

# JOIN US JULY 1-4

## Demonstrate in Philly!

(Information on pages 8 & 9)



# THE VETERAN

Vietnam Veterans Against the War

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## NO CUTS... NO WAY

JUN 1 1976

# The GI Bill... Has Got to Stay



New York City Veterans take to the streets to demand Expand and Extend the GI Bill in April Demonstration.

### ANGRY VETS PROTEST NEW ATTACKS ON GI BILL

On March 24, in Buffalo, New York, 200 veterans picketed the offices of the Regional Director of the VA. Called by the Western New York Concerned Veterans Coalition, the demonstration was aimed at stopping government plans to cut off the GI Bill on May 31st for all vets discharged before 1966. The vets were also protesting a massive review of all vets receiving the GI Bill in Western New York which threatens to cut thousands off the rolls. When a delegation of vets went to see Hooker, the VA Director, he passed the buck to Congress, saying it was none of his business because Congress makes the laws. He suggested that Buffalo is no place to live at this time and that vets should look for greener pastures. But, as a result of the action, the review was postponed.

Just what vets need--VA Directors telling us to find "greener pastures."

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### VETS DEMONSTRATE IN NEW YORK CITY

A new chant hit New York City streets on April 5, when 60 angry veterans, most participating in their first protest, marched from their trade school to the Regional VA building:

"NO CUTS--NO WAY--  
GI BILL--HAS GOTTA STAY!"

The vets on this march were mostly from Technical Careers Institute (TCI), a vocational training school, and were there for several reasons: some were being cut off the GI Bill by the May 31 deadline (when 3.7 million veterans nationwide

will no longer be eligible for benefits); others were there because of a new variety of harassment the VA is using to try to cut ever larger numbers of vets off the Bill--taking attendance, just like in grade school. Everyone there felt strong unity with each other because, even if not directly affected now, every vet knows damn well that his card may turn up next.

When the TCI vets arrived at the VA building they immediately entered the lobby in order to go up to Regional Director Nugent's office

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# DEFENSE BUDGET BLOATED

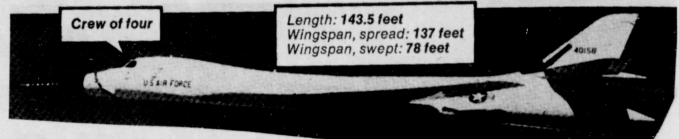
The soon-to-be approved defense budget is bursting at the seams--a record \$100.1 billion, a sum that is, for the average person, hard to comprehend. The cutbacks in the same overall budget are easily understood though. Education, health, food stamps, and even a recent veto of a national daycare plan for working parents, point to one overwhelming fact. The US ruling class is actively pushing and building for another war. They want the working class to "tighten our belts" and foot the bills while they pile up the profits from a war economy.

Behind all this "concern" about national defense is the hard fact that the US and the Soviet Union are in a neck and neck battle to see who will control the world's markets and resources. Since the defeat in Vietnam, the US capitalists have been losing their grip on the world while the rulers of the Soviet Union, capitalists themselves, are putting the moves on one country after another. Extending the hand of "friendship and socialism" the USSR, no longer a socialist country, is holding the club of exploitation and economic domination behind their backs, ready to bring it down on any country that gets out of line with them.

The question of whether the US is #1 or #2 in the world militarily has taken

up a good deal of time in the media lately, especially with all the electioneering go-

workers in other countries; it's that or collapse.



The B-1 Bomber, the US Air Forces latest super toy, at an official cost of \$87,000,000 each!!

ing on. Time after time we're reminded that the Soviet Union is armed to the teeth and growing more "superior" every day. But number one or two, it's clear that both superpowers are dedicated to ripping off whatever they can from other countries around the world. And in the US there's a good reason why the rulers want to whip up enthusiasm for war.

War has always been a prime mover of the US economy. Factories crank up production, politicians promise more jobs and better days ahead, workers bust their backs and send their children off to war, and the profits soar--right into the pockets of the rich. They get the big big bucks and the people get the shaft. All because they have to expand their markets, their resources, their potential

The defense budget jump, the massive cutbacks in social programs, the election year politicians spreading war hysteria for the rich who line their pockets--all these factors cry out that the country is gearing up for war. As veterans, we've seen this song and dance before, and for many people the bitterness and stench of Vietnam are still with us. Being used and then discarded taught us that we'll be damned if we sit by and see our families be used up in another war for profit.

If the rich of the US and the rulers of the USSR want another war, let them carve each other up. The working people of both countries will be better off without them. We say, "We Won't Fight Another Rich Man's War."

# ROTC WAR GAMES DISRUPTED

On April 1, VVAW joined with the Revolutionary Student Brigade and other students and vets and disrupted "ROTC DAY" on the campus of the University of Cincinnati. "ROTC Day" was the army's attempt to recruit officers and win support for the ruling class's future rich man's wars by putting on a big show of helicopters, marching cadets, mock battle actions, rapelling down walls, and weaponry.

Recruiters are everywhere--in the high schools and colleges, at the unemployment offices, on the street corners and on TV, trying to take advantage of unemployment and other economic attacks on the working class by offering youth another "choice" besides McDonalds or jail. At the same time, the GI Bill and other vets benefits are being cut back or eliminated, and the cost of education is soaring with everything else. ROTC is trying to suck in students with offers of financial aid and jobs after graduation. But just like the military's promise of vets benefits, like the GI Bill, this sugar-coated poison isn't being swallowed.

For one thing, even before ROTC Day, enrollment in Army ROTC was at an alltime low. An ex-cadet who spoke against ROTC at the protest said that 70

out of 100 freshmen in Air Force ROTC have already quit since October.

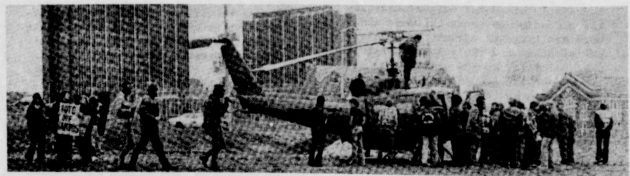
The protest on April 1st took the actions of many individuals against ROTC and brought them together in one united statement. The lies of ROTC were totally exposed by members of VVAW who told it like it really was, speaking from their experiences in war. The vets tried to get the ROTC cadets to see that Vietnam was no accident. It was the direct result of the unquenchable thirst of the US ruling class for more markets, ever more resources, ever more reserves to invest their capital in, for profits.

"I'm just in it for the cash," said

one cadet.

"You think Uncle Sam won't get his pound of flesh? He'll have you fighting in Angola, the Middle East or Europe soon--all to protect his class and his position," answered a vet.

Most students were angry as hell at the ROTC "war games," shouting and mocking them. Members of the RSB and VVAW marched right onto the field where they were going on, disrupting the exercises. Students and veterans played an important part in opposing the Vietnam war, and actions like this one against ROTC can help oppose the capitalists' preparations for a new war.



Vets and students at the University of Cincinnati march on to the field during ROTC "war games." During the Vietnam War this kind of action threw ROTC off a number of college campuses.

# VVAW CALLS FOR VETS' ACTIONS MAY 31 MEMORIAL DAY--"FORGET" the GI BILL"

In the Bicentennial year 1976, Memorial Day celebrations are scoring a comeback. For several years the holiday was downplayed, but this year, the marching bands, the fife and drum corps, the renditions of "Taps" and readings from the Gettysburg Address are with us once again. Once more we will hear the politicians quoting, "We here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom...."

But Memorial Day takes on added significance this year because this is the date when 3.7 million veterans, those who got out of the military between 1954 and 1966, are being slashed from the GI Bill. This outright attack on vets will be veiled under phoney attempts to honor those who died in wars fought by the US. Flowers will be laid on graves around the country to "honor" the dead, but as the politicians and their rich bosses bend over forward in prayer, they'll be kicking the living veterans with their feet. Flowers are cheaper than paying veterans enough money to get a decent education.

But the attack on veterans coming on Memorial Day is only part of what these memorials will be. The Legionnaires and the politicians will be saying how glorious it is to die fighting their wars of imperialism. There's no doubt about it, these ceremonies will be pock-marked with references to the current conflict between the US and the USSR, about how the US has to "honor" the dead by building a more powerful military so that it can protect the very thing that the dead soldiers fought for.

In VVAW will honor our fallen brothers, not by jumping on the bandwagon of the ruling class, but by fighting like hell for the living. VVAW is calling for demonstrations by chapters around the country to demand "Extend and Expand the GI Bill" and to forcefully state, "We Won't Fight Another Rich Man's War."

Those of us who were sent to Vietnam to protect the profits of the rich are determined that the lessons we learned will be heard again on this Memorial Day, 1976. Whenever and wherever Memorial Day parades went on in the past several years, VVAW and Vietnam veterans were there to point, as best we could, to the real enemy--the class that sent us off to fight and die for their profits. VVAW in 1976 will once again be exposing their lies as they attempt to peddle their message at the same time they are slicing the GI Bill, because we will be pointing to the reality behind their lies, the reality that many of us learned from fighting in their wars.

It may be that the people who run this country think that they're safe again



Vets in New York City raise the demand: EXTEND & EXPAND THE GI BILL. All over the country vets will be raising the same demand on Memorial Day.

to bring out the bands on Memorial Day; perhaps they think that the American people have forgotten Vietnam. And there's no doubt that they are going to be using Memorial Day just as they are using the whole Bicentennial year's celebration: to whip up support for another war.

The celebration of Memorial Day has its origins at the end of the Civil War. In scattered towns around the country, townspeople decorated the graves of the war dead with flowers. The most famous of these remembrances took place in Columbus, Mississippi where, in 1866, the women of the town--against the advice of the men--marched to a nearby cemetery which held the bodies of 1,500 Confederate and 100 Union casualties from the Battle of Shiloh. Soon, however, the band of rich hoodlums who controlled the country saw ways in which to turn this sincere celebration of grief and hope to their own purposes. In 1868, the Commander in Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic (the GAR was a national veterans organization which came out of the Civil War) issued an order setting May 30th as a National Memorial Day. And all the hullaballo which came to surround Memorial Day would, it was hoped, help turn peoples' attention away from the many problems that the Civil War did not solve--the rise of the Ku Klux Klan in the South, the millions of Black people who were legally "emancipated" but were certainly not free,

or the intensified exploitation of workers throughout the country.

As with other patriotic holidays, Memorial Day has been more and more used by the rich to glorify their wars, promote flag-waving nationalism, and to whip up enthusiasm for future wars. As always they have a message they want to get over--"Honor these brave men who died in defense of freedom; rededicate yourselves to the ideals for which they so gloriously gave their last full measure of devotion." No matter what the rhetorical flourishes happen to be, what they're saying is that we must all pull together, that all the wars the US has fought have been just and glorious ventures, and that the American people must be prepared to fight and die once again.

In the last five years, however, Memorial Day ceremonies have been cancelled or at least played way down. The US ruling class realized that, while the Vietnam War was daily headlines, the American people were not going to stomach the message; in fact, millions were in the streets protesting against that rich man's war. To celebrate Memorial Day in a big way would have pointed to the thousands of Americans killed in Indochina; there would have been no way to avoid the question, Who is responsible for these deaths? The answer is clear: the responsibility rests with the rich who sent us to Indochina to fight a war which was not in the interests of working people in the US or anywhere else in the world, particularly in Indochina itself.

So, on this Memorial Day, VVAW will be saying "no way" to their rich man's wars and we'll be saying loud and clear, "Stop cutting back on the GI Bill." VVAW chapters will encourage veterans to speak out at the demonstrations about how they are getting screwed over by the VA, particularly around the GI Bill cut offs, and the general way that the GI Bill is inadequate.

How can the ruling class use this day to "honor" the dead when they are attacking the living? VVAW demonstrations will make the answer to this question ring clear in strong, militant actions which will unite with the needs of all vets.

**EXTEND AND EXPAND THE GI BILL  
WE WON'T FIGHT  
ANOTHER RICH MAN'S WAR  
BUILD THE FIGHTING  
VETERANS MOVEMENT**



# NEW YORK CITY DEMONSTRATION

(continued from page 1)

the federal guards turned off all the elevators, which meant that as long as the demonstration continued, the building was shut down. The people coming in to work or to see the VA representatives found out why the vets were in the lobby from the banners, spirited chanting and from talking to the demonstrators. And some of these people joined in the chants, bought copies of The Veteran and gave support.

Although he had promised to be on the march, the TCI vet rep (the veterans representative employed by the school) showed up almost an hour after the vets arrived at the VA, claiming that he "got out of bed just to be here." (People wondered who was worried enough to get him out of bed at the early hour of 10:30 am.) He tried his best to defuse the militance and anger of the protest and partially succeeded, for instead of everyone going up to see Nugent, which was the original intention of the demonstrations, the group decided to send in a delegation. Everyone else went outside the main entrance to wait, but much enthusiasm was lost by not immediately starting a chanting picket line. People were disappointed in how things were turning out, particularly that a delegation went in instead of everyone.

The delegation was met by two of Nugent's assistants with words that we've all heard before, empty phrases which try to pacify people into overlooking how they're getting screwed more and more, and how there isn't really anything that people can do. But people aren't as stupid as those on top might wish. They promised a letter--it arrived late, like a GI Bill check, and contained the kind of stuff people expected: the delegation's concern over the fate of the GI Bill would be forwarded to Washington, and nothing more could be done. A meeting was planned to discuss the next step.

Although there were some disappointing parts of the demonstration, many vets were repeating over and over that the initial energy and enthusiasm had to be expanded into hooking up with the growing demonstrations taking place in all five of New York's boroughs and in the state capital (see the story on page 16), for one area particularly hard hit by the huge cuts in all areas of the bankrupt city's budget is the tuition-free city university system which has afforded working class youth an education that would otherwise be out of reach. The number and size of these actions have mushroomed in recent months as tens of thousands of students have taken to the streets.

Vets are hit not only by the cuts in education but also by the VA and just by being vets in a period of outrageous unem-

ployment. Because of the rate of unemployment among vets, many vets have felt the need to get an education to have a better crack at the dwindling job market and also to have some kind of income just to survive. But the "better" jobs at the end of a diploma are increasingly scarce. And besides trying to cope with GI Bill checks that are almost impossible to live on, these checks are often late. Then there's the new harassment of attendance-taking. Who knows what other moves the VA will pull in their campaign to reduce the number of vets taking advantage of the military's promises about an education at government expense?

And it's not just vets, either. In a time when the rich and their cronies in the government are trying to squeeze every penny, education for all students is being attacked. While other students are fighting to keep the gains in free university education that have been won over the years, vets, while part of that same struggle are caught in a triple-bind between the VA, unemployment and the city education cuts.

It was all of this and more on the minds of the TCI vets on April 5. Many of them were also aware of the proposal by President Ford that the GI Bill be cut

back from 10 years of eligibility to 8 years. And the Bill which has already passed the House (though not the Senate) which would eliminate the GI Bill for all people entering the military after January 1, 1976.

What was clear to everyone was that if the bosses manage to get these cuts, which are drastic enough, through Congress, there's no telling what the hacks who are running their top-heavy bureaucracy might try to pull next. The feeling was definitely one of unity, anger and the desire to move forward from the TCI demonstration to link up with other vets and students around the city and across the country to prevent these attacks from being successful.



NYC Vets take protest to VA lobby.

## VETS PROTEST NEW ATTACK ON GI BILL

(continued from page 1)

Which city with over 20% unemployment does that turkey consider "greener"? For that kind of advice the VA pays him with taxpayers' money.

Of course all he's doing is trying to get rid of his immediate problem--a group of angry vets. He's simply mouthing the words of the government and that class the government serves. Their point, which they will never come out and make straight up, is pretty clear. When vets won the GI Bill back at the end of World War II, the US was sitting on top of the world. Corporations were expanding; competition was nowhere to be found since Europe was in ruins and Japan was an occupied country. Not only could the US ruling class afford to give vets the GI Bill but they needed more and more people who were educated to do the white collar work in their expanding factories and plants and offices. And, of course, they were scared of what 11 million vets (the number returning at the end of the Second World War) might do if they were not pacified in some way or other.

The situation for the bosses is a hell of a lot different today. Their economy is faltering despite whatever temporary and minor recoveries it might make. They have to put their supplies of capital where it will make them the biggest profits, and that is not in social services

such as welfare or food stamps or the VA or the GI Bill. Or education in general for that matter. And because their economy is no longer expanding, there isn't the same need for more and more educated people.

Their solution is the one we see all around us--cut back to throw vets off the GI Bill, or hike tuitions to force students out of school, or make the school conditions so repressive that people will just drop out. All of this is coming down right now across the country.

To take potshots at vets, they have a number of weapons in their arsenal. Their big gun is the ending of the GI Bill on the 31st of May for all veterans who were in the military between 1954 and 1966. This so-called "Cold War Education Bill" was passed in 1966 giving all these vets the ability to go to school at government expense. Of course, by 1966, millions of the 3.7 million vets affected had jobs, were bringing up families, and could not possibly use the GI Bill. Since then, however, many of these same vets have been laid off or have reached a point where they can afford to spend time in school; that's why there are 300,000 of them in school at present. But come May 31, Memorial Day, their benefits

(continued, next page)

## VETS PROTEST

(continued from page 4)

are gone, including GI Bill benefits for millions of vets who don't even know that they had the GI Bill (since the VA tells nobody anything unless pushed).

But that's just one weapon in their collection. The VA and the class which stands behind it have all kinds of weapons to aim at the Vietnam-era veteran. First there's Ford's proposal to cut back the GI Bill from 10 years to 8 years, but too many people in Congress don't want to have anything to do with that proposal, fearing the anger of veterans. So they told the VA to start chopping anyway it could--but not to get vets too riled up in the process.



Vets in Buffalo protest GI Bill cuts.

At Queens College in New York, teams of VA auditors go around demanding attendance records for vets.

In Chicago, the city college system, working hand in hand with the VA, has arrived at a way to insure that vets meet "satisfactory educational progress levels." What that means is that the VA will be monitoring vets grades each month; if vets don't have a "C" average (that's satisfactory level according to the city colleges) they will be called in for counselling--and that will lead to being tossed off the Bill. Have a bad month, fight with the instructor, get sick for a couple weeks, and a vet may well find himself off the Bill. (This is a nationwide program, with the VA setting general guidelines and the individual schools deciding what grades are satisfactory.)

At Citrus State College in California, all vets were cut off the Bill simultaneously until they fought back; vets there built a large protest movement and got a court injunction against the VA.

At an extension school of UCLA vets were all cut off because the VA suddenly discovered that the school did not offer a degree.

And checks are late, forcing some vets out of school. Red tape creeps higher causing other vets not even to apply out of disgust with the military-like VA system and bureaucracy.

The VA and the people who the VA fronts for aren't stupid. They know bet-

ter than to try one single national program to get vets off the Bill, because they know vets won't take that. Instead, they hope to try out one program here, another there, each time getting a few more vets and saving themselves a few more nickels.

But vets have a real history of resisting. For many of us, the resistance began in Vietnam when GIs told their officers where they could stick their orders. Vets fought against the continuation of the war in Indochina. And vets are fighting these latest attacks too.

At a meeting to protest the "C-Average or Out" attacks at Kennedy-King College in Chicago (one of the city colleges) a VA representative told vets that Congress is the answer, write letters, there's nothing we can do. The same thing came from the VA Director in Buffalo. These representatives of the rich man's system will do whatever possible to squirm and twist their way out of any responsibility and try to divert the fight of veterans. Congress has already given its answer; a spokesman for the Senate Veterans Committee went through the same sort of buck-passing routine by saying that the Senate Committee wanted to extend the Bill for "Cold-War" vets, but the House committee chairman was against it and the President was against it and because of cuts in the VA budget, the Senate Committee didn't have the money to spend. In other words: "Vets, learn to live with it; there isn't anything that can be done." Well, we've learned a whole lot better than that.

Along with VA officials and Congressional representatives, the growing vets movement has also had to deal with the inevitable presence of misleaders in our own ranks. Shuffling papers and sitting behind desks of a variety of veterans offices, these individuals appear at almost any gathering of vets, putting forward the ideas of Congress and the VA, assuring us that "working through the system is our only hope, that we ourselves have no real power. Their sole purpose is to defuse or divert the struggle while making a career for themselves; they

will agree with VA reps and Congressional lackies and, if all else fails, begin to systematically attack VVAW and other progressive vets by redbaiting, accusations of being outsiders, or even the low life tactic of trying to divide people racially.

Many of us have seen these tactics before from bosses on the job, to the brass in the military or the dozens of government infiltrators in a variety of organizations. Tried and true, these tactics, whether overt or covert, serve the system that oppresses us all, and no other.

We don't believe we are helpless or powerless. If there was nothing to be done, we'd still be working 12 hour days and the war in Vietnam would still be going on today.

In Philadelphia, where VVAW is building around the GI Bill cutoffs, over 60% of vets in school in that area will be driven out if the cutoff isn't fought and beaten. One Philly vet who saw a VVAW leaflet and could not contact the organization duplicated the leaflet himself and put it up wherever he thought vets might see it. This kind of activity and enthusiasm represents the growing vets movement.

Vets in Buffalo got the audit of school records postponed because they united and would not be diverted from the aim of their struggle. Citrus State vets are getting their checks. In chapters from Boston to Los Angeles, VVAW is building a campaign not just to fight the attacks coming down on vets, but to Expand and Extend the GI Bill. Vets are signing the petition and getting involved in building the struggle. On Memorial Day vets will be confronting the pious politicians and spokesmen for the ruling class with the fact that on this very day the Bill is ending for millions of vets. As vets are learning around the country, the answer to attacks on the GI Bill and the way to extend and expand the Bill lies in building the unity of a fighting veterans' movement.

# JOIN VVAW



FOR MORE INFORMATION OR MEMBERSHIP FORMS, CONTACT THE LOCAL CHAPTER OR SEND THIS FORM TO:  
VVAW NATIONAL OFFICE, P. O. BOX 20184, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60620 (312) 651-1583

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

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One year ago, in April, Vietnam and Cambodia were liberated. These great victories were celebrated around the world. Pictures of liberation soldiers entering Saigon and Phnom Penh being cheered by thousands of people flashed at us on TV screens and newspapers. Cambodian liberation flags were displayed on most all of the buildings of Phnom Penh. Vietnamese celebrated International Worker's Day, May 1st, with large, joyous rallies in Saigon, Hue, Da Nang and Hanoi. In neighboring Laos, victory was just around the corner. And everywhere in Indochina and around the world great relief and joy abounded as the end of US domination came to an abrupt end.

In the face of the most overwhelming power the Indochinese won their wars of liberation. The US poured in millions of troops over a 10 year period, with approximately 550,000 military personnel at the height of the war. It conducted the most massive bombings in the history of the world. It used sophisticated military hardware, like the electronic battlefield. Thousands of helicopters, APCs, tanks and patrol boats were used to deploy troops to all parts of Vietnam. And all this was to no avail. Armed with a fierce determination to rid themselves of foreign domination, the Indochinese repelled every advance, forcing the US to negotiate table and eventually to withdraw ground troops.

After the signing of the Paris Peace Agreement the NLF waged a relentless struggle against the Saigon-led troops of Nguyen Van Thieu. Suffering military and political defeat at every turn, Thieu's government lost the support of all segments of the Vietnamese people exposing its corruption and criminality for what it was: a puppet of US business interests. In sharp contrast, the NLF led by the Provisional Revolutionary Government, won the support and respect of the overwhelming majority of Vietnamese people. It initiated programs in liberated areas such as schools, hospital care, and agricultural advancements. It was because the NLF had this massive support that eventually led them to total victory in Vietnam.

## One Year After Victory

# Indochina Rebuilding



The victory proved that a small nation can defeat a large one, that a weak nation can defeat a strong one, and that armed with a correct political understanding it could defeat any army with overwhelming military superiority. Their war was a just war in the interests of the working people and the peasants and against those who attempted to exploit them.

When the US first began to build up its forces in Indochina during the 1950s it was the world's undisputed imperialist power. In its efforts to move into every corner of the world it arrogantly assessed that it could crush the independence movement in Indochina as a warning to other nations who tried to fight off its domination. The Indochinese victories inspired the world's people to fight against imperialism. Struggles for liberation erupted in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In the US a massive anti-war movement arose turning millions of Americans to protest the war. Veterans who fought in the war joined the demonstrations against it.

That's where VVAW came from. It was because of fighting in this rich man's war that we got together and built a nationwide organization to share our first hand experiences. In 1971 VVAW went to Washington DC in a demonstration called Dewey Canyon III where over 1,000 Vietnam veterans threw war medals away in disgust at the Capitol steps telling Congress and the rich that we were against the war we were forced to fight. In other war protests VVAW took over the Statue of Liber-

ty, the Lincoln Memorial and the Betsy Ross home in Philadelphia and marched in ranks with millions of others all across the country during the war years. We warmly welcomed the victory of the Indochinese people.

### INDOCHINA REBUILDS

Now one year later, on the first anniversary of liberation Vietnam and Cambodia are moving forward to rebuild their countries from the devastation of the war years.

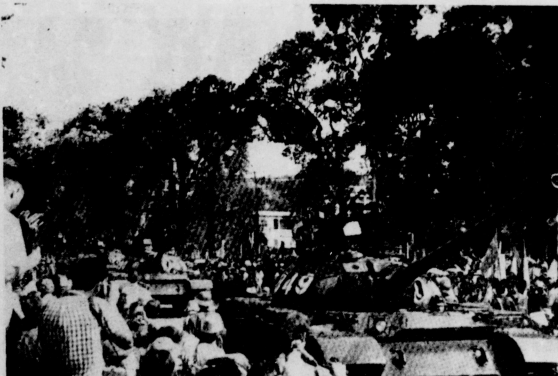
In Vietnam a 492 member National Assembly was recently elected to move the two Vietnams together. Officials reported that a huge voter turn-out elected workers, farmers, intellectuals and representatives of religious groups. The Assembly will meet shortly to adopt a new Constitution, national name, flag, anthem and a new capital city. One official said that the aim was to build a Vietnam "peaceful, unified, independent... aiming at a new man, new cultural families and an ever more powerful, richer and finer socialist country."

All across Vietnam, the people are rebuilding the country. Factories damaged by the war are running full speed ahead. Rice harvests are predicted to be at a self-sufficient level for the first time in over a decade. Schools and hospitals are being built and the country is making overall, rapid advances in reconstruction.

Cambodia is also making great leaps in reconstructing their country. The US ruling class tries to paint a different picture, however. They say that after liberation Cambodian troops killed over 500,000 people and forced abandonment of Phnom Penh. This is a lie. It's the same lie that they tried to get over on us about what was going to happen in Vietnam if the NLF won. While they couldn't get by with that one, they are perfectly content to make it up about Cambodia in attempts to paint a rotten picture of what freedom from their rule is about.

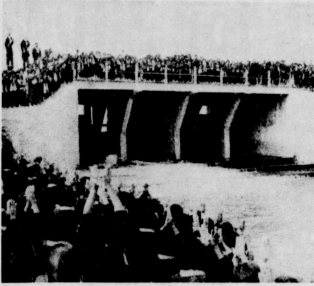
It is true, though, that there have been many deaths in the country. According to Khieu Sampan, President of Cambodia, over 1,000,000 people were killed as a result of the war. He stated that hunger and hunger-related diseases took a heavy toll among children, the aged and the sick. And the US bombings forced hundreds of thousands of people into Phnom Penh

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Liberation forces greeted by the population of Saigon, renamed Ho Chi Minh City.

## Indochina, continued



Peasants in southwest Cambodia celebrate completion of new dam and reservoir as Cambodia rebuilds.

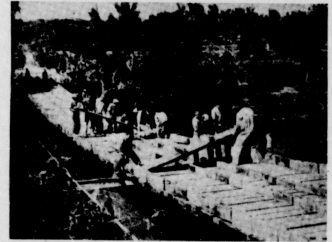
After liberation people were moved out of the disease ridden city to work in the fields to restore the rice crops. Now there is enough food to eat and because of the success of the irrigation projects initiated, they expect a surplus crop of rice next year. With the swollen population of

Phnom Penh gone, that city is rebuilding itself from the ravages of war. Rebuilding Cambodia is simply a case of putting the overall needs of the people above the desires of a few whiners who never did an honest day's work in their lives.

The Cambodians recently held elections for a People's Congress and elected workers, peasants and members of the revolutionary armed forces. According to Radio Democratic Cambodia the Congress was held in "an atmosphere of great unity of the people and in an excellent situation in industrial and agricultural production in the country." Chau Teary, a Cambodian spokesman in Paris stated, "The people have become the real masters of power."

Vietnam and Cambodia continue to give us inspiration. The people of both countries are making great strides as they struggle to continue their revolutions. We have a lot to learn from their struggle. For us veterans who fought against them, we now see that they weren't ever our enemies. In fact VVAW puts forward that

we won't fight another rich man's war. As the US and USSR make war preparations, the lessons of Indochina become more and more important. There's no way that we will fight against the people of the USSR just as there's no way that we will fight against the Indochinese again. Our fight is right here at home against the rich who sent us to Indochina to do their dirty work.



South Vietnamese workers rebuild suspension bridge.

# Westy Babbles On

William C Westmoreland, the big daddy of the Vietnam brass is currently running around the country hawking his book, A Soldier Reports and in the process is leaving a trail of crap so deep that it would be enough to fill the Pentagon three times over.

Westmoreland was the general who, in 1965, saw "the light at the end of the tunnel" in regard to US victory in Vietnam. The statements he is making to the press while he sells his book make about as much sense as his famous quote.

According to him the reason why people in the United States turned against the war was because we watched it on television. He said that people didn't see World War II or the Korean War on TV and that because there was news censorship during those wars it helped on the battlefield. If Vietnam had news censorship, he could have won the war. "Oh, they were seeing the sensationalized war news over TV every night. It wasn't the same war we were seeing in Vietnam." What the hell did he think people were watching--Korean War reruns?

People didn't turn against the war because Walter Cronkite told us to. And it wasn't because there was no censorship either. We got a slanted view of the war; just as slanted as the military press releases put out about it. Lies such as Americans "freeing" towns from the "domination of the VC" (who were in fact fighters for the Vietnamese people). But there



Westmoreland sees some light, 1967

was enough news about the war and there was enough understanding gained over a period of years by the American people to turn against it because the war was wrong. It was a war to suppress the freedom of the Vietnamese people by the rich of this country.

And if Westmoreland thought people were only swayed by what they saw on TV, then how does he account for the thousands of veterans who came back from the war, told the truth about what the US military was doing there and joined the millions of people demonstrating against it? He can't. Because being a front man of the US ruling class, he's only capable of echoing their lies and being rewarded by shining the little fading stars on his mothballed uniform.

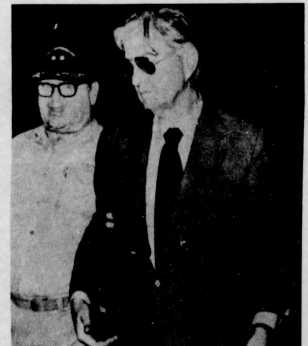
Westmoreland was always asking for more troops in Vietnam. "If we only had another 100,000 troops, we could win," he always seemed to be saying. At the height of US military presence in Vietnam there were about 500,000 GIs with additional South Korean, Australian and Thai soldiers. With all these forces and with the B-52s and harbor mines, etc, he couldn't get to first base in the face of the determination of the Vietnamese people to rid themselves of the US corporate interests and their military.

Recently, in Paris, Westmoreland was still putting forward that if the US had systematically pounded the port of Haiphong and the city of Hanoi as well as other targets with B-52s they could have forced

the Vietnamese to deal with the US government on its terms. Maybe his memory is fading away, but the US used more bombs in Indochina than were dropped during World War II. The harbor at Haiphong was mined and in December of 1972, both Hanoi and Haiphong were bombed incessantly.

Ask any vet who was in Vietnam about the determination of the Vietnamese. All the bombs in the world could have been dropped there causing much worse damage than was done. It may have taken longer to win it, but there was no stopping their national resolve for liberation. The Vietnamese freedom fighters were not fighting for the oil companies--they were fighting for independence.

And the Vietnamese had allies all over the world, including in the US and also including the thousands of American GIs who weren't going to get killed for (story continued on page 14)



US Ambassador Martin "evacuating" Vietnam in April, 1975.

# We've Carried the Rich for 200 Years

## Regional Conferences

Since Vietnam Veterans Against the War first made the national call for a demonstration on July 4th back in January of this year, many people and organizations have joined to help build it. Seeing the great potential this demonstration has for striking a blow at the rich and strengthening our movement, a July 4th Coalition was formed in February. The July 4th Coalition has been coordinating building and making plans for the four days of demonstrations in Philadelphia. The planning and enthusiasm were significantly advanced by two recent events.

In mid-March the July 4th Coalition held two regional conferences, one in Philadelphia (for the East coast) and another in Cincinnati (for the midwest) to push the organizing effort forward. Another conference is planned soon for the South.

Over 500 people attended the conferences including workers who came from struggles going on in plants and factories all over the East and Midwest. From the garment sweatshops of New York City to the coal mines of West Virginia and Kentucky, to the auto plants of Detroit, the steel mills of Chicago and the meatcutters' strike lines in Milwaukee, workers came to the conferences uniting with veterans, youth, and the unemployed, sharing their experiences and shouting loud and clear: "We've Carried the Rich for 200 Years, Let's Get Them Off Our Backs."

At the meetings people spoke of the different struggles they were part of, the overall slogan of the demonstration, and its demands--"We Won't Fight Another Rich Man's War," and "Jobs or Income Now." Brining out their individual experiences, time and time again people hit out at the fact that we've carried the capitalist rulers of this country on our backs for too damn long, and placed the blame for our hardships squarely where it belongs--on the rich! Participants in the conferences also told how trying to survive under the capitalist system affects them. A young person from Milwaukee talked of the future this system offers, and asked: "What's left for us--the Army or McDonalds?" An unemployed vet who had been thinking of re-upping pointed out, "What do I want to go to the Army for? When I get out it'll be the same thing--no job." And one older unemployed worker said, "The rich man organized to get his money--we go to organize to take it away from him."

People left the conferences determined to go all out to make this July 4th demonstration a big step forward in building a nationwide movement of the American people against the ruling class of this country, with the struggle of workers at its core. As one young worker put it, "I've been thinking about those Bicentennial minutes on TV and they always end up, 'And that's the way it was.' That's all they can say. So we're going to Philadelphia to say, 'This is the way it is!'"



Students build for the Bicentennial Demonstration



1976--Millions walking the streets looking for jobs and still more shoved out the door while plants close down. Those still at work, worked to death, chained to the bosses' machinery. Our cities falling apart. Our schools, hospitals and firehouses shut down. Half finished construction sites standing next to burned out tenements and the drums of another war beating louder. All this amidst lies of recovery and the fireworks of celebration.

No! This is not what we worked so hard for. No, this is not the future we want for our children. One thousand outrages slap us in the face. No, we can't live like this. And we won't.

Our class, the working class, men and women of all nationalities--we build and we produce. But their class, the capitalist class, takes it all. They own what they have never built--the mills, mines and banks. Owning all, they take all we produce. And for us, only enough to keep us alive so we can slave for them some more.

They take our hard work and twist it. We work together. They steal, each as much for himself as he can, and try to keep us apart. Everything has a price for them. Their uncontrollable drive for profit makes this whole society run like it does. Crisis after crisis, war after war, injustice upon injustice. Ten generations of profits bled out of ten generations of our lives.

Our whole history proves this. We have fought for all that is worthwhile in this country. We are not animals but that's how they would have us live. No! Not in 1776, 1876, or 1976. Our history is filled with storms of resistance, battling back and standing tall. We are men and women. We will not be slaves. We are the backbone of the whole country, millions strong. They are a handful of murderers and slavedrivers, rotting even as they claw to grab more.

### July 4th Coalition

Initiated by Vietnam Veterans Against the Committee, Revolutionary Communist Pa

FOR DEMONSTRATION MATERIALS (LEAFLETS, BU  
DEMONSTRATION CONTACT ANY OF THE ABOVE LIS  
NATIONAL OFFICE ( P.O. Box 20184, Chicago, IL. 60620 Tel.  
QUARTERS ( Tel. 215-426-1505).



# the Rich for 200 Years, Let's Get Them Off



1976—Millions walking the streets looking for jobs and still more shoved out the door while plants close down. Those still at work, worked to death, chained to the bosses' machinery. Our cities falling apart. Our schools, hospitals and firehouses shut down. Half finished construction sites standing next to burned out tenements and the drums of another war beating louder. All this amidst lies of recovery and the fireworks of celebration.

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## July 4th Coalition

Initiated by Vietnam Veterans Against the War, Unemployed Workers Organizing Committee, Revolutionary Communist Party and Revolutionary Student Brigade.

1976. These thieves call all of us to celebrate with them. National unity... all together and many happy returns. No! We shall not celebrate their rule. Despite all their sickening lies and broken-record hoopla, we have nothing in common with them. For them—200 years of plunder. For us—200 years of slavery and oppression. All they have they took from us. All we need we have wrenched from them through bitter battle. It is they and their never-satisfied thirst for profit that stand between us and our fight for a better life and a brighter future for our children.

Fellow workers! Today as before our class battles every last abuse—on picketlines and shop floors, in neighborhoods and communities and everywhere throughout society. Our fight is a just fight, our demands are just demands. In building this struggle on July 4th in Philadelphia, we will proclaim especially our demand for "Jobs or Income Now!" and determination that "We Won't Fight Another Rich Man's War!"

We have the strength to mobilize. We have the ability to unite all the battles, all the people, all the anger at the way we have to live. The future belongs to us. We are the only ones who can push things forward, and we are determined to break through.

Now is the time to pull it together. All our forces. All our battles. As we have always fought them we will fight them on the day they choose to celebrate their bloodsoaked rule. We will come together, thousands strong, to expose their crimes and build our movement, on that day and for the great battles ahead.

On to Philadelphia!

We've carried the rich for 200 years, let's get them off our backs!

## Demonstrate in Philadelphia, July 4th!

FOR DEMONSTRATION MATERIALS (LEAFLETS, BUTTONS, STICKERS, POSTERS) AND TO HELP BUILD THE DEMONSTRATION CONTACT ANY OF THE ABOVE LISTED ORGANIZATIONS LOCALLY, OR THE VVAW NATIONAL OFFICE ( P. O. Box 20184, Chicago, Il. 60620 Tel. 312-651-1583) OR DEMONSTRATION NATIONAL HEAD - QUARTERS ( Tel. 215-426-1505).

# s, Let's Get Them Off Our Backs!



## UWOC BUILDS PETITION CAMPAIGN

"The bosses' Bicentennial is about as popular as the mumps. At the unemployment centers workers say, 'What's to celebrate?' UWOC together with VVAW has been going out to shopping centers with the Jobs or Income petition blown up poster size. Last Saturday we brought our banner saying, 'We've carried the rich for 200 years, let's get them off our backs!' and taped it to the marble wall of a Chase Manhattan Bank. The response was stronger than we expected. In a few hours hundreds signed the petition, and many wanted to join in, build the campaign and come to Philly."

This is the description of one chapter of the Unemployed Workers Organizing Committee in New York City about the campaign to build the struggle of unemployed workers. UWOC is a nationwide organization of people who are demanding jobs. In their drive to build the struggle of unemployed, they have launched a nationwide petition campaign with the aim of getting over 250,000 signatures by July 4th to be brought to Philadelphia to wave in the face of the US ruling class. By early May UWOC had gotten well over 150,000 signatures, well on the way to the goal.

Because unemployment affects all working people, not just those out of a job, other organizations have taken up the UWOC call to take out the petition as widely as possible. With thousands being laid off every month, workers have been taking the petition into factories and workplaces across the country, gathering support from working people who don't want to be out on the streets after their next paycheck. And workers whose jobs seem secure today have not forgotten what it was like just a year ago when jobs were being picked off like flies, knowing that it will happen again. VVAW has taken up the petition also, taking it to veterans at VA hospitals, on campuses and wherever we meet vets. In New York City, VVAW has found that veterans are eager to sign the UWOC petition as well as the petition to Extend and Expand the GI Bill.

UWOC has been fighting to defeat state bills to cut unemployment benefits in Connecticut and Washington, uniting with city workers on strike in San Francisco, fighting layoffs in New York and extension cutoffs in Ohio, Wisconsin and Indiana, and beating evictions in Denver. UWOC will be marching in full force to Philadelphia to set up a tent city of the unemployed and, on July 4th, to "rip the red, white and blue veil off of 200 years of exploitation--taking 250,000 signatures on the Jobs or Income petition with us!"

1976. These thieves call all of us to celebrate with them. National unity... all together and many happy returns. No! We shall not celebrate their rule. Despite all their sickening lies and broken-record hoopla, we have nothing in common with them. For them—200 years of plunder. For us—200 years of slavery and oppression. All they have they took from us. All we need we have wrenched from them through bitter battle. It is they and their never-satisfied thirst for profit that stand between us and our fight for a better life and a brighter future for our children.

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On to Philadelphia!  
We've carried the rich for 200 years, let's get them off our backs!

**Demonstrate in Philadelphia, July 4th!**

### PETITION WE DEMAND: JOBS OR INCOME!



THESE ARE NO JOBS!! For those of us unemployed and on layoff, millions of us, with unemployment spreading like a cancer hitting all working people - we workers all say as one - we cannot live with these conditions. We cannot eat good-time promises. To government, industry, politicians - we demand action! We are available. We need everything we can produce. We question what's right about closing down plants and shops and cutting out jobs! This is a rich country and our labor made it that. We demand jobs - we will not be without. We say - paychecks or enough to live on until we get them. We say -

**JOBS AT UNION WAGES -  
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FOR ALL TO COVER OUR  
COST OF LIVING -  
THROUGH ALL PERIODS OF UNEMPLOYMENT.**

**WE DEMAND JOBS OR INCOME - NOW!**

--UNEMPLOYED WORKERS' ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE

War, Unemployed Workers Organizing  
y and Revolutionary Student Brigade.

TONS, STICKERS, POSTERS) AND TO HELP BUILD THE  
ED ORGANIZATIONS LOCALLY, OR THE VVAW  
12-651-1583) OR DEMONSTRATION NATIONAL HEAD -

# ON STRIKE! WORKERS FIGHT BOSSES' ATTACKS

Scarcely a day passes when the evening news or daily newspaper doesn't talk about a strike--one that's going on or just settled or about to happen. If it isn't a big national strike, it's a local strike. Usually, the news items are accompanied by dire predictions and thunderings of economic doom from some government expert or corporate executive. "Inflationary," they bleat; "The economic recovery will suffer."

They're right that their "economic recovery" is moving right along, for the moment, though it won't last. First-quarter earnings reports for major corporations averaged around 100% improvement this year over a year ago with Dupont up 60% and Honeywell up 1,165%. Economic recovery is a temporary reality to the corporations and fat cat owners. But ask the worker who was laid off a year ago and still can't find work. Or the veteran who is unemployed and trying to scrape by the the \$270 per month from the GI Bill. Or the worker who has a job but finds that recovery means forced overtime and speedup, or whose wage increases three years ago haven't come close to keeping up with inflation. Economic recovery is just one more lie, brought to us by the people who sponsored lies about Vietnam and more lies about Watergate.

The economic crisis is still with us and the bosses are still trying to make us pay for their crisis. But in 1976 they've come up against a year when major contracts are expiring: teamsters, rubber, electrical, construction, garment and auto contracts all are up this year, along with hundreds of smaller contracts around the country. And workers don't forget quite as easy as the bosses would like--they remember all the layoffs in the past two years and the way contracts have been gutted in the past and the way in which their union leaders have, in the past, sold out the rank and file.

With all of this in mind, 400,000 truckdrivers and warehousemen, members of the Teamsters Union, approached the first national contract of the year. On March 31, they went out on their first-ever nationwide strike. Although the strike didn't last long, some midwest teamsters wildcatted even after the settlement. But the importance of this strike was not in its length; it was significant in that it happened at all.

The trucking industry leaders tried hard to prevent the strike, so they could get by with a minimum settlement. They had powerful allies in other bosses in the US ruling class, since other corporate executives and their mouthpieces in the government knew that the teamster contract could set a pattern for other major contracts to come. The bosses had another ally in Frank Fitzsimmons, head

of the Teamsters Union, who said before the strike, "We have never had a national strike in this union and I will do anything possible to ward off any work stoppage." All of these forces combined to try to stifle the struggle of the Teamsters' membership.

The attacks on the members came from many sides. The trucking companies tried to say how broke they were and, when negotiations began, offered absolutely nothing. The media screamed about how, if the teamsters went on strike,

dards of living had been going down, as the small wage increases gotten back in 1973 had been more than gobbled up by inflation. And the rank and file were in no mood to allow a similar contract this time around: they started out with demands for a 40% pay hike, better pensions, and unlimited cost of living increases. In fact the membership was angry enough at the last contract that Peter Bommarito, URW President, was not even elected from his home local as a delegate to the last union convention. This anger forced the union leadership into a strong position



San Francisco city workers on strike, part of the wave of strikes that is sweeping the country in 1976.

they would hurt other workers, an old divide and conquer tactic. And, to keep the pressure on Fitzsimmons as well as stab at the union, there were threats of investigation of the Teamster Pension Fund and a national TV "expose" of corruption in the union--none of these things because the capitalists care how Fitzsimmons runs the union so long as he can "control" his membership, but to turn the screws a little tighter.

None of these tactics worked. As one striking driver described the situation, "The only reason (Fitzsimmons and the union leadership) sanctioned the strike is because they know we were staying out. We're all fed up and this time we're beginning to stick together." Groups began to organize against a union leadership sell-out. Teamsters across the country began to organize to fight the companies and their union leadership. Through their militance, some of their demands were won.

With one eye on the gains won by the Teamsters and another on their sell-out contract of three years ago, the 68,000 rubber workers, members of the United Rubber Workers (URW) went out on strike on the 20th of April. Over the period of the last contract, rubber workers' stan-

in negotiations and, when the companies tried to run their sob stories, the union leadership had no choice but to call for a strike. In the past strikes have been directed against only one of the big four tire makers, but, since the companies have a "mutual aid pact" to compensate whichever one is struck, this has not been effective though it has gotten union leadership off the hook. This time, however, all four companies were struck.

And struck hard. At the international headquarters of Goodrich, workers carried a telephone pole to block a gate. Cops jumped them, hospitalizing several and arresting six. The public outrage was so strong the county was forced to suspend one deputy sheriff for hitting a striker with a flashlight. And when a court injunction prevented more than 40 strikers at a gate, one Goodyear gate was manned by four 55 gallon drums--with 20 workers acting as "visitors" to one side.

Anxiously watching the results of the Teamsters and Rubber workers struggles were the giant car makers wondering if their fat profits were threatened. Already, rank and file auto workers are organizing to fight for a good contract; members of a rank and file group, Auto Workers United to Fight in '76, staged

(continued, page 13)

# MAY DAY 1976

May First. May Day. International Workers' Day, the proudest and most solemn holiday of the world-wide working class.

In countries around the world, workers this year, as every year, greeted this holiday with celebrations and demonstrations from huge, tens of thousands strong, rallies in socialist People's Republic of China to outlawed assemblies in fascist Spain. In the US in over twenty cities across the country working men and women marched, rallied and held other activities organized by the United May Day Committees, which were initiated by the Revolutionary Communist Party for this occasion.

May Day is the day when the working class measures its growing strength to see where things stand in its struggle and to look to the future to see where it is headed. May Day honors those who have died fighting to advance the struggle against the capitalist class that bleeds workers. It's the day that the workers reaffirm their determination to replace the capitalists' rule with a new society that is free of exploitation and oppression. This international holiday is an important day, not only for the working class but for people everywhere who want to fight this system we live under.

May Day started in the US and grew out of the struggle to limit the working day to eight hours. On May 1st, 1886, 190,000 workers took part in a general strike and 350,000 more demonstrated around the country for the eight hour day--called out by the newly formed American Federation of Labor. The actions were successful. For many thousands the work day was reduced with no cut in pay.

The famous Haymarket incident is connected to May Day. On May 3rd, 1886, police fired on a workers' rally from the McCormick Harvester plant which had been on strike for several months, killing one worker and wounding others. A protest rally was called on May 5th. Someone threw a bomb at police who were surrounding the rally, killing one of them. The killing was used as an excuse to railroad and hang the Chicago area leaders of the eight hour day movement.

But the struggle did not end with these martyr deaths. Plans were made to have another general strike on May 1st, 1890 to further the demand for the eight hour day. At a meeting in Paris, France, of socialist workers' organizations and trade unions it was decided to expand the fight to an international general strike. Since that time May Day, May 1st, has been International Workers' Day.

The three main slogans of May Day, 1976, in the United States were:  
FIGHT--DON'T STARVE!  
WORKERS UNITE TO LEAD THE  
FIGHT AGAINST ALL OPPRESSION!  
DOWN WITH THE SYSTEM OF  
WAGE SLAVERY!

In America today 10 million workers are unemployed, while those still with jobs are hit with brutal speed-up and wage cuts. More production and more profits is the exploiters' plan to get out of their crisis. "Make working people pay" is their motto.

And all the while our rulers bombard us with talk of "recovery" and calls for national unity and Bicentennial spirit. "Things are getting better," we are told, and "we all have to stick together, bosses and workers alike." But their is no sticking together and there is no recovery.

There is only one thing that is getting better--the working class' ability to unite and fight. Everywhere workers are demanding jobs. Where a couple of years ago the word was that you could not fight layoffs, now there are strikes and actions against them across the country. Workers in 30 cities demonstrated for jobs recently, and the Unemployed Workers Organizing Committee nationwide petition for Jobs or Income is gathering hundreds of thousands of signatures. In the factories, there is growing resistance to being ground down in the name of increased productivity--siddowns, slowdowns, walkouts,



strikes. Eighty thousand miners wildcatted for the right to strike. Auto workers in New Jersey walked over forced overtime on top of layoffs. Singer workers sat down against a piece rate cut. For two months, workers at National Lead in New York have been on strike--turning down a contract that means layoffs for 300 and speed-up for the rest. Every shop floor is a battleground between the workers and the bosses. The working class has no common interest with the handful of rich who run society for their own profit. The first slogan of May Day expresses the determination not to be crushed.

As the capitalist system continues to decay around us, it is not only the working class that is under attack, but the vast majority of the American people. Everywhere cutbacks in social services are the rule, (unemployment insurance, veteran's benefits, food stamps, education and etc.) as the rich try to devote the maximum possible amount of capital to increasing profits to weather the storm.

Increasingly, people are fed up with this "belt-tightening" routine, looking for ways to fight back, and asking themselves how, with the technology and industrial

(continued on p. 15)



May Day Celebration in Chicago

# LETTERS TO VVAW

## VA CARE GETS WORSE

Both of the following letters deal with the rotten conditions in VA hospitals. While that class of people who run this country are trying to come up with all kinds of new ways to throw vets off the GI Bill, they are doing everything they can to cut back on VA care also. Both letters point out that, like the GI Bill, healthcare was something that vets fought for and which we now have to fight to keep.

Dear Veteran:

I am a disabled Vietnam vet from New York City. I've been fighting the VA for 8 years now, first to get the lousy 30% disability rating they "awarded" me, then to get it raised to 60%, and ever since then, fighting to keep it. Now it seems the VA is trying to award me 100%. No, not in terms of money, but in reality. Here's the story.

I spent two years in Vietnam (66-68) with the 1st Cav and flew as a doorgunner on a CH-47 Chinook helicopter. During that time I had the wonderful experience of getting shot down 3 times, hit in the back with a ricochet AK-47 round, lose the hearing in my right ear, crippled, and in general just messed up fighting to keep the imperialist red, white and blue flying.

The second time I got shot down--at the beginning of January, 1968, I got my back screwed up bad. The doctors at the 2nd Surgical Hospital at Chu Lai wanted to send me back to my company. So I spent the next month on my back, being carried from hooch to bunker and back again by my buddies, on a sheet of plywood. That was at Chu Lai, which was our rear area at that time. After a month I could walk well enough to go out on missions again, though I still couldn't lift anything over 30 pounds and lived on Darvons and any other kinds of pain killers I could beg, borrow or steal. Fortunately we had a company medic who didn't go by the book on the question of how much pain killer a GI was authorized.

When I got back to the streets of NY I found I still had a lot of trouble walking or standing, so I took myself down to the VA to cash in on all those bennies the recruiter told us about. I, like most of my fellow veterans found a remarkable resemblance between the VA and the military. After much "hurry up and wait," I got a grand total of 30% disability for my back, hearing, nervous condition and a few other problems thrown in for good measure, plus a back brace. Four years, several re-evaluation physicals, and two jobs later, they upped me to 60%. In the mean time I had developed an infection at the base of my spine, which is the result of getting hit there the second time I got shot down. I was in and out of the VA hospital dozens of times. Each time I was told I needed an operation. Each time a week or more down the drain, another dozen pills to pop and each time being used as a training aid for student doctors--and then being told no operation this time. By then I was trying to hold down a job as an

elevator mechanic, but was spending more time off the job than on, and the lousy 60% the VA was sending me was just about covering expenses.

Finally, last August, I became delirious from the infection and was rushed to the VA hospital. Three days later they operated. They told me before the operation that I'd only be out of action a few days. 27 days later I was finally able to walk (though not too well) out of the damn place. But now I had no job to go back to because I couldn't do the work. Because I was in for more than 21 days on a service connected disability, I was supposed to get 100% for that month. When the check came it was for my usual 60%. I still haven't gotten the difference and it's been 7 months now. But that's nothing to what has gone down between the time I got out of the hospital and now.

About a week after I got out, I started to have incredible pain. As the tissue started to heal and I could place my fingers in the wound, I felt something sharp sticking out. Because they had removed a large chunk of meat from my lower back, they used steel wires to literally wire me together. The only problem was they left six of them inside me, and now they were tearing me apart trying to work their way out. I spent another 4 trips to the VA hospital. Each time to have minor surgery to remove the wires, each time being assured that they had gotten them all.

It's been 7 months now since the operation and I'm still bleeding, plus the infection has returned. I went back to the VA hospital last week and they had the balls to tell me that they blew the operation and I have to go through the same trip all over again.

I just called a private surgeon and am going to spend the \$50 for him to give me his opinion. I can't afford to lay out the \$50 but what else can I do? I'll be damned if I'll take the word of those turkeys at the VA. Also, this time they want to cut more meat out, a lot closer to the spine. Based on how well they've done in the past, I'll consider myself lucky if I can walk away from this one.

Before I went into the Army I worked at Lennox Hill Hospital here in NYC. We used to say that the hospital specialized in "diseases of the rich." That is, the doctors were the best, the treatment was excellent--but you better not even entertain the thought of going there unless you had money and plenty of it. For vets at the VA hospital or workers at the city hospitals, the opposite is true.

This doesn't just apply to medical care--it is the essence of everything that this system "offers" us. I got taken for the big ride when I was sent to Vietnam. I was a soldier in the imperialist US Army. Now I'm no longer useful to the rich who run and own this system so they want to throw me away. NO WAY. I'm not going to live like this and I'm not going to stand around while the capitalists try to lay similar trips on other people.

VVAW has put out a call for four days of actions in Philadelphia for July 1-4. "We've carried the rich for 200 years, Let's get them off our backs" is the slogan. This says it like it is. I'll see you in Philadelphia for all four days, even if I have to crawl there.



(This is a letter from several patients and workers, and one patient also a VVAW member, at the Allen Park VA in Detroit, Michigan.)

Dear Brothers,

Just a few lines to let other vets around the country who've been following the struggle here get an update. First off, the firing of Tim Wells\* has had a big effect on both workers and patients. People are angry and still willing to struggle. But Tim's lawyers felt that they should "approve" any literature VVAW put out at the hospital because this might "jeopardize" Tim's case. We in VVAW think that just the opposite is true. We felt that it was very important to build on the unity that had been growing around Tim's case and the general conditions at the hospital. Most patients and workers agreed with us. To put your faith completely in lawyers and not in the people, vets and workers, is a mistake that we too often make. Lawyers, with all their intricate legalities take the very guts out of a struggle. They take our most militant fighters out of the mass struggle and drag them through months of waiting periods and "appeals." By the end of such a process the people involved in the struggle are demoralized and no longer united. This is not to blame individual lawyers, but the whole legal/courts apparatus which is specifically designed, through

(continued, next page)

## LETTERS

(continued from page 12)

its red tape, to take all the steam out of a mass movement of the people. Still, many patients and workers want to keep up the fight against Tim's firing.

Conditions at the hospital haven't changed much. The hospital is putting on a big show by slopping around a lot of fresh paint and by panning the elevators, which still continue to break down. They were also proud of the fact that they hired 30 new nursing assistants; but, by the time this letter was printed, they had already lost half of them--the assistants quit as a result of the conditions. What they give with a spoon they take back with a steam shovel. So they've closed down 2 wards, thus cutting the number of beds available to patients.

Meanwhile nothing new has been done to change the mess in "admitting," and the most serious danger to patients still continues to be negligence due to understaffing. One recent example is a patient who received a massive overdose of sedation and was out for 6 hours.

Resident doctors are so understaffed and overworked that they can't possibly meet the needs of vets. On one ward, 2 resident doctors handle 52 patients.

The picture for medical students (interns) is not much better and the situation for nurses is even worse. How can one nurse on one ward be expected to care for 50 patients?

So it is with all other departments. Sound a lot like the VA hospital in your area? Well our fight here is continuing. Unity is growing between patients and workers and with that unity we can build our strength and win.

Patients and workers at the Allan Park VA, and VVAW, Detroit.

\*Tim Wells, a Vietnam vet, worked at the Allen Park VA hospital as an aide; because he was interested in decent care for the patients and refused to knuckle under to pressure from the VA bosses, he was fired. The story of that firing and the struggle that was being built against it appeared in the last issue of The Veteran.



THE VETERAN WELCOMES LETTERS, COMMENTS AND CRITICISMS. PLEASE WRITE TO US. ALSO, IF YOU HAVE ANY POETRY, DRAWINGS OR STORIES YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN THE PAPER, SEND THEM ALONG.

## POEM

(The following poem was written by a disabled Vietnam veteran, a member of the Detroit chapter of VVAW. It can be sung to the tune of "The Medic.")

Come all of you veterans,  
With tears in your eyes,  
Come working class people  
Who've come to decide,  
We have blood on our hands  
And hate in our minds  
For the rich class who use us  
To kill our own kind.

We're part of the workers  
who built this here land,  
We join with our brothers  
To take a firm stand  
Against this system for profits  
That sends us to wars  
Where workers kill workers  
And nothing is gained.  
We're sent back to their factories  
And unemployed lines.

A powerful movement  
Now grows in this land,  
Of veterans and working  
Class women and men  
Who say we won't fight  
In no rich man's wars.  
We'll organize against them  
To make war no more.

They'll never divide us  
By running their lies,  
For 200 years we've learned  
To despise  
You rich class who own  
The factories and land  
And against you we'll do  
All that we can.

In 200 years we've come  
To decide,  
Like our brothers who stood  
On the Capitol steps  
Threw back their medals  
And held up their fists.  
They shouted aloud--  
Next time we fight  
We'll be taking these steps.

## STRIKES (continued from page 10)

a demonstration on the first day of a Special Bargaining Convention, the place where the United Auto Workers union was making plans for negotiations in the fall. Among the rank and file demands and "Defend and Extend Our Right to Strike Over Speed-up & All Grievances," No More Forced Overtime and No Overtime in Any Plants Where Workers Are On Layoff," and "An Improved Cost of Living Allowance & Across the Board Wage Increase."

In each of these strikes, there's more on the table than simply wages. For sure workers have to get paid to keep up with inflation which shoots prices out of sight. But, in this time of economic crisis, wages are only one problem as the ruling class of the country tries to shift the burden of their crisis on to working people. In plant after plant, full-time workers are laid off and temporary workers put in their place, saving the bosses a few more nickels. Speed-up and forced overtime are common. These add up to

a powerful number of reasons that rank and file union members around the country are forcing their leadership to take a stand in this contract year. As a worker on strike for two months against Budweiser said, "What good does it do to have good wages if they can make you work twelve hours a day, lay you off and replace you with part-time help, and run all over you with a lousy excuse for a grievance procedure like we got? There is a lot more than money at stake here."

A lot more at stake. Each strike and each striking worker underlines a fundamental point. Harvey Firestone with all his piles of money can't create a single tire. Henry Ford with his millions can't build a single car. It's the workers who make the tires and make the cars, and who create the wealth. And it's the workers who have the power to say no, we won't continue to create under these conditions of layoff, overtime, speed-up. For the bosses, 1976 will be a long year!

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## WEST POINT SCANDAL

# Officers Prepare for Future Coverups

Along the banks of the Hudson River, up from New York City at West Point, sits the 174-year-old institution known as the US Military Academy. Famous for turning out an endless line of blood-thirsty young "tin soldiers" the likes of George Custer and William Westmoreland, the Academy, whose motto is "Duty-Honor-Country" has been rocked by a recent series of scandals.

The cadet corps of future Army officers supposedly governs itself through a strict code that states, "A cadet will not lie, cheat, or steal nor tolerate any cadet who does." Punishments dealt out for infractions of this code by upperclass cadets have recently come to light and suggest the Academy is administered along the lines of a zoo.

The practice of "hazing" or harrasing new cadets is an outdated practice of indoctrination that was prevalent at one time throughout the American educational system of higher learning, used primarily by fraternities and other gatherings of the sons of the rich and privileged expressly to take care of the need of those involved to prolong their childhood. West Point has managed to maintain and in fact encouraged this standard of ignorance down through the years. Horror stories given to the American public have recently contained incidents of starvation and physical abuse which is generally reserved for enlisted personnel in the military, but is apparently not acceptable for future officers.

Periodically we are also treated to massive expulsions of cadets for cheat-

ing (such as the 50 expelled in April) as the Academy bares its inner secrets, flushes its private cesspool and quickly puts the lid back down.

In reality, the cadets have violated and been found guilty of the basic law of this system--"Thou shalt not get caught." The very idea that these future officers, who will represent the US ruling class in its bloodsucking wars, would be such "innocent victims," is ridiculous. The rich who pull their strings guide their own lives on a philosophy of lies, murder, coverups, thefts and deceit. It's very clear that more than a little of the corruption of the bosses rubs off on their little stooges, the cadets.

One cadet, Steven Veer of Chicago, who has been subjected to intense harassment and severe punishment for a minor infraction of the code described things aptly when he said, "They've made it clear to me what this whole place is all about. It teaches us to cover things up. The honor system is not realistic. If they really practised it, they wouldn't have anybody left here."

Just as clear is the fact that West Point and its occasional attempts to shine up its so-called "good name" will remain with us until the people of this country commit it, the system it serves, and the wars to which it supplies officers, to the garbage pile of history.

It may, however, make a wonderful museum for our children to demonstrate what crap imperialist wars were.

and the tragedy of Watergate," but that they would come back to "reality."

In fact they have come back to Westmoreland's "reality." With near hysteria Congress is taking up the call of the US ruling class, passing bills to increase the defense budget and gearing up for war with the rivals, the ruling class of the Soviet Union--chief competitors for grabbing up countries and resources to squeeze profit out of. Now they are trying to get us to believe that it would be in our interests to fight a war with the Soviet Union. But our enemy is not the working people of the USSR anymore than it was the Vietnamese in Indochina. Our enemy is right here at home; our own ruling class. The only thing we have in common with them is a battlefield--and we're on opposite sides. If there is another rich man's war, our task will be to fight against them, not for them.

When Westmoreland or anyone else with the same view puts forward his lessons of the Vietnam war--"Once this coun-

## Followup from last issue

The last issue of *The Veteran* carried an article about Post-Vietnam Syndrome and focused on the case of W. H. MacFarland, a Vietnam vet who killed a man during a flashback to his combat experiences. Railroaded off to prison, Mac began to fight the rich man's system which had sent him to Vietnam and now had him behind bars. Only after later examination did it come out that the killing took place because the victim drew a gun.

Since the last issue of the paper, Mac has been transferred from Soledad Prison to a hospital for what the State of California calls "treatment." At 3AM guards came into his cell, loaded him with 40 pounds of chains, and took him to the hospital. Even though they tried to attack him with clubs, Mac beat back their attacks.

The hospital won't cure the recurring nightmares about Vietnam, though it is better than the prison. Mac goes up for a parole hearing at the beginning of July. People can write to the California Adult Authority, State Office Building #8, 714 P St, Room 523, Sacramento, Ca, 95814, to say that they've heard of Mac's case. The fact that more and more people came to know about the case--and the way in which hundreds of thousands of Vietnam vets have been discarded by the rich who no longer need us--helped to force the state to transfer Mac.

People wanting to encourage Mac in his continuing struggle can write: William A. MacFarland, RT 2, Drawer B, Patton State Hospital, Patton, CA 93269.

try makes a commitment we should be prepared to back it"--we should see that "this country" is not us, but them, the ruling class, and that our interest aren't the same as theirs. We must oppose wars like Vietnam and fight like hell against any rich man's war.

Westmoreland will probably continue to travel around with his lies and distortions. While he's not the only one with the same song and dance, it would give particular delight to veterans if he took the advice of his predecessor, Douglas MacArthur, the Klunkhead of the Korean War, and "Just fade away."



## Westmoreland (cont'd from p.7)

the oil companies either. Massive refusals to go into combat were facts that can't be glossed over by Westmoreland or the class he represents.

With reminiscences about how things could have been if he had his way, we don't need Westmoreland any more than we need venereal disease. But Westmoreland is still useful to the ruling class. Not only is he dreaming about the Vietnam war, he's putting forward views on "detente" or "peace through strength," or whatever they are calling it in efforts to whip up war hysteria.

Recently he stated, "The Soviets have reached parity with us, and it is almost inevitable that they will overtake us militarily in the next five years. They have the momentum." And he gave warning that Congress was over-reacting to what he called "the disaster of Vietnam

## MAY DAY (continued from page 11)



Car Convoy in Chicago. May Day 1976

and agricultural capacity, enough to provide for all of humanity, we still are forced to exist in the middle of a living hell, with chaos, war and poverty. But there is a way out. The working class has the power to change things. Within its movement lies the seed of a decent life for all people; the seed of a future free of the exploiters and their system of rule. It is the largest class; it produces everything that makes up this society's wealth. Exploited by the bosses whose profits come from legally stealing the wealth workers produce, the working class has no interest in common with our rulers. Producing everything, they have no interest in continuing exploitation or oppression.

This second slogan, then, is both a statement and a call to workers to take up the task of mobilizing as many people as possible against all the attacks we face. The working class has the power to unite all the struggles of the people into one fist, one movement directed against the source of our attacks.

For the capitalists, survival is always a question of squeezing more profits from the labor of the workers and the pressure is even heavier as their crisis deepens.

For the workers, survival is a constant battle to keep the heads of their families above water. Workers are, of course, "free" to stop swimming, "free" to give up their jobs, but to exercise this "freedom" is to drown. In reality, workers are enslaved by the capitalist to whom they must sell their ability to work in order to live. This third slogan, then, points to the source of this exploitation and misery. Wage-slavery is the heart, the foundation on which all the abuses of capitalism are built.

In addition to these three slogans, each locality where May Day was celebrated also took up the present struggles of workers including the sharp struggles

around jobs, cutbacks, the danger of war and the cutbacks on social services. For example, in Chicago workers rallied and heard speakers on struggles of electrical and steel workers and an unemployed worker spoke about struggling for Jobs or Income. They also heard about the plans for the July 4th demonstration in Philadelphia where working people and others will come together to say "We've Carried the Rich For 200 Years, Let's Get Them Off Our Backs!"

After the rally they proceeded by car caravan through residential areas of the south side of the city to the site of the Memorial Day massacre at Republic Steel, where in 1937 a rally of striking steel workers was attacked. Without warning hired police thugs fired point blank into a crowd of men, women, and children killing several outright. From there they proceeded to tear gas and club the entire march, with the final count of ten dead and over 150 wounded. This attack, designed by the factory owners to stop the workers movement, served only to enrage the workers and intensify the struggle at Republic Steel. After repeated struggle, Republic Steel met the workers' demands.

This May Day people in Chicago returned to that site not to mourn the dead but to pay homage to those who died in the workers' struggle and to re-affirm the commitment to continue to struggle today.

In Milwaukee, workers groups along with youth, students, and VVAW, joined in a militant rally and a spirited march in the city in celebration of May Day. It was the largest May Day celebration in Milwaukee in many years. Of great significance during their celebration was the

announcement of the founding of a city-wide workers' organization bringing together workers from the major industries around Milwaukee; a milestone in the struggle of workers in that city.

These two actions and all the others across the US point to the fact that this May Day, just as others to come, magnifies the growth of the working class movement.

The rich have always hated and feared May Day. They have tried to bury it, renaming May Day as Law and Order Day and our children are taught vague stories about May Pole Day. Or as in Los Angeles this year, declared it Mae Day, in honor of old time movie star Mae West).

Today's union "leaders" whose early counterparts once stood closer to the interests of the working class, have now joined with the efforts to erase May Day--proclaiming in its place Labor Day in September, (a day totally divorced from militant international working class history.)

From their glittering penthouses the rich look down with disdain on working people and our history. But when workers rise up, these parasites tremble for it means the very foundation of their empire is rebelling.

LONG LIVE MAY DAY!!

FIGHT--DON'T STARVE!

WORKERS UNITE TO LEAD THE FIGHT AGAINST ALL OPPRESSION!

DOWN WITH THE SYSTEM OF WAGE-SLAVERY!



Los Angeles VVAW chapter members get signatures on the petition to "EXTEND AND EXPAND THE GI BILL."



# Vets Join With RSB to Fight Attacks on Schools

# STUDENTS SAY NO CUTS

The ability to obtain an education is under increasing attack today, more than in any previous period of time. As the economic crisis deepens, students across the country are faced with huge tuition hikes, cutbacks in instructors, classes and financial aid and numerous services. But students, refusing to sit back as thousands are driven out of school, are responding with huge demonstrations opposing these attacks. These demonstrations, led in many places by the Revolutionary Student Brigade, a student organization of the Revolutionary Communist Party, have taken the struggle to terrified trustees, administrators and state governments, meeting with heavy police intimidation and outright attacks.

In New York 10,000 students marched on the state capitol in Albany on March 16, braving a 20-inch snowstorm, to demonstrate their anger against cutbacks in the State University (SUNY) and City University (CUNY) of New York. Fed up with months of heavier and heavier cuts covered by false promises and secret plans, over 2,000 of the students stormed the doors of the Statehouse, rolling over cops and student government marshalls, and rallied inside the building.

This militant action, led by the CUNY Fight Back contingent (which was organized by the RSB) was the high point in a series of actions that have rocked New York State campuses in the past few weeks. Through these struggles more and more students are learning who it is that is responsible for the attacks coming down on people and how to fight them--and win.

Students in New York for the past year have witnessed the near collapse of New York City. They have seen the economic crisis hit sharply, have been forced to stand by with millions of other New Yorkers while Washington, Albany and municipal governments haggle over how many firehouses and hospitals should be closed and how many thousands of government workers should be fired.

Each "plan" to save the city and state only leads to greater cutbacks with no end in sight. This has been true for higher education, with each month a new "plan" or proposal coming out for cutting back or raising fees. But every proposal has the same goal--to make the people give up more to help out the bankers and businessmen looking for more profit.

This is the background for the fight being built on the SUNY and CUNY campuses. At the SUNY the state is trying to raise tuition \$100 and increase dorm fees by another \$100. In New York City, the Kibbee plan which was just adopted by the Board of Higher Education would end Open Admissions (the policy where any high

school grad can enter a city college, which was won by student struggle in 1969), close down four campuses and force thousands out of college.

The Albany demonstration, launched a statewide struggle that shook the NY state and city educational system to its roots. Before the blaze of anger from Albany had cooled, the ripples from that fight became waves at campuses across the state. Nineteen colleges with thousands of students participating, went out on strike, confronted administrators where they hid and seized and occupied buildings.

As a result of these struggles students are beginning to feel that they are engaged in an on-going fight over these attacks against the politicians and their friends who represent a different class, the class of rich capitalists who run this country.

These cutbacks, like all the abuses people face in this country, are attacks by this class of the rich on the majority of people. What students across New York and the rest of the country have learned through their day-to-day battles is that the only way to stop them is to take things in their own hands, to organize and to confront the rich with mass struggle.

In New Jersey 6,000 students gathered in Trenton, the state capital to demand an end to attacks on the state education system. The students protested tuition increases, teacher layoffs, closed admission policies, and other cutbacks. They demanded that Governor Byrne come out and meet with them by chanting "We Want Byrne". When he didn't show the chant changed to "If Byrne won't come out, then we'll go in." They took over the capital steps and hundreds of students were met with armed state police and attack dogs.

In Chicago the Chicago City College Board raised tuition fees by 75%. The

day after this vote 350 students, led by the Southwest Student government and the RSB marched across the campus to confront Oscar Shabat, Chancellor of the Board. A few days later 400 students from several campuses marched through downtown Chicago to the Board Office, City Hall and picketed the Civic Center. They refused to send a few delegates to meet with the Board. Instead the students demanded that the Board come out, chanting "All of us or none."

The nation-wide fight against tuition hikes, cutbacks and other attacks have brought students from other schools in Boston, Maryland, Georgia, Florida and others into the growing struggle and will continue to expand to schools--large and small across the country.

As veterans, we too are facing these same attacks from the schools and the VA, brought on by the US ruling class, who seek to bleed us all--youth, students, vets, unemployed, and employed alike. Used in their crummy wars, thrown into the streets from the military, record numbers of vets from the Korean era to the Vietnam era are attending school. With these attacks on all students, attacks on the GI Bill and massive cutbacks, they're trying to put us into the streets again.

We in VVAW, students or not, will stand shoulder to shoulder with the RSB and other students in the face of these attacks. When push comes to shove, it won't be the students that are kicked out of schools, but the rich and their cops, bootlicking administrators, "sham" student leaders and trustees.

(Much of the information in this article came from Fight Back, the national paper of the RSB. For more information about the RSB or to subscribe to Fight Back, contact the RSB National Office, PO Box A3423, Chicago, IL 60690.)



Chicago City College Students Fight Tuition Hike