

Vietnam Veterans Against the War-Winter Soldier Organization

NEWSLETTER

number 30



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General Information

WE NEED PHOTOS. This issue of Winter Soldier seriously lacks organizational pictures, because we're running out of the pictures from the DC Demo, and you aren't sending any new pictures. It's important to let the readers of the paper know that our chapters are moving--pictures are one of the best ways to do that. People doing actions on the weekend of the 28th of October have time to get pictures together along with reports of what happened--and get them to us. People whose actions are taking place on November 11 should get the pictures off to us immediately (they have to be here no later than November 15th to get in the next issue of the paper).

We need black and white, 3x5 prints, 8x10 prints, or negatives--we'll take it from there. Posters, banners, signs, people--militant actions, or just pictures of the ways in which the chapter is working. It helps if there is something in the picture to identify it as VVAW/WSO. It also helps if the picture is in focus.

Please--we know that people are in action, and we know that people have cameras. We also know there are plenty of color slides in personal (or chapter) collections--please spare one camera and one photographer to take black and white pictures.

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Lawton Trial Up-Date -- Another Postponement!

Most chapters should by now be aware that charges against Zurebu Gardner were dropped in early October (see this month's issue of Winter Soldier). In more recent developments in Riverside, Gary's third trial was again postponed, and is now scheduled to begin on November 5th. The reason for this most recent postponement stems from the prosecution's problems with the trial judge, following Judge Estudillo's dropping of the murder charges against Gardner. If the prosecution succeeds in having Estudillo dismissed, then a new judge for the trial will have to be appointed. The trial of Chukia Lawton (Gary's wife) and Rusty Bronaugh is scheduled to begin on November 4th, the day before Gary's trial is set to start. (See Winter Soldier for details on this trial).

Some facts have recently come to light in Riverside which clearly expose the frame-up nature of the state's attempt to put an end to the work of Gary Lawton. It was recently uncovered in open court that Tennell, member of the Riverside Police Dept. and chief investigator of the ambush killing for the District Attorney, did in fact pay a drug addict \$30 a day (the cost of his drug habit) for testifying against Gary Lawton. This evidence was suppressed by the State Attorney General's Office and it took over 3 years and two trials before the defense succeeded in forcing the Attorney General to release this evidence that they had gathered during the first trial of Lawton, Gardner and Jackson. In other developments concerning Tennell, a police informer has stated that it was Tennell who set up the ambush of Riverside policemen Christiansen and Teale (the two officers who were shot in Riverside in April, 1971 and whose murders have been pinned on Lawton). This police informant allegedly stated that Tennell was seeing one of the ambushed officer's wife, and that was his motive for setting up the shooting. Though the defense has not yet proved this allegation, it does bear a good deal of thought and further investigation.

Other news from California concerns the fact that shortly after charges were dropped against Zurebu Gardner, he moved into Los Angeles to get away from the repression and harassment of Riverside. On the night that he arrived in Los Angeles, he was stopped by LA police, picked up for "suspicion," hassled and then let go. Because of this incident, Zurebu decided to move in with an LA VVAW/WSO member, feeling that the living arrangement would produce greater safety. Zurebu took his gear and moved into the new house, and within ten minutes, the LAPD were at the door, searched the house, ripped apart Zurebu's car, and soon left -- leaving a 24-hour watch on the house. Though Zurebu escaped the clutches of the Riverside Police, he is continuing to be harassed and persecuted by their "neighbor" police force. It seems as though the state of California is mighty pissed off about the fact that Zurebu could no longer be brought to trial on the trumped-up murder charge, though he is still awaiting trial on charges of felonious assault on a police officer, stemming from the March, police attack by Riverside police while Gardner and other defense workers were attending the trial of a member of the Riverside Political Prisoners Defense Committee.

As Gary's third trial approaches, it should be clear to everyone that the rulers of Riverside are out to get Gary as their prime target. They will be doing everything they can to frame this brother, and it is up to us to provide all the support we can. The telegram and letter campaign is still being asked for by the RPPDC, as are petitions which demand that the charges against Lawton be dropped and the frame-up be stopped. In response to the request for telegrams, a representative of Gensuykio, the Japan Council Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs, sent the following messages to Lawton:

"Plot to bring Lawton up in third trial is contrary to all principle of Justice and is evidence of fascist repression. We support the struggle to set him free for total victory." In another telegram, Gyotsu Sato of Gensuykio said: "Congratulations for victory in setting Gardner free. We strongly support Gary Lawton in his struggle against totally unjust frame-up charge brought against him by Riverside District Attorney. Gardner has been freed and the false charge against him rejected."

This is an example of the type of international and national pressure that is being brought against the Riverside authorities. It is urgently asked that this type of pressure continue throughout the U. S. and that chapters mobilize all the energy they can muster to spread the word about this racist and repressive frame-up and get petitions signed, letters written, telegrams sent, etc. to see that this third trial is stopped and the charges dropped.

FREEDOM FOR ONE IS NOT ENOUGH; FREE US ALL! SAY ON!



Second Leavenworth Trial Begins in Wichita, Kansas

Though the first Leavenworth trial has ended in conviction of the four black Leavenworth Brothers, it is important that people realize that the trials surrounding the July, 1973 uprising at Leavenworth Federal Prison are not yet over. The trial of Jesse Lopez and Armando Miramon began on October 21st, in Wichita, Kansas. These two Chicano brothers are charged with four counts of kidnapping (carrying a maximum sentence of 100 years each) and Miramon is charged with assaults on prison guards. During the Leavenworth rebellion, four guards were allegedly held hostage by William "Whitey" Hurst and Miramon. (Hurst was the only white brother indicted as a result of the July uprising, and in March of this year, he was found dead in a cell of the Wyandotte County Jail). Lopez was brought from his cell during the rebellion to serve as an intermediary between the prisoners and the administration at the request of Whitey and the agreement of Warden Loren Daggett. The four guards were released unharmed after the Warden agreed to meet with a prisoner grievance committee of 3 Blacks, 3 Chicanos, and 3 whites, with news media present.

Both Lopez and Miramon have pleaded guilty to these charges with reason of temporary insanity. The strategy behind these pleas is not yet clear, but the Leavenworth Brothers Offense/Defense Committee has said that the reason for the guilty pleas will be made clear as the trial progresses. This trial is expected to last approximately four weeks.

The first day of this second trial was spent with motions for continuance, which were denied by Judge Theis (the same judge that heard the previous case). Jury selection began on the second day of the trial, but judging from the jury panel, prospects for a decent jury of these brothers' peers, do not look good. There are only 3 blacks on the jury panel and one Chicano. Remembering back to the previous trial, it looks as though the prosecution will challenge these four prospective jurors, which will leave the brothers to face another all-white, middle-aged jury. We will continue to follow this trial of Lopez and Miramon in the newsletter and in Winter Soldier, but for those chapters who need immediate information, contact: LBODC, 106 East Lincoln, Wichita, KS 67211, (316) 264-7264.

First Conviction in Wounded Knee Trials

Shortly after charges against Russell Means and Dennis Banks were dropped in their St. Paul, Minnesota trial, four Wounded Knee defendants were convicted of conspiracy to interfere with federal officers. This trial was held in Lincoln, Nebraska and was characterized by perjury by federal officers, purposefully lost evidence and strong indications of governmental misconduct. Mark Fleury, Colin Wesaw, Reginald Dodge and Larry Johns are the first of the Wounded Knee defendants to be convicted. More than 130 people were charged with crimes in connection with the 1973 liberation of Wounded Knee, and since then, more than 30 of these people have had their charges dropped or been acquitted.

In this Lincoln, Nebraska trial, Mark Fleury was also charged with breaking and entering with intent to do bodily harm at the ranch house of Jim and Joanne Larabee (located near Porcupine, SD -- 10 miles from Wounded Knee). Fleury was also charged with assaulting Mrs. Larabee with a deadly weapon. During the trial, Mrs. Larabee testified that Fleury walked into her home carrying a rifle with the barrel pointed down. On the basis of these facts alone, he was found guilty of breaking and entering with intent to do bodily harm. Mrs. Larabee also testified that she was never threatened with the gun, nor was the gun ever pointed at her. When she called the police, Fleury ran away and for this, he was found guilty of simple assault.

The four defendants were also charged with conspiracy to impede, obstruct or interfere with federal officers lawfully engaged in the lawful performance of their official duties during the course of a civil disorder. They were also charged with two counts of assault on federal officers. The latter charge stems from the fact that after leaving the Larabee house, Fleury and the other three brothers walked through open country until they were surrounded by white ranchers with guns. The four took cover and waited until BIA policemen arrived and ordered them to come out. They were alleged to have fired into the air and did not come out until the BIA agents shot a warning volley over their heads and ordered them out again. They then surrendered. The judge in the trial dismissed the two counts of assault stating that the two who shot could not be distinguished from the two who did not. Nevertheless, he found that there had been shooting and that these "facts" should be applied to the conspiracy charge. The government's position was that anyone who tried to enter Wounded Knee with weapons was interfering with federal officers because they were trying to keep people from entering.

The Wounded Knee Legal Defense/Offense Committee, speaking about this trial, said: "Although this is the first conviction in a case arising from Wounded Knee, there will be many more unless the American people demand an end to imprisonment of Indians fighting for what is theirs and a way of justice... The conspiracy of the U. S. government against Indian people, which began long before Wounded Knee, won a significant victory with the conviction of these four men. Its persecution-prosecution tactics have gained in credibility with the American public. It will never stop until the conscience of American people force them to end this country's longest war."

James Hardy Guilty of "Intimidation"

In the story in this month's issue of Winter Soldier about the "Cincinnati 7" there is a brief description of the James Hardy Defense Committee; what follows here is further information about that case.

James Hardy is a Black Cincinnati whose activities on behalf of the Black community there have kept him in constant hassles with the police. At various times he, and the group which he formed, have taken up the problems of health-care, housing, dope in the Black community, police brutality. Two years ago James was framed on an "attempted burglary" rap, tried before an all-white jury and racist judge, and convicted and sentenced to 1-15 years. He was released from Lucasville, Ohio's maximum security prison, on parole last March, and since that time has continued to work--often loudly--in defense of the people and the peoples' interests.

On June 27th James was indicted for "intimidating a public servant," a charge growing out of a letter received by the public safety director and the chief of police which threatened them "unless the police quit abusing Black and poor white people." In the first official word, the police claimed that the letter was signed by Jimmy Hardy and the SLA. Later it was revealed that it was only signed by the SLA.

There was immediate press hysteria, an all-points bulletin, etc etc, all the tools which the powers that be could use to paint James as a dangerous fugitive. In fact, when he heard about the charges, he was at work (hardly a secret from the police); he went to his parole officer who hadn't heard of the charges; he went to a police station to turn himself in, and they hadn't heard about it. Finally, he found the right station and did turn himself in--and despite this, bail was set at \$25,000.

Some of the work of the James Hardy Defense Committee is mentioned in the article; the Committee tied their work in to the whole question of racism, of police repression, particularly in the Black community and around strike breaking. There was public support, and the Committee helped to mobilize that support.

The case went to trial--in front of the same racist judge--on October 2; James, acting as his own co-counsel, had the jury dismissed, since there was no way that jury could represent a "jury of his peers," guaranteed by the constitution. The major prosecution witnesses were two handwriting experts who testified that a handwriting sample they were using was the same handwriting as that in the letter. But their specimen was taken from an application for a job which none of the so-called witnesses could remember James having signed. A collection of letters, written from prison, were confiscated from James' home, but none of these were used in the comparison. Nevertheless, James was found guilty, and sentenced to 3-10 years. He is now out pending appeal.

FREE JAMES HARDY

Paul Lyons found guilty; Files Suit Against Prison System

Paul Lyons, prison co-ordinator for VVAW/WSO in Huntingdon Prison (Pennsylvania), was found guilty, on October 4, of two charges each of assault with intent to kill and aggravated assault and battery, and assault by prisoner. The charges stemmed out of a vicious assault on Paul by at least 6 prison guards at Farview State Prison in 1973, and is the prison's systems typical method of trying to cover-up the brutality of its guards and policies.

In Paul's words, "All are framed-up charges since the individuals who should have been indicted and charged with a criminal act are the racist sadistic pig guards and the prosecutor for lying to the racist pawns on the jury. (Paul, a Black prisoner who has long struggled against the racism of the prison system, was tried before an all-white jury.) It is all too clear what justice is all about when a man like Nixon can rob, and murder millions of people in an immoral war, and kill millions of blacks, and poor whites being held captive in all prisons and jails in this country as political prisoners of war."

While this sorry excuse for a trial was going on, Paul received word that a suit he had filed earlier against the prison system in Pennsylvania had been accepted by the Western District Court in Pittsburgh. One of the many devices used by the prison system to harass politically active prisoners is the transfer--simply moving the individual from one prison to another. Not only does this kind of transfer break off contacts and friendships as well as the political work the prisoner is trying to do, but it means that he will spend several months in isolation at the new prison. By law, prison administrators have pretty much a free hand in transfers, but there is a concerted attack on this practice around the country.

Paul's suit is based on his being transferred out of Huntingdon Prison solely on the basis of his political associations--primarily with VVAW/WSO. A letter from the head of the board of corrections points to Paul's work with VVAW/WSO and with other prisoners as reason for being transferred to the State Prison at Pittsburgh. There seems to be some chance of winning the case--if so, it would give people inside prisons one more tool to use against the authorities who are repressing them. While winning the case will not lessen the racism and repression on which the prison system is founded, it will force the administrators to justify their use of the punitive transfer.

Prison Food

The following letter comes from a member of the Prisoners Coalition Movement at the Delaware Correctional Center in Smyrna, Delaware:

"In Sept 1972 the prisoners at Smyrna had a food strike. As the name implies it was for better food than the administration was giving out; the strike was broken. Since then the food has gotten progressively worse; we sustain ourselves on pork (even in hot weather) ground beef (that's always spoiled), rotten potatoes, corn, and a variety of low-grade slop fit for pigs.

"To date, there had been evidence of foreign objects in the food, but on Sept 18 they (the administration) hit an all-time low; within the bread (which is baked on the premises) was found a rat's head!! At the time various administrative

staff were informed (including the doctor); since then there has been no tangible results; the food is still worse.

We call on readers to support us in our bid for humane and just treatment. We need this support because we are a young movement, moving and organizing outside the established channels and organizations (read: two-faced administrators and sellouts). Please write, in our behalf, to Director Keeves, Delaware Correctional Center, Smyrna, Del 19977.

Comrade In Arms,

Prisoners Coalition Movement

Considering the basic boredom of much of prison existence, and the importance of food to the prisoners, this is harassment carried to an unusually inhumane degree, even by prison administrators. But among the things which most administrators fear is public knowledge of their activities; letters from around the country, pointing out that people do know what is going on, can have a positive effect in lessening this particular tactic of harassment and repression.

Regional Reports

Anti-Ford Demo in Burlington, Vermont

The Demonstration in Burlington, Vermont, when Ford came there to speak at a Republican fund-raiser, was called, by the straight media, the most hostile reaction Ford has yet faced. A brief description of that action is carried in the copy of Winter Soldier; what follows is the press release (parts of it) put out by VVAW/WSO and the other groups in the coalition which got the demo together.

"A major rallying point for the demonstrators was the GOPs \$50 a drink cocktail party and \$50 a plate dinner for the party faithful... Security was extremely tight during Fords visit. Vietnam-style concertina wire was strung along the Air Guard hanger where Ford disembarked in order to avoid Vermonters at the regular commercial terminal. SS agents were everywhere. The GOPs planned 'non-partisan greeting' for Ford was canceled but about 250 demonstrators showed up anyway to point out Fords refusal to meet with common people...

"After sneaking out the back exit of the airport, Ford's first stop was the \$50 a drink cocktail party at the Ramada Inn where he was met by 250-300 placard waving, chanting demonstrators. The Ramada's fancy electronic billboard had been rearranged to read "Welcome President Dorf." In contrast to the \$50 drinks inside, the protesters had a 5¢ a glass apple cider stand, and the Living Theatre performed a skit about the victims of US imperialism.

While Ford was successful in avoiding demonstrators at both the airport and Ramada Inn, he wasn't as lucky at Patricks Gym where the \$50 a plate dinner was scheduled. Again taking the initiative, protesters packed the restricted area in front of the gym. Joined by the contingents from the airport and Ramada, the demonstrators now numbered over 2,000 and the fatcats arriving for dinner were

forced to move through the angry crowd. At the first sign of Fords arriving convoy, many demonstrators massed in the lower parking lot--Ford's only available access area. Despite attempts to keep the people back, the demonstrators pushed down a rope fence erected to keep them out and flooded the parking lot. Outnumbered, outmaneuvered and outflanked, there was little security could do and Ford himself was forced to 'run a gauntlet of shame' amid the chants and demands of the angry people. Ford never looked back once as SS agents rushed him into the gym-- Ford was visibly shaken! "



Non-Ford and Non-Rockefeller Demos

As mentioned in the WS article, Northern California VVAW/WSO was part of a 2000-person demonstration, originally planned for Ford's visit to San Francisco, then changed to an anti-Rockefeller demo when Rocky was substituted for Ford. On October 7th, the New York City chapter was part of a planned demonstration against Rockefeller who was scheduled to speak at Cooper Union in Greenwich Village. Around 500 people were there waiting for the Rock, but because of the demonstration he didn't show; the 200 demonstrators who had gotten inside took over the stage when it was learned that Rockefeller wasn't going to appear, and things finally calmed down about 45 minutes later with several people arrested for fighting.

The demonstrators re-formed on the streets, moved on to the Chase-Manhattan Bank, from there to the Chemical Bank, and finally, some of the demonstrators went to the police station to demand the release of those arrested.

Chicago Holds Amnesty Forum

The Chicago chapter of VVAW/WSO held a forum on amnesty on October 11th. Approximately 75 people attended the event to hear the chapter, the American Legion and Veterans for Peace discuss Ford's sham "earned re-entry" program. Though the American Legion refused to show at the last minute, the forum was still considered a success and a good fund-raiser for the chapter. Without the American Legion, there was not much "hot debate," but the chapter did manage to expose Ford's "amnesty" plan for what it is -- an attempt to dissipate the growing movement for universal and unconditional amnesty for all war resisters.

Santa Cruz Chapter Conducts Week-Long Activities During "Week of Concern"

VVAW/WSO in Santa Cruz hosted 7 days of activities during the International Week of Concern. Events concerning the war in Indochina and amnesty were held in the community every day during the week of Sept. 30th. During the week, members of the chapter sat in a tiger cage in a heavily trafficked area of the city to bring home the fact that Thieu is still retaining over 200,000 political prisoners. Leafletting accompanied this action. The highlight of the week occurred over the weekend, Oct. 4, 5, and 6, with nightly programs and films. One evening was devoted to prisoners and political prisoners (both in Vietnam and the US), one night dealt with veterans and the question of amnesty, and the last evening was devoted to a program on Vietnam and the continuing war, including a Vietnamese meal. A full report on the week-long activities has not yet been received by the National Office, so details regarding attendance and analysis is not yet known. Elsewhere in California, the Oakland chapter participated in a Days of Concern program and rally on Oct. 11th and 12th to bring the fact of the continued war in Indochina home to the American people.



St. Louis Chapter Report

The St. Louis VVAW/WSO chapter has been involved in a lot of activity around the amnesty issue. In response to Ford's pardoning of Nixon, the chapter picketed the opening night showing of the play, "Clarence Darrow." Local newspapers covered the protest, as did the local NBC and CBS-affiliate TV stations. The TV stations also did interviews with the chapter coordinator who presented our position on universal and unconditional amnesty. Approximately 500 leaflets were distributed at the picket line. In addition to this anti-pardon action, chapter members appeared on a local late night talk show for a series of three 90-minute programs on the topic of amnesty. These shows included a debate with members of the American Legion before approximately 30,000 viewers. The chapter was also able to reply to a radio editorial on amnesty, and the chapter's response was broadcast (on the widely listened to station) at both morning and evening rush hours.

One result of the chapter's discussions and struggle around the future of VVAW/WSO and the focus of the organization is that they have decided to drop their plans for opening the building that the chapter owns as a coffeehouse. That decision means that they will no longer be assuming any further burden, either financial or in terms of chapter effort, to achieve what had become an ever-receding goal of opening the "Chestnut Tree Coffeehouse." Further details on this decision should be obtained from the St. Louis chapter.

The chapter's political action committee is currently beginning the work of preparing for the next National Steering Committee Meeting and details on the meeting will be sent out to regions at a later date. This same committee is also planning a demonstration at the VA to be held on Veterans Day to coincide with the National Program.

California Regional Office Has Materials For Sale

The California Regional office has asked that we notify all chapters that they have the following materials for sale: The Red Star Singers album, "The Force of Life," a new book called Women in Vietnam, another book which is a children's history book about Vietnam, records by the singing group "Prairie Fire," and the book Prairie Fire. We don't know prices on these materials, so if you're interested, contact the California Regional office in San Jose.

National Office Reports

National Defense Committee Workshop -- Milwaukee, November 2-3

The National Defense Committee weekend workshop is fast approaching and is set for November 2&3 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The last newsletter contained a run-down on the papers that various individuals and chapters are responsible for, and that newsletter should be referred to for further information. This will be the last newsletter reminder of the NDC meeting, so if you or your chapter is responsible for writing a paper, it should be completed by now and on its way to the National Office. Those people attending this weekend meeting should notify the National Office or the Milwaukee chapter or your intended time of arrival. We hope to begin the meeting at 9:00 a. m. on the morning of the 2nd (Saturday), so people should plan on being in Milwaukee prior to that time. When you arrive in Milwaukee, go to the chapter office. Housing will then be arranged for. The address of the Milwaukee chapter is: 2532 N. Holton, and the phone number is: (414) 264-0882. If you need directions to the office, contact the Milwaukee people and they will be sure to get you where you are going. See you in Milwaukee at 9:00 a. m. on Saturday!

National GI Conference

At the Milwaukee Steering Committee Meeting in April of this year, the NSC decided to sponsor a national conference of GIs and GI organizers. Originally scheduled for Labor Day weekend, the conference finally took place in Chicago during the weekend of October 11-14.

This conference, which was the first of its kind in over two years, was a move forward in trying to develop an anti-imperialist program for organizing in the military. Although the conference achieved only a minimal amount of programmatic unity, important political questions effecting the military organizing were debated at length. The National Office feels that this is an important first step in developing a program for FI organizing that is based on solid, well thought-out political theory. Several questions that were discussed are briefly outlined in the enclosed joint news statement that was sent out after the conference. Among those are the questions of the oppression of women, the role of GIs and the united front against imperialism. Within the next month we will have the completed minutes of the conference and will be sending copies out to the chapters. We hope that everyone will take up the different questions raised during the conference and struggle around the different lines presented.

By a slim majority, the conference passed a resolution which supported the idea that local demonstrations take place on Armed Forces Day wherever feasible and desirable. The proposal for local Armed Forces Day demonstrations was part of a three-part proposal submitted by the National Office of VVAW/WSO. The first part was a logan which could be used as an overall theme for our day-to-day work. The slogan is: BUILD THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST GI MOVEMENT: UNITE TO FIGHT ALL OPPRESSION! The second part included seven demands which could be organized around to one degree or another at virtually every military base in the world. Those are: END ALL RACIAL OPPRESSION; END THE OPPRESSION OF WOMEN IN THE MILITARY; END NON-JUDICIAL PUNISHMENT; GIs ARE NOT STRIKEBREAKERS OR RIOT COPS; A SINGLE-TYPE DISCHARGE FOR ALL GIs AND VETS; UNIVERSAL, UNCONDITIONAL AMNESTY FOR ALL WAR RESISTERS; IMPLEMENT THE AGREEMENTS--END ALL AID TO THIEU AND LON NOL. The final part called for local demonstrations on Armed Forces Day as a highlight to the ongoing work around the seven demands. The Armed Forces Day section was the only section accepted by the conference.

The proposal was based on the same basic strategy that we used to arrive at the national program that was adopted by the NSC in Buffalo, that is, day-to-day work around a minimum program which is highlighted by periodic actions. While we expected alot of struggle around the demands and would not have been surprised to see some of them dropped or changed, we were discouraged that the conference (except for the VVAW/WSO chapters present) were unwilling to even struggle to a point of unity around any demands. Part of this was the outcome of many peoples' disagreement with the basic concept of a minimum program as a strategy in building a mass movement; others disagreed because they were unsure about our proposal and were not willing to make any political committment; still others, it appeared, opposed it simply because we were putting it forward.

All in all, we feel that the conference was a success because it moved the level of struggle forward and gave us and other members who were there a better perception of the task ahead of us. The National Office will be sending out a more detailed analysis prior to the NSCM.

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GI Organizing Workshop: Chicago/Thanksgiving Weekend

PURPOSE: Begin development of organizational program for GI work
WHO: VVAW/WSO chapters doing active GI work
WHEN: Thanksgiving Weekend, Nov 29th (Friday) to Dec 1st (Sunday)
WHERE: Chicago, location to be announced
SPECIAL: All participants notify National Office in advance

In terms of really pushing VVAW/WSO's GI organizing ahead, one of our primary tasks at present is to develop a thorough analysis of our past practice with GI work and an in-depth program to guide our work with GIs in the future. Without summing up our past experience in GI organizing we will never be able to systematically learn from our own history; without understanding the lessons of our own work we can never use them to improve and guide our present and future work. Similarly, we need to develop a real plan of action or organizational program to serve as the basic guideline for a coordinated, national GI organizing effort. While the actions (Armed Forces Day, particularly) adopted at the Buffalo NSCM in reference to GI organizing were an important first step in this direction, they were not enough in themselves. We need a much more extensive analysis of the issue before we can adopt a specific organizational program for VVAW/WSO's GI organizing. And again, without such a program we cannot expect to move our work forward on the basis of a conscious, coordinated plan of action that will allow us to seize our own initiative. Rather we would be forced to aimlessly, and ineffectively react to one situation after another. This workshop will not arrive at that definitive program, but it will hopefully begin the work necessary to do so.

Realizing the extensive amount of work that must go into this process, and the minimal amount of time we will have at the GI organizing workshop at the upcoming St Louis NSCM, the National Office is coordinating a special weekend workshop on GI organizing to be held in Chicago on Thanksgiving weekend. Based on the success of the two special weekend National Defense Committee workshops that have already been held, we feel that this is the best way of getting the necessary work done in time to present to the GI workshop at the St. Louis NSCM on December 27th. As we don't have a location for the workshop at this point, people will have to make final arrangements on time, location, etc through the NO prior to Thanksgiving. Also, since we are not sure how long it will take to hold this workshop, we want to try and leave things as flexible as possible. Work will begin on Friday evening, November 29th, run through Saturday, Nov 30th, and include Sunday, Dec 1st, if necessary.

We would like to limit participation in this workshop to those VVAW/WSO chapters doing active work with GIs, particularly those which did attend the GI conference, since we see this workshop as building on the work done during that conference. There are two reasons for this: first of all, the logistics involved--we simply don't have the capability of putting up more than 10-15 people. Secondly, this will be a working session and is not a familiarization course on the GI movement. Participants should all have active practice with GI organizing. Those chapters doing GI work were invited to the National GI Conference and they are the only ones that should plan on sending delegates to the GI Workshop on Thanksgiving: these are Highway 13, Columbus, Dayton, Denver, Colorado Springs, Tacoma, and Oakland. We realize that there is a need for allowing observers to participate in workshops such as this: there are many chapters that may be wanting to begin doing active GI work that could benefit from such a workshop. However, at this point, we don't

see anyway that can realistically be worked out in the context of this Thanksgiving workshop, given our logistical capabilities. If there are chapters or regions that would like to send observers, we can only promise to try and work something out depending on how many people actually attend. However, by and large, we don't think it will be feasible.

ALL PEOPLE PLANNING ON ATTENDING THE WORKSHOP SHOULD NOTIFY THE NATIONAL OFFICE ASAP.



Things the NO Needs

Part of our job is to let you know what other people are doing, and to let other chapters know what you are doing. And that means you have to tell us; a note in a letter about what a great demo we had two months ago is good to have, but is nowhere near as useful as a description of what happened (along with analysis, if possible) somewhere close to the time it took place. Leaflets about the action, and/or newspaper accounts of the action are also helpful. And, of course, PICTURES.

Reports on the less-glamorous, day-to-day work are also helpful. When we get a letter from a chapter saying "We did this and this, and nothing happened," we want to be able to say, "Well, this chapter did that, but also something else, and it did work"--we feel that kind of coordinating is of use, but only if we get the information from you.

Amnesty Buttons--WE GOT 'EM

Because some chapters did respond to our request for pre-payment for amnesty buttons, we ordered them and they arrived. (These are the orange and blue buttons from the DC Demo.) In many places, they are selling like mad; 10¢ each from here (which covers the cost and the postage), and they are being sold anywhere up to 50¢ each. Send in orders (with money) and we'll get them right out to you.

Ex-Tampa Chapter

Many chapters and regions have gotten a copy of "Round Robin Report For September, 1974 From Tampa Chapter, VVAW." People in the National Office and in the Miami Regional Office have been trying to deal with Carl Brown, Ed Cooper, and what is called the Tampa Chapter for well over a year; our feeling is that the time has come to stop wasting time on that hassle. Carl Brown and Ed Cooper were expelled from the organization not by the NO but by a unanimous vote of the National Steering Committee; this was a move we supported and encouraged, but the NO does not have the authority to expel anyone from the organization.

We stand by the section concerning Tampa in the National Office Report. We also underline the political point (which is more important than the particular problems of the ex-Tampa chapter): VVAW/WSO is moving forward through its chapters around the country. The organization can no longer afford to be diverted from our work by those people using the organization's name for their own purposes with the potential of dragging the organization into another Gainesville.

Working Paper

Regions and chapters were to have sent in additions and suggestions to the Working Paper by Oct. 15th. To date, no chapters have responded to that request. The National Office was supposed to compile these suggestions from the regions and send them back out to regions by the end of October. Since we have had no in-put, we have not yet begun to "compile" working paper ideas. We hope to get around to discussing the Working Paper in the near future and send out what suggestions we have to the regions so we will have something to talk about at the next NSCM. If chapters and regions have ideas and suggestions about the Working Paper, please get them in to the National Office ASAP so we will have other people's ideas to work from.

Internal Funding Reminder

To keep people up-dated on the progress of the Internal Funding, a policy which was adopted at the last NSCM in Buffalo, following is a list of chapters that have paid either for the month of Sept., Oct. or for both months: Oakland, CA, Riverside, CA, Chicago, ILL, Milwaukee, WIS, Buffalo, NY, New York City, NY, Columbus, OH, Akron, OH, Dayton, OH, Salt Lake City, Utah, London, England, and the Liberated Barracks in Hawaii (which is not an "official" chapter at this time). We have a sneaking suspicion that there are more chapters than those which have paid, so if your chapter has not yet paid your dues for the past two months, then we hope to have your internal funding soon. Also, since we began keeping official records in September, some chapters who may have paid in August will not be in our internal funding records. We have found that the money from these few chapters has been helpful, and if all chapters could be conscientious in paying their dues, it would definitely help the financial strain on the National Office. So, send your pennies in today!

Also, since we asked for chapters to begin paying for copies of Winter Soldier, we have received payment from the following chapters: Chicago, Milwaukee, Buffalo, London, England, and the Liberated Barracks in Hawaii. We feel this is a good start, so for those chapters who are not yet sending in money for the copies of W. S. that you receive, we hope you will give it some serious thought since we can no longer support the newspaper alone. We thank those chapters who have begun to consistently pay their debts, i. e. dues, copies of the newspaper, payment for materials, etc. and hope that this will be a coming trend in VVAW/WSO.

PS. St. Louis chapter dues just arrived!

Press Releases

When word came of dropping of charges against Zurebu Gardner we put out an immediate press release which was sent to our regional offices and to the media. Since this was also the time of the hassle around the so-called "deserters' loophole," we included a press release on that, also. We would like to know if people found these items useful and if so, what use was made of them. Also, criticisms of the releases would be helpful. Ideally, we would send these releases to all our chapters, but don't have the money--did the word get to the chapters, particularly around the Gardner fiasco? Any suggestions for further releases?

Address Changes

The following changes have taken place since the last newsletter.

ADD: VVAW/WSO
co Providence Workers Committee
P.O. Box 6711, Charles St
Providence, Rhode Island 02940

Fitz MacCrae
Box 16,
Norton, Vermont

Oshkosh Contact:
Dan Dederling
Rm 1069 N. Scott
University of Oshkosh
Oshkosh, Wisconsin
(414) 424-2814

Stevens Point Contact:
Lyle Updike
Box 181A
Stevens Point, Wisconsin 54481
(715) 346-3628

CHANGE: Madison chapter to:
James A Powers/Steve Barnes
105 Iowa Court
Madison, Wisconsin
(608) 255-8388

DELETE: Eau Clair Contact
Calumet Contact



Chapters Receiving Parcel Post Shipments of Winter Soldier Owe Money

A long time ago, we agreed to ship bulk copies of Winter Soldier to certain chapters via Parcel Post. This is done because it is cheaper in the long run than shipping papers on Greyhound or REA. When this method of shipping was decided on, we asked that those chapters who were to receive their newspaper Parcel Post, reimburse us for the postage money. This reimbursement for postage is happening on a very sporadic and irregular level. So, if your chapter receives bulk copies of W. S. through the mail, please note the amount of postage on the package and send us that amount. With the number of Parcel Post shipments that we send out, the money spent on postage begins to add up. So, this is a reminder for all of you who receive PP shipments to pay for the postage on a regular basis!

Amnesty

Amnesty Conference to be Held!!

The Second Annual Conference of the National Council for Universal and Unconditional Amnesty, (NCUUA), will be held at the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky from November 16 to 17. The conference will have representatives of national and local organizations from the ACLU to VVAW/WSO.

It comes at a time when the American people have understood and rejected the limited, punitive earned re-entry program put forward by President Ford. This proposal is totally counter to the position of universal and unconditional amnesty that this organization puts forward. The conference will deal with this program and discuss ways in which the amnesty movement can best work to organize people around fighting for a real amnesty; one which will recognize the correctness of resisting imperialist wars, and one that will include all those who need amnesty.

The conference will hold ten workshops: veterans, church, campus, community, families, Congress, legal/counselling, news/media, fund raising, and demonstrations. Each of these workshops will discuss ways in which organizing around the issue of amnesty can best be done. Last year, VVAW/WSO had approximately 20 members from various chapters attend the conference in Toronto. We feel that in light of the present trend in the amnesty movement, that it is essential that VVAW/WSO have more representatives than that. It is hope that each chapter will be able to send one delegate. As many people as want to attend can do so.

There is a registration fee of \$15 per person which includes sleeping and eating for the two days. If for some reason, this is too much money special arrangements can be made. All people interested in coming to the conference should contact the National Office as soon as possible for more information. It is important that this be done as representatives to national and international conferences must be cleared by the National Steering Committee or the National Office. Hoping to hear from you soon.

Amnesty Action and Information Centers -

After the Ford announcement of his punitive clemency program for resisters to the Indochina War, exile organizations met in Toronto, Ontario to plan a response to this sham. The conference overwhelmingly rejected the program and announced a boycott of the plan. The exiles stated that their resistance was correct and that to accept this plan which would divide the amnesty movement would be incorrect. They reaffirmed the need for a universal and unconditional amnesty while at the same time demanded an end to the war in Indochina, a single-type discharge for all veterans and decent benefits for all veterans.

VVAW/WSO totally supports the call of the boycott as does the NCUUA, a grouping of national and local organizations who are committed to universal and unconditional amnesty. As it is necessary to get word of the boycott out to as many people as possible, four amnesty action and information centers have been set up in Los Angeles, Denver, New York City and Atlanta. These centers are to provide information about the pitfalls in the Ford program and to organize active participation of those in need of amnesty, (as well as those who support uua), to fight for a real amnesty. The centers will provide counseling but will do this in a political way. These centers are not being set up to draw war resisters into the program of punitive earned re-entry.

The four centers are located at the following places:

Joe Uργο/NCUUA
339 Lafayette
New York, NY 10012
(212) 228-1500

Geoff Pope
Amnesty Action
1384 Fairview NE
Atlanta, GA
(404) 373-5833

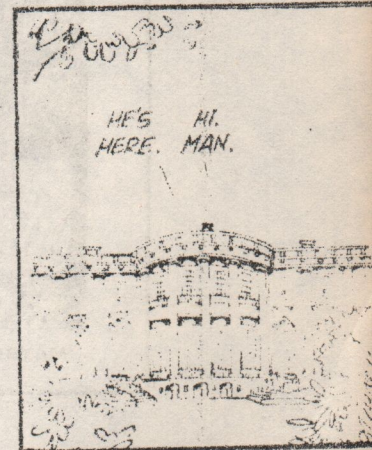
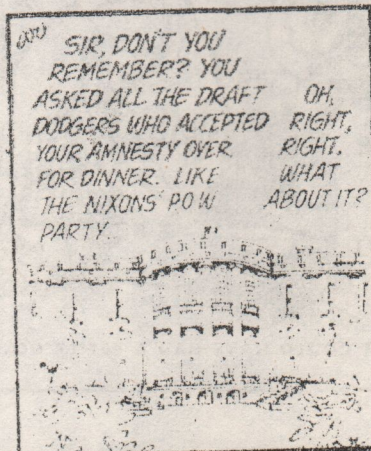
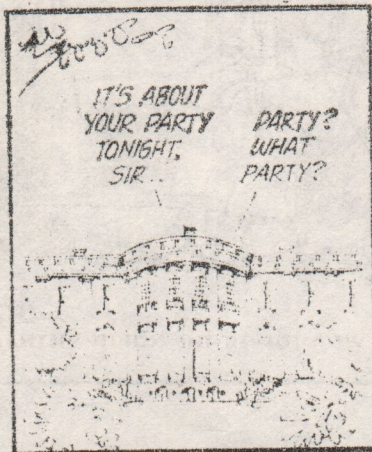
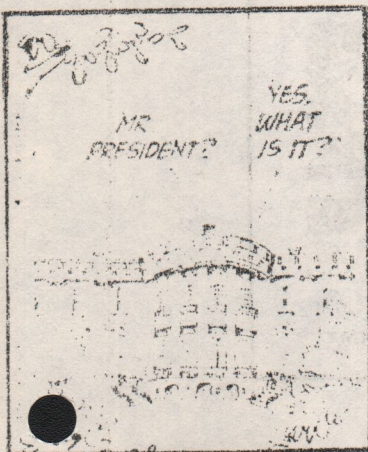
Bob Anyon
1764 Gilpin
Denver, CO
(303) 321-3717

Mary Clarke
Amnesty Action and Info
5899 W. Pico Blvd
Los Angeles, CA
(213) WE7-0236

We think that it is important that chapters in these areas work along with the projects in order that the political views of VVAW/WSO be put forward in local planning of amnesty actions. Joe Uργο and Bob Anyon are members of VVAW/WSO.

DOONESBURY

By TRUDEAU



Information Requests

Send Photos to Winter Soldier!

Putting out a good political newspaper requires having up-to-date, relevant news and analysis. It also requires having a regular input of decent graphics and photographs to go along with the news. The old saying about a picture being worth a thousand words couldn't be more true--there are many things that can only really be said by a picture or a photograph. Try and imagine how much less effective and interesting Winter Soldier would be without photos and graphics to compliment the copy.

The point of all this is that we simply have not been receiving photographs (or good graphics!) from regions or chapters. This is a general criticism of the whole organization and will hopefully be taken seriously. We have a collective responsibility in funding, producing and distributing Winter Soldier. Part of this responsibility that we all share, is to see that the paper has the best possible photographs and graphics for any given article. When you have an action or a demonstration, or have pictures relevant to our work, please send them in to the National Office. In particular, if you can send the actual film negatives that would be best as we have our own darkroom facilities and can do whatever prints we can best use. (We can't use color film or prints for the paper without having them made into black and white photos at a considerable expense). We will return all prints or films on request.

