S. recognition of Taiwan and removed the U.S. embassy there. And for all his talk about a "continuing commitment" to insure the "freedom" of Taiwan, the protective curtain of U.S. troops and U.S. military aid will soon be gone. Every point where there was serious disagreement between China and the U.S., Carter backed down on. He had to; he needed China more than China--with its long history of being able to rely on itself--needed him.

While Carter was recognizing the real world, back at home the American Legion was "representing veterans" by unleashing its own statement: "Taiwan symbolized the democratic and free enterprise system," the Legion commander said in a press statement. Vietnam vets who went to Taipei, the capital of Taiwan, on R&R might well agree with the statement. They saw the "freedom" of the Taiwanese women to be prostitutes, the "freedom" of Taiwanese drug dealers to flood the market with all kinds of dope, the "freedom" of the rich (both Taiwanese and American) to exploit the workers. Meanwhile, on the Chinese mainland, prostitution has been wiped out, and former prostitutes have been given the chance to be useful members of society through retraining. Dope is no longer a problem in a country once famous for its opium dens. Workers and peasants, the vast majority of the people of the country, have control over their own destiny free from the exploitation of rich

bosses. Peoples' control allowed the overthrow of the much-publicized "Gang of Four" who were thrown out of power by the people of China because they could see that the "Gang" was attempting to bring back the old system of exploitation. Following the direction set forth by Mao Tse Tung the government of China continues to build a society and system which will provide a better way of life for its people.

VVAW applauds the victory of the Peoples Republic of China in winning formal recognition on their terms from the U.S. government. We welcome the increased relations this formal recognition will mean--the tens of thousands of Chinese students who come to the U.S. and be able to teach us some of the lessons they have learned. We welcome the fact that the Chinese people will be able to benefit from some of the technology of the U.S. and to do so without falling into the trap that U.S. corporations have so long been setting. Unlike Taiwan where, for one example, the electronics manufacturer Stewart-Warner could pick up one of its plants and runaway from the U.S., throw American workers out of jobs and exploit the workers of Taiwan by paying them 50¢ a day; in the Peoples' Republic, the government will own 51% of any enterprise built there, workers will retain the right to strike, and ownership will revert to the peoples' government after a limited number of years. Or take the example of Coke, long a symbol of American economic domination of developing countries: while the Peoples Republic has now begun the manufacture of Coke, the same conditions apply--majority ownership by the peoples government, and further, the Chinese have said that their primary interest in a Coke plant is to learn from American technology--in this case, advanced bottling techniques which the Coca Cola company can provide. Aware of the possible dangers, the people of China and those they have selected as leadership are providing safeguards which will insure they gain the advantages of Western technology without falling into the traps which that technology has meant in other countries.

We hope to continue to learn from the many successes of the people of China over the years since 1949 as they move ahead improving the lives of all their people, and we welcome the opportunities that normalization of relations will mean.■

EDITORIAL

IRAN, STUDENTS, and DEPORTATION



Iranian students storm home of Shah's sister.

Exactly like rats deserting a sinking ship, the relatives of the Shah of Iran are scurrying to the U.S. where they can join such notables as Lon Nol, ex-U.S. puppet dictator of Cambodia, ex-Vietnamese President Thieu (who probably ran off with millions in gold from the South Vietnamese treasury) and ex-General Loan, famous for his personal execution--without even a semblance of trial--of a liberation fighter in the streets of Saigon (see "Fraggin") but even more damned for his job as kingpin of the heroin trade.

Jimmy Carter and the rest of his government have expressed alarm because a thousand Iranian students burned cars, fought the police, and tried to overwhelm the home of the Shah's sister behind a wall of flames in the exclusive Beverly Hills area where they have bought palatial homes with the money pillaged from the sweat and blood of the Iranian people. And Carter is being joined in a chorus of dismay by those who, among other things, are scared to death by the idea of militant demonstrations in the suburb haunts of the wealthy, wishing passionately that the rebellions would be confined to the ghettos.

VVAW remembers the statement inscribed on the Statue of Liberty: "Give me your tired, hungry, your huddled masses yearning to be free...." Think of that as you read the newspaper accounts of the entourage around the mother of the Shah: "She spent Wednesday night at the Marriott Hotel where her party rented an entire floor of 33 rooms.... Under the guard's care were 90 pieces of luggage,

a black poodle and a number of birds of various colors." Hardly the "huddled masses!"

Iranian students are fighting for freedom, fighting in this country the same fight as millions of their countrymen in Iran--and fighting the same enemy: the Shah and his U.S. backers. That the Shah should feel free to run off to the U.S. is an outrage. His billions of dollars do not cover what he is; the fact that his mother is portrayed as a sweet, white-haired lady of 90 years does not change what she stands for. If people want to feel sympathy, save it for the 18-year-old Iranian peasant girls whose eyesight is being lost doing the intricate, 12-hour-a-day chore at slave wages to make the famous Persian carpets which the Shah's family walks on and milks for millions of extra dollars in trade.

If Jimmy Carter is even half serious about his "human rights" advocacy (something that he has so far shown only when it's convenient for him) let him tell the Iranian students that they--and their struggle for freedom--are welcome here in the U.S., and further tell the Shah and his family to find another sanctuary to hide in. The U.S. should not be a haven for war criminals, even those who have worked hand in glove with the U.S. government, like the ex-leaders of Cambodia and Vietnam, nor for the blood-stained money stolen from the people of Iran. Support the Iranian students--and other students fighting for freedom in their own countries. Down with the Shah in Iran or in the U.S.■

MILLIONS TARGET OPPRESSOR UPRISING IN IRAN HITS SHAH'S RULE



Yanking down a statue of the Shah of Iran the Iranian people demonstrate on the streets of Tehran (left) while their militant actions in fact pull the Shah off his throne. Demonstrations continue (right) when the Shah hand picks a new government.

The clock has run out for the Shah of Iran. Hard-pressed by demonstrations of the Iranian people numbering in the millions, nation-wide strikes that have almost shut down the country, and the inability of a military government to keep a lid on the peoples' struggle, the bloody rule of the Shah has come to an equally bloody end.

Placed in power by a CIA sponsored coup in 1953 which overthrew the democratic government of Iran, the Shah bartered Iranian oil deposits for a vast arsenal of weapons unmatched by most countries in the world--weapons which have, in part, been turned against the Iranian people. While the Shah and U.S. oil companies (as well as other U.S. corporations) grew rich from these collaborations, the people of Iran saw little of the new-found wealth living at a level of unimaginable poverty, and brutalized by the murderous agents of SAVAK, the Iranian secret police directly controlled by the Shah.

The rich oil reserves were only one of the vital interests that the U.S. government saw in Iran; of crucial importance is the strategic location of Iran on the borders of the Soviet Union, standing in between the USSR and the Indian Ocean. Fear of the growing power of the USSR has led the U.S. government to beat a path to the Shah's door, fulfilling his every whim. U.S. president after president have praised the Shah as a bulwark against the Soviet Union and as a stabilizing force (meaning U.S. puppet) in the Middle-East.

Most recently, Jimmy Carter, self-styled advocate of human rights and self-proclaimed "activist" in this area, managed to conveniently overlook the history of political prisoners, murder, torture, and outright dictatorship to welcome the Shah to the U.S. last year. But the rebellion of the people of Iran spilled over to Washington, DC, and Carter and the Shah got a snoutful of their own teargas as thousands of Iranian students in the U.S. stormed the White House hoping to kick the hell out of this dictator. It was all a sign of things to come.

By the end of the summer of 1978, students were carrying out almost daily anti-Shah demonstrations. By the end of December almost every segment of Iranian society--workers, peasants, intellectuals and students, religious leaders, anti-Shah politicians and other revolutionary forces had virtually shut down Iran. Hardest hitting among striking workers were those in the oil fields who turned off the flow of oil--and, at the same time, money into the Shah's coffers--not only for export but to the point that the U.S. had to start exporting fuel to one of the richest oil producing countries in the world. Among the demands of the oil workers was that Iran immediately cease its oil exports to the government of South Africa for its brutal repression of the Black majority in that country, and to Israel whose policies refuse to recognize the legitimate

demands of the Palestinian people.

The Shah has reacted with every weapon and trick in his bloody book. Turning loose his U.S. equipped and trained military, the Shah has gunned down demonstrators from every walk of life. On September 8th when millions of demonstrators marched all over Iran, the military slaughtered 6000 people in Tehran alone. And the attempt of the Shah's regime to downplay their "body count" has not disguised the fact that thousands upon thousands of demonstrators have been shot down in the streets all over the country.

But the thousands of deaths did not have the desired effect; for every killing, hundreds more came forward to take the place of those killed. The Shah's military government was forced to step down, and his leading generals fled the country.

As the strikes and turmoil grew, long outlawed labor organizations surfaced to lead the workers into battle. The Shah tried to buy off the workers' economic demands, promising huge wage increases totalling \$7 billion and making it clear that the workers were hitting him where it hurt--in the pocket-book. But the workers continued to strike. Troops sent to break the strikes and force the workers back to their jobs failed miserably. In fact the military had its own problems with troops shooting their officers rather than firing on crowds of demonstrators.

The Shah added to his troubles by gunning down a group of Islamic religious tra-

ees, bringing the full brunt of influential Islamic forces against his government, refusing to accept anything less than the complete ouster of the Shah and the institution of a democratic government.

As a last-ditch effort, the Shah tried to maintain control with minor concessions and reforms; the people continued to respond, "Death to the Shah!"

Faced at last with the realization that the people of Iran were going to string him up from the nearest lamp post, the Shah has now dealt his last card. Setting up a government of nominal opposition leaders whom he chose, the Shah has announced that he's "tired" and is leaving the country on "vacation." The Shah's escape was greeted with loud celebrations throughout Iran. And by continuing their demonstrations (in the face of continued government killings of demonstrators) the people of Iran are making it clear that they do not want a government hand-picked by the Shah (nor do they want the constitutional monarchy that the Shah is pushing), but instead a government of their choice. The present government is the Shah's last stab at control, a puppet government for a puppet dictator.

At the time of this writing, all indications point to likelihood that the Shah's "vacation" will last forever. The Shah, his vast family and his cronies have raped the country for billions of dollars, all safely put away in European and U.S. banks and property for the inevitable day when their reign would be overthrown. Most of the Shah's family has already snuck out of the country, but they will hardly face poverty. A sister owns a huge estate on Majorca; a nephew owns an island. Cronies illegally sent \$2.4 billion out of the country, and so many Iranians have bought million + dollar homes in one Southern California suburb and its being called "Iran West." But just like the Shah's tearful visit last year, the Shah and his family are finding that they are not yet safe from those who refuse to accept his bloody past or the last-minute plunder of the country's wealth: Iranian students in the U.S. have already attacked the home of the Shah's mother, driving her into a secret hideaway (see editorial).

The people of Iran have made it clear that they want "independence": independence from the Shah, independence from the U.S. corporations, and no deals with the Soviet Union. The latest government may be able to maneuver around for a while, but will not be able to deter the Iranian people in their drive for freedom. ■

Black and White Fighting Oppression in SOUTHERN AFRICA

The rulers of South Africa and Rhodesia have attempted to buy time for their racist governments by laying new plans to stop their opposition--the people of their countries. The war drums beaten by these rulers echo their precarious position and sound the death knell for their form of rule.

South Africa has sent its army plowing across borders of Botswana, Zambia, Angola and Namibia to eliminate the forces of SWAPO (the Southwest Africa Peoples Organization, leaders of the liberation struggle in Namibia, formerly known as Southwest Africa) and their bases. Killing of women and children by the SADF (South African Defense Forces) swells the body counts since, as in Vietnam, a dead body is automatically counted as a guerilla or terrorist.

The hottest battlefield has been in Namibia which has been controlled for years by South Africa, mostly for its rich natural resources. Over 60,000 white South African troops have been moved into Namibia to carry out offensives against liberation forces. And while the SADF has been claiming victories on the front, the ruling class back in South Africa has been claiming their own "victories." Recently they traded in Vorster, their old-line racist prime minister, for a new one, unbendingly committed to the policy of apartheid. Prime Minister Botha stated, after his "election," that, "I intend to carry out the racial policies of my party with all of its consequences." The South African government has wavered on UN-supervised elections in Namibia, depending on whether they thought they could control the outcome. Now, with growing numbers of SADF troops in the country, Botha is "advising" Namibia to go ahead with elections.

Another proof of "electoral politics" in action is found in Rhodesia which has solved its problem of majority rule by executive decision. Even though a four member bi-racial committee was established seven months ago to supervise the transition from minority white rule to majority rule, Prime Minister Ian Smith, head of the Committee, has announced that no elections will be held in Rhodesia (they were scheduled for the end of December in 1978). He claims that his government has won what amounts to recognition by

countries such as the U.S. At the same time, over one half of the country was placed under martial law while South African troops helped white Rhodesian forces mount an offensive against revolutionary forces in Rhodesia and Zambia. The swift action was necessary; the racist rulers saw a growing support for real majority rule and support for the peoples' revolutionary forces, not for the sham version of majority rule that Smith and his Black cronies were pushing on the people of the country.

While South Africa and Rhodesia work together to continue their reigns of oppression, and rule with iron fists government leaders around the world who denounce apartheid, do nothing! These countries, including the U.S., send their peacemakers scurrying around in circles mumbling about negotiations and talking about "human rights violations." No move has been taken against the outrageous acts of these racists because of the common bond of profits which have tied the existence of these white governments and apartheid rule to profits of British and U.S. businesses based in the countries or ripping off the rich resources to be found there.

For example, an effective boycott against Rhodesia and South Africa would quickly run the economies of these systems into the ground and probably topple the racist power structures. Western leaders, however, say that such a boycott would hurt the Black majority more than the white rulers and will not take such drastic action. They glibly speak of their concern for Blacks and all they have to lose--like the 13¢ per hour pay and life on government reservations--while they avoid mentioning that a boycott might mean losing access to the strategic minerals like gold, uranium and chrome.

Against this background, the white minority in South Africa (Azania) and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) are not deaf to the clamor of war or blinded to the atrocities committed by the armies that preserve the racist rulers. To fight a war, you need an army, and the people have begun to build resistance movements against being used for cannon fodder. Much like the U.S. government during its venture in Southeast Asia, the governments in Southern Africa



South African drafter resisters and supporters picket the showing of the film "Wild Geese" in London; the film, modelled on the use of mercenary troops in the Congo--now Zaire--glorifies the role played by these "kill for bucks" scum who sell their "talents" to the highest bidder.

face increasing numbers of draft dodgers and deserters--unwilling to fight a war that only benefits the rich. Unlike the rulers of the countries, the resisters can see that the future of their countries cannot lie in white minority rule.

Just like the U.S. government had to take strong action against resistance to their war in Southeast Asia, the governments of South Africa and Rhodesia have to attempt to suppress resistance and resisters. Rhodesia has put into action a plan to conscript young Africans to fatten up their overstretched armies. Tens of thousands of Blacks are affected and a movement has begun to fight government conscription. A petition, circulated and signed by university students stated: "We will not, willingly or under force, expose our families, the majority who are in operational areas, to the dangers of being killed by the nationalists forces because we, their sons, will have turned class traitors to the cause of the masses of Zimbabwe." No longer can the Rhodesian leaders count on Blacks accepting their role as enforcer of a system that oppresses and kills their brothers and sisters.

South Africa has taken stricter measures to maintain their army because the problem of dissent is more widespread and severe. For the first time in 20 years, more whites (the backbone of the SADF) are leav-

ing the country than entering. Those who cannot afford the cost of leaving on a plane are crossing the borders of Botswana and Angola seeking refuge and political asylum as draft resisters and deserters, refusing to fight for a system which they loathe. There is no alternative for service in the South African military--you go when they call you or face their brand of justice. Advocating conscientious objection can be punishable by death under the Terrorism Act; it is illegal to talk about the draft, and deserters, if caught, can be expected to spend ten years in prison at the least. Yet, these harsh sentences did not keep 4,000 men from refusing to report for duty in 1976 (the last year for which the South African government gave out figures) or stop the growth of a war resisters' movement in South Africa.

Throughout South Africa, war resisters have banded together in an effort to help those who want to escape the racist military. Once outside the coun-

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PAN AFRICANIST CONGRESS OF AZANIA

PERMANENT OBSERVER MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Telephone: (212) 986-7378

SUITE 506
211 EAST 43rd STREET
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10017
17th November, 1978

Vietnam Veterans Against the War
Box 20184
Chicago, ILL. 60620.

Dear Comrades,

On behalf of the Central Committee, the members of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania and the Azania Peoples' Liberation Army, the armed wing of our vanguard movement and indeed in the name of the entire oppressed people of Azania we salute our comrades-in-arms of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War for their solidarity and revolutionary assistance accorded us through the gift of sneakers, boots and fatigues recently donated to our movement. We are happy to inform you that these have been sent and have since been received at our External Headquarters in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania for distribution to our cadres who are poised to intensify the armed struggle of the people of Azania, under the leadership of the PAC, and confront the counter-revolutionary violence of the racist regime with the revolutionary violence of the people.

Whilst we continue to request and welcome gifts of all kinds for the execution of our struggle, the revolutionary symbolism of your donation reflects your understanding of the nature of our struggle and the method for its waging. Please be assured that these gifts will be utilised in the manner for which they were collected and donated. With the intensification of our struggle we will continue to need this solidarity. For our part, we assure you that we will vindicate the confidence reposed in us by dealing death blows to the racist regime that has usurped the birthright of the Azanian masses, thus making our contribution to the struggle of the people of the world against imperialism and super-power hegemony.

Kindly convey our revolutionary greetings and solidarity to our comrades of the VVAW. Our thanks go to all those who worked so hard to make this donation possible.

Yours for the revolution,



ELIZABETH R. SIBEKO.
Representative in the USA &
Member of the Central Committee, PAC.

MOTTO - SERVICE, SACRIFICE & SUFFERING

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AFRICA

try, these resisters have built the beginnings of international support for dissenters. In July, South African resisters and supporters demonstrated in London against the showing of the film "Wild Geese" to voice their disgust with the film that glorifies the role of white mercenaries who fight for the SADF. They brought to the public the real issues that the movie glosses over. OMKEER, a paper for call-up age South Africans, is run by war resisters to help build the resistance against minority rule. The paper has been used to create dissension in South Africa by providing the truth of what apartheid rule is and how it is kept in power. One group here in the U.S., the South African Military Re-

fugee Aid Fund (SAMRAF) is not only building support for dissenters but is also fighting for deserters and CO's who seek asylum in the U.S.

The coordinator for SAMRAF is Don Morton, a South African exile. After exposing police torture in South Africa in 1971, Morton fled the country to continue his anti-apartheid campaign. When asked how does one come out of South Africa not a die-hard racist, he replied, "There is no way one can rise out of that mentality without permanent stains and scars of years of racism except by steeping oneself in the liberation struggle."

SAMRAF recently sponsored a speaking tour by Michael Morgan, a South African deserter. Morgan spent one year of required duty in the army and was discharged. Three months after his discharge, though, he was

drafted and sent to Namibia for duty. During a two week leave he deserted to Britain and began to speak out against apartheid rule and the products of their war. While in Namibia he witnessed the results of military training--hands cut off bodies to be sent back to Pretoria for fingerprint checks, men looking forward to the search and destroy murder missions, and the policy of not taking prisoners. "During training, the military puts you through an intensive brainwashing program," he said. "The idea is to tear us down and rebuild us to their liking. There was lot's of tearing down and little rebuilding."

"We were taught that SWAPO guerillas were frothing-at-the-mouth terrorists and beasts...", but the "beasts," he came to learn, "were white commandos intent on proving their manhood by killing."

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GI Bill-Pensions

someone is getting ready to rip you off. And the GI Bill statistics prove the point. Of the 7.2 million vets who have used the GI Bill, 4.3 million (that's about 60%) have used 13 months or less; 3.1 million have used less than 7 months! (These figures come from the publication of the Wisconsin Veterans Union and are based on Wisconsin statistics which are then applied to the country as a whole--there may be variations from place to place, but Wisconsin is fairly typical.)

When Carter or one of his V.A. frontmen tell us how well the GI Bill has been used, how successful it has been, they won't bother with the facts behind the figures. What they'll do is try to run the riff that the high percent of GI Bill use shows that vets can get by--there is no reason for an increase, they'll try to tell us. Once again, they're lying to us. No one can say 3 million vets dropped out of school because they suddenly lost interest in an education; in fact, a large number of these vets were forced out by GI Bill inadequacies and the constant screw-ups around checks.

With the support of their phony figures, the V.A. and government are now trying to give to older vets in hopes that younger vets will somehow be blinded to how they are being robbed. But a lot of us have fought this kind of tactic before and have no patience with it now. We say that vets of whatever era must get what they need to live decently--whether it's pensions for older vets, disability payments for disabled vets, or GI Bill payments for vets in school! ■

"For years I had been participating in something I did not believe in. Now I am doing something I do believe in."

The resisters' organization has four aims:

- *Build support outside South Africa for dissenters;
- *Create a climate of resistance inside South Africa;
- *Provide military information to SWAPO and the Patriotic Front;
- *Educate war resisters and exiles.

One of the chief problems faced by deserters is political asylum. "No western country offers asylum to the South Africans," Morgan stated. "After all, South Africa is fighting an illegal war in Namibia. What if a man says he will not fight the illegal war? Will the U.S. or Britain force him to do so by extradicting him back to South Africa?" ■

Rich Get Richer, the Workers Get Shafted

WAGE-PRICE "CONTROLS"

Jimmy Carter recently announced a new government program of voluntary wage-price guidelines, calling it "Phase 2" in the attack on inflation. It was about 90% pep talk delivered solemnly and seriously to underline the gravity of the situation (something that people who have to buy food or pay bills have known for some time). The theory seems to be that by calling for "national unity" and by saying that "we're all in this together," then the companies will hold down price rises on their products, workers will ask for smaller pay raises (the now famous 7%) and as a result, inflation will slow down and the country will recover from the latest in its series of economic problems.

That's the theory. It was tried out before when then President Ford blundered out his WIN (Whip Inflation Now) program--which did nothing except make a lot of money for some button manufacturer who sold millions of WIN buttons. Contrary to the "theory," the reality is much different. Wage increases are not the cause of inflation, as Carter and his economic geniuses would have us believe. In fact, demands for better pay on the part of workers are nothing but an attempt to catch up. Even government statistics reflect the fact that, since 1972, real wages (which means buying power--how many hours of work it takes to buy a pound of hamburger or whatever else) have gone down. So how are workers' increased paychecks the cause of inflation?

Barry Bosworth, Director of the government's Council of Wage and Price Stability, admits that under Carter's policies, workers can expect no increase in real wages "for several years." Every time there's a problem in the economy, some government expert is around to tell us that we'll have to "tighten our belts," "bite the bullet," and "pull together." For millions of workers, just being able to stay even, to be able to afford the same things people could buy a couple of years ago, would be a real step forward.

It always seems to work out that when there's a crisis in this country, it's the majority of people who have to tighten the belt; meanwhile, the rich and their corporations make a mad rush for fat bellies and fatter wallets. How often have we seen the corporate bosses moaning and whining

because of their workers' winning a 10% wage increase while, out of the other side of their mouths, they're using the increase to justify their raising prices by 20%? When the price of hamburger goes up by 50¢ a pound (as is now being predicted for 1979) you can bet it's not the farmers who are going to cash in--it's going to be the giant meat-packing houses, and not the workers in those industries, either.

Inflation isn't the only way they squeeze the last nickel out of us, either. Veterans are all too familiar with some of the other ways. Long waits at the V.A. hospital because the staff is too small; disability checks you have to fight like hell to get and then can't possibly survive on; lack of qualified doctors in the hospitals. These and hundreds of other social services suffer in this inflated economy because money goes to serve the rich for oil depletion allowances, for inflated military expenditures (and profits for the corporations which manufacture the materials), and more.

Inflation comes because prices are raised; prices are raised because companies need constantly to increase their rate of profit in order to stay in business. Even staying even isn't good enough--unless the corporation can make more and more profit on each dollar they have to invest, some other corporation is likely to snatch away the business, and the money needed for capital investment is likely to go somewhere else. Instead of each worker producing 50% more than his pay, it has to go up--55%, 60%. One result is the speed-ups and the simultaneous layoffs which have become so familiar to hundreds of thousands of factory workers.

There are other contributing factors to high inflation. The cost of the war in Vietnam is coming back to haunt us. The deficit spending by the government contributes. The fact that the U.S. can no longer impose its will on the rest of the world--as in the case of oil reserves, for instance--is important. Obsolete machinery, a situation faced by many U.S. firms, causes less to be produced for the amount of money invested (as well as bringing speed-up and layoffs to save money).

None of these reasons for inflation have anything to do



While President Carter and George Meany, head of the CIO-AF of L may have tactical differences on economic policy, they are united on the main point--talk big about benefits for workers but in fact push the workers down while aiding the corporations.

with the workers, although it is true that workers who refuse to be worked to death because of speedups do contribute--as they damn well should. Nevertheless, economic experts and spokesmen for the country's rulers still try to heap the blame on workers' "unreasonable" wage demands. Lurking behind Carter's "voluntary" Phase 2 guidelines is the threat that if people do not adhere to the 7% wage increase figure, the government will have to institute wage and price controls. And this is the course of action being pushed by George Meany, supposed champion of America's workers, whose last day of productive labor as a plumber was in the 1920's and who now, no doubt, has to call in help to unplug his toilet.

In fact, wage and price controls have been used before. Nixon imposed them in the early 70's, and they were half successful: the controls on wages held, but prices increased and inflation continued. Workers got screwed again while the big bosses could sit back and gloat. And they want to do it to us once again.

Workers aren't to blame for inflation and workers aren't about to pay for it. The government would love to be in the situation where the people are "thankful" for a crumb here and there. Vets were supposed to be grateful, two years ago,

when the GI Bill increased by a miserly 7%, somewhere close to one third of the cost of inflation since the last time the GI Bill was boosted. Postal workers are supposed to show their gratitude to the postal service by working all the harder in return for their recent contract which gives them somewhere around 20% increases in wages over the next three years--while inflation is running at 10-11% and may well start galloping beyond that figure at any moment.

With some of the various fringe benefits, postal workers made some gains in the 1978 contract. Coal miners, as a result of a record-setting strike, made important contract gains. Cost-of-living allowances were an important part of contract struggles as workers fought to get some way to deal with inflation.

In 1979 there are many more vital contracts up to be renegotiated. Auto, trucking, electrical, construction, rubber, meat-packing and other industries will find many workers who are not about to be sweet-talked or bamboozled into shouldering the burden of inflation. 1979 may well be a year when the workers who are supposed to bear the brunt of "Phase 2" or whatever other program Carter and his cronies trump up, will announce that they've had enough of belt tightening--it's time to fight. ■

Original Agent Tests a Phony VETS RETESTED

(Shortly after VVAW found out about the potential hazards of Agent Orange back in March of 1978, members of the Milwaukee Chapter of the organization went to the Veterans Administration to demand tests for the defoliant. Milwaukee VVAW has a long history of fighting the V.A. having taken over various V.A. offices a number of times and having pushed forward the fight for healthcare and disability payments in every way possible. As a result the V.A. there felt it had to do something about this newest demand. So they caved in to the vets demands and gave a test--a phony test, primarily a blood test--to defuse the anger of vets at this newest outrage. Once vets found out that the "test" was purely for show, their anger grew since it was clear that the V.A. was playing with veterans' lives.

The following letter describes the beginning of the process of retesting, again the result of the continued struggle

against the V.A. and all that it stands for. The letter was written by one of the vets who had gone through the original phony "test.")

On November 9 a couple of us were called to the V.A. for further tests. During our Agent Orange Day demonstration a V.A. doctor mentioned that he had seen a list of 22 people being called back for testing for Agent Orange; so far, as far as I know, only 2 have actually been called back--two of the six VVAW members who took the original "phony test."

We were at the V.A. from 8:35 AM to 4:50 PM: I was just helped through a 4-page form, 2 pages for me and two for the doctor. It asked name, rank, service no, places of duty in Vietnam, when, where, how, and how long, and what it was like. I asked if we were expected to remember all the dates and places and the V.A. worker said it helps but isn't necessary, so I wrote them a book.

Then we went to one doctor who gave us a complete looking over and worked on the form. Then a shitty V.A. lunch that we had to pay for, followed by X-Rays, blood tests, pulse and blood pressure.

I waited two hours to see the last doc and he was really neat. He said we really got screwed and that the poison was cumulative. Even if we ate Lake Michigan fish we were adding to our poisons because PCBs and dioxin are related. We talked about Agent Orange for 10 minutes. I then went down stairs to file for disability. I felt that since April we have forced the V.A. to move somewhat but still they are not pushing it except to ask each Vietnam vet if he was exposed to toxic chemicals.

John
VVAW, Milwaukee ■

Continued from P.3 CAMBODIA & VIETNAM

in to economic and territorial demands by carrying on a border war. When this tactic failed, Vietnam, with complete Soviet encouragement and backing invaded Kampuchea with its puppet Cambodian and Soviet advisors; the invasion had many similarities to the U.S. invasion of 8 years earlier.

VIETNAM TURNS AGGRESSOR

The Vietnamese are treading in the precarious footsteps of the U.S. and the French before them. They believe they are destined to be masters of an "Indochina Federation," but like other imperialists before them, they are setting themselves up for a fall. They won against the French, the Japanese and the Americans because their people supported and sacrificed for a just war, a war of national liberation to kick out a foreign aggressor. They are now putting themselves in the position of being the aggressor that their own people fought so long and hard to expel.

Moreover, the Vietnamese government has put itself in the position of trading one foreign domination (that of the U.S.)

for another (that of the USSR).

We in VVAW waged active struggle against the U.S. involvement in Indochina because the U.S. was wrong in its attempts to rip off the resources and to try to control the destiny of the people of Vietnam. We were right to do this, and we cherish the memory of the friendships we made with the Vietnamese people by opposing our government and wholeheartedly supporting the Vietnamese in their battle for freedom and independence. But we did not give the Vietnamese a blank check for our support back in 1972 when we threw away our medals in Washington. We do not and cannot support their invasion of and aggression against Kampuchea, home of a people whose struggles we also supported and whose friendship we also value highly. We cannot condone trading one master for another which, while it may win temporary advantages for the leaders of a country, can only work to the detriment of the people. We cannot let aggression go unanswered.

As we took to the streets to demonstrate against U.S. aggression against Indochina, we have demonstrated against Vietnamese and Soviet aggression against Kampuchea. On January 12th, VVAW participated in demonstrations by hundreds of people in the Bay Area, in

Chicago, and in New York City in support of an independent and free Kampuchea, against recognition of the Vietnamese puppet regime in Phnom Penh, and against Vietnamese and Soviet aggression. The Vietnamese and the Soviets will learn a lesson in Kampuchea, the same lesson that Ho Chi Minh taught: "Nothing is more precious than freedom and independence." Eventually, the wrath of the people of Kampuchea along with the Vietnamese who fought the Americans, will teach this lesson in blood.■

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INTERVIEW

them, "If you pay me 10%, then pay me my back pay from 1922 up til now and I'll accept the \$35." That's what I'm fighting for now. If they can pay me 10% now they should have paid it from back then. I'm getting \$44 now. I told them "I'm not fighting for the big money (the 40%) from back then. Just pay me my 10% from '22 up til now."

THE VET: What did they say?

Preston: I ain't heard from them.

THE VET: So, in other words, the V.A., by giving you the money has admitted that you deserved the money for your wound.

Preston: Yeah. But they haven't paid the back pay.

THE VET: You applied in 1922?

Preston: 1922.

THE VET: So they haven't paid you anything from 1922 until 1970 what?

Preston: 1976.

THE VET: So it took you 54 years to get your first payment?

Preston: Yeah. And now I'm fighting to get that back payment....

If there's something wrong with a person why don't they be truthful and tell it? Uncle Sam's got oodles of money.

There's Nixon there. He put the whole world in a cramp. We take him out of the White House and then they pay him a pension. Up into the thousands. I'm fighting for a penny. Can't even get a penny.

Then a war breaks out and he comes and grabs these young boys. Millions of young boys. Disfigures. No legs. No eyes. No arms. 19-year-old kids. Mess their lives up before they get any consolation out of their lives. They throw them back in society.

They put that doghead Nixon up there. Put all his men in prison and he's up there getting thousands and thousands of dollars. For what? For putting the world in a cramp. Why don't they pay me my penny?

They told me at Hines that you're entitled to every nickel but you've got to fight. And I mean you've got to fight before you get anything, brother.

It's a shame the way this country treats its soldiers. And then when a war breaks out, who wins it for them? And when you come back, instead of thank you, kiss you and shake your hand, and give you what you've got coming to you, they kick you in the butt and say, "Get behind!"

AS WE SEE IT

What To Say To An 18 Year Old About MILITARY ENLISTMENT



GIs of Alpha Company, 196th Light Infantry Brigade, part of the Americal Division, appear in one of the most famous acts of resistance during the Vietnam War. At Firebase Pace GIs flat out refused to move despite all kinds of threats from the brass. This act was publicized widely because the U.S. media got hold of the story, but was only one of innumerable such acts, both organized and individual that helped the liberation forces win.

What to say to the 18-year old who wants to go into the military? It's a question that members of VVAW face all the time. Demonstrations outside recruiters' offices (as during Veterans Day and Agent Orange Day, described in this issue of THE VETERAN), selling the newspaper outside government offices with recruiters inside bring us into contact with young men and women who see the military as a way out of the situation they find themselves in. And more and more, as Vietnam vets grow older, our own children are going to be reaching the age of military service.

And it's certainly not only Vietnam or Vietnam-era vets who face the questions. Millions of Americans were out in the streets fighting against U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia, and many of these individuals still have strong opinions on joining up with the military, even though there is no Vietnam going on at the moment. And, while 4 or 5 years ago during the height of the anti-war struggle, there was much information spread around concerning the role of the U.S. military in Southeast Asia, today's 18-year-olds were still in grade school, in many cases insulated from the furor surrounding the Indochina War.

Seductive advertising from the military feeds into the situation; the Pentagon bosses make

full use of the fact that there is no shooting war going on at the moment. The whole recruiting effort has been designed to present the military as a good time (Join the Navy--See the World), a patriotic thing to do, or as a way to pick up necessary skills which can later be used on the outside. It's a good job, the military is saying, with many future benefits. Propaganda about re-instituting the draft, which periodically creeps out in Pentagon press releases, reinforces young peoples' interest in enlisting--if they're going to get us anyhow, why not do it when the time is "good" and there isn't anything else to do anyhow.

The military continues to push the draft with talk about the failure of the all-"volunteer" military and with dire predictions about what would happen if Europe were invaded--instead of the 30 days that the military says is necessary to crank up an army, it would take at least 90 days to get the draft going again and get troops to Europe to replace the hundreds of thousands who are expected to be casualties in the early days of a new war.

Right there is the central point we try to make with those who talk about joining up: the military's purpose is to fight another rich man's war. It's not to provide job training, it's not to hand out the GI Bill, it's not to provide world tours for

recruits. It is to fight, to get killed or wounded in the service of greater profits--or continued profits--for that rich band of thugs who run this country. The military is, plain and simple, the armed enforcers for the country's rulers. With its own internal discipline, with its code of military "justice," it works to force the sons and, more and more, daughters of American workers to do the bidding of the American bosses whether they like it or not, whether it is in their own interests or not. If the workers in the postoffice go on strike, as was threatened in July of 1978, the military will be scabs and strike-breakers; if the people of Watts rebel against the conditions under which they are forced to live, it's the military that will come in to put down the rebellion. When the 1932 veteran Bonus marchers got too militant for the Hoover administration, it was the military which was sent in to drive the vets out of Washington with tanks and bayonets. And if the U.S. rulers decide to keep the Shah of Iran, or any of the other dictators they prop up around the world, in power, it's the U.S. military that will go to kill that country's people.

It's important for someone going into the military to know what they're getting into; in war games, it's the "war" that comes first, not the "games."

There are other insights into the nature of the military we can draw from our experience--racism, for instance. Despite the attempts at image building which the military comes up with from time to time, minorities have a hell of a time in the military. Minorities made up way beyond reasonable proportions of the ground-pounders, the combat forces who will be the first to be killed. Bad discharges are still handed out wholesale to Black soldiers. Bar brawls become mini-race riots in Europe and Korea, though we seldom hear about them. Despite official denials, the KKK has always flourished inside the military.

Beyond things like racism, there's just the whole pile of harassment and nonsense. The military needs to wash the brain clean so it can fill it up again with its own content. So there are endless repetition of the simplest instructions or stupidities like scrubbing the barracks with a toothbrush. Once the mind is turned off or overwhelmed, then the military can pour into it what they want.

But with all the horror stories we can tell about war or about first sergeants, we're still going to meet youth who are going to go into the military. It makes little sense to tell them they shouldn't. Even though there is, right now, no draft, and the sentiments against it--

part of which helped to build a large anti-draft movement in the past--are still present, the fight against the draft could not stop the economic draft which is what's happening today. Last year, for instance, 31.9% of the recruits joining the Army were Black; moreover, their educational levels were higher than for whites joining the military. Why?

For one possible example, take the Black teenager who may or may not have finished high school; even if he has, the diploma is no guarantee of being even able to read. The job market is closed, almost: there's the \$2.65 an hour job at MacDonalds, but beyond that, the choice is ripping off liquor stores. Neither choice holds

much of a future. And then there's the military. Recruiters aren't all stupid (they just appear that way!). They play on the fact that the potential GI feels unwanted in society and then come off with their pitch--we want you, we'll give you a job, we'll pay you a living wage (\$6900 a year for new troops under the all-"volunteer" Army). If you can't read, well, we've got to keep up our quota, so we'll pass the test for you. You've got a long arrest record--no problem; we've been taking recruits straight from courtrooms for a long time.

For these recruits there is no choice. Vets can give some hints--how much of the recruiters' propaganda to believe, what are some of the necessary preparations, what are some of the weapons needed to fight against military harassment. And we can draw on the experience of GI's who fought fiercely against both the uses and methods of the military. The GI anti-war movement saw hundreds of thousands of GIs in acts of resistance to the military in Vietnam, everything from directly refusing orders and fragging overly enthusiastic officers to consciously misplacing forms to mess up the military machine. The resistance inside the military was a major reason for U.S. withdrawal from Southeast Asia--the brass could see that there was no longer an Army which would fight their war.

Some of those lessons are good today for those who are joining up. When the men and women of the military are forced to fight against their own interests (as was the case in Vietnam) they can go a long ways toward changing the situation. More than once in the past, the rank and file in the military have risen in rebellion against the way they were being used and made it impossible for the government and rulers to continue. ■