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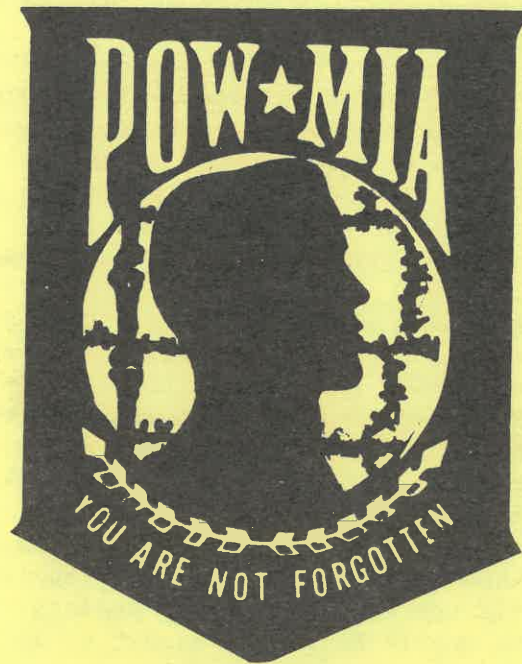
Viet Vet Monsoon Tribune

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Issue No. VI

VVA CHAPTER 106

September 1988



PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE
POW-MIA NATIONAL RECOGNITION DAY CEREMONY
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1988
10:00 A.M.
TUCSON VETERANS ADMINISTRATION MEDICAL CENTER
CENTER PATIO
3601 So. 6th Avenue
TO PAY TRIBUTE TO ALL FORMER AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR
AND THOSE MISSING-IN-ACTION

This special ceremony is held in cooperation with American Families and Friends of POW-MIAs, Veterans Administration, American X-POWS, and Davis-Monthan Air Force Base.

THE POLITICAL SPECTER OF VIETNAM

On Nov. 5, 1987, politicians under the age of 45 suddenly found the stability of their world threatened. Douglas Ginsburg, 42, a nominee to the Supreme Court, had admitted smoking marijuana, and his nomination was going down the tubes. Politically ambitious baby boomers--at least those who had shared their generation's initial fascination with drugs--must have felt a frisson of doom. Would they be disqualified, too? Nobody knew. Sen. Al Gore, in Florida campaigning for the presidency, stayed up almost all night trying to decide whether to admit his youthful marijuana use. He did, along with another presidential candidate, Bruce Babbitt. Pundits speculated that an entire generation of politicians might be declared unfit for office.

It didn't happen. Neither Gore nor Babbitt was noticeably hurt by his confession. Instead, a set of informal rules seems to have evolved, rules under which drug use by politicians is judged--the Ginsburg Rules, if you will. Smoking dope in college (Gore) is pardonable. Smoking dope as an adult lawyer (Ginsburg) is crippling. Thirtyish pols, aware of these new rules, have learned to field questions about substance abuse as routinely as questions about abuse of PAC contributions.

Now, with the controversy over Dan Quayle's National Guard service, the second generational shoe has dropped: Vietnam. Quayle is the first national politician to face interrogation for his avoidance of that unpopular war, but he won't be the last. The grilling of Quayle, even more than that of Ginsburg, is a frightening spectacle to politicians born between 1942 and 1950. If they are like the rest of their Vietnam-era draft eligible peers, some 92 percent of them managed to steer clear of Vietnam. Now they are to be held to account for it. But what are the rules?

The draft-ducking issue makes the drugging issue look simple. There is, after all, now an overwhelming public consensus that drugs are bad. But the debate over the Vietnam War was never really settled. Quayle's quandary is a political depth charge, bringing to the surface long-submerged foreign-policy disputes, profound generational divisions and some dirty little secrets of American society. The outlines of the post-Vietnam political code--the Quayle Rules--are hardly visible. Before they can be written, the voters must answer some questions:

Was service in the National Guard a Vietnam dodge? The year is important. In March 1968 the Joint Chiefs of Staff asked President Johnson to mobilize the guard. Johnson refused. After that it was an open secret in the military that the vast majority of guard units were safe from call-up. By December 1969 (when Quayle finished his initial training) the last guard units were out of Vietnam and were never sent back. The only guardsmen who went after that were volunteers. "The guard meant not going to Vietnam," says John Wheeler, a vet and chairman of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund. "Everyone knows this." Reserve units were more likely to be called, but were still relatively safe.

Viet vets only? Will active-duty service in Vietnam suddenly be a prerequisite for baby boomers seeking national office? That would be bad news for men like Sen. Bill Bradley, who spent his draft-prone days in the Air Force Reserve, or Sen. Don Nickles, who joined the guard in 1970. Too late for them to punch the 'Nam ticket now.

A "vets only" rule is unlikely, however, for at least two reasons. Vietnam, unlike World War II, wasn't big enough to require the services of most draft-age men. (In World War II, 70 percent of the eligible age group wound up serving.) Bradley, Nickles and Quayle may have avoided the war, but they did more to serve their country than the nearly two thirds of their congressional peers who got out on deferments and performed no military duty of any kind.

A more obvious contrast with World War II is the moral controversy over the war. "I knew this war by 1969 was a terribly twisted and broken affair and it was not a war to die in," remembers Wheeler. If others back home reached the same conclusion, should they be condemned for not serving? Veterans themselves seem to respect the war's moral ambiguity--one reason why the stark black Vietnam Memorial, condemned by conservatives as

too inglorious, is so popular. "You will find the bulk of us are not judgmental," says Wheeler.

Hypocrisy of the right? "If you're so much in support of war, why don't you go over there and fight it," one of Quayle's college classmates recalls asking him. This question is the core of the Quayle Rule proposed by many Democrats, namely that only those who supported the war should be required to have served. The list of so-called "chicken hawks"--hard-line anticommunists who somehow missed the Vietnam action--includes Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams (bad back), columnist Pat Buchanan (bum knee) and Texas Sen. Phil Gramm (college deferment).

Of course many conservatives also had complaints about Vietnam. New Right Congressman Newt Gingrich, who got out on various deferments, says Quayle was "prudently patriotic" in light of Democratic mismanagement of the war effort. Quayle himself alludes vaguely to his "problems" with the war's "no-win policy aspect." If it's OK for liberals to avoid service in the belief that a war is immoral, is it OK for conservatives to avoid service just because a war is being botched?

Hypocrisy of the left? "Some of them were probably parading around and protesting that war...and that's hypocrisy that is really stunning to watch," charges Sen. Alan Simpson, referring to Quayle's inquisitors. At least Quayle didn't go to Canada. At least he didn't "throw a cup of urine in the face of an Army medical technician," says former Navy secretary James Webb. The Republicans proposed Quayle Rule: if you didn't serve, don't complain.

"Hypocrisy" is not really the right word here. It's not hypocritical to avoid a war you oppose. But that doesn't get antiwar types off the moral hook, because the same nasty issue of privilege that haunts Quayle also haunts the war's opponents. The graduate school and undergraduate deferments allowed many sons of the affluent (including the writer of this article) the luxury of protesting the war from the safety of a campus while the less fortunate were sent to fight. Even when those loopholes were closed (in 1968 and 1971), there were antiwar doctors available to help obtain medical deferments. In an influential 1975 article, James Fallows argued that Vietnam opponents who avoided the draft (as he had) had been "prolonging the war." If more affluent Americans had put themselves on the line--either by serving or going to jail--their parents would have quickly pressured the government into pulling out the troops. Indeed, that's probably why Johnson kept the undergraduate deferment and allowed the guard to become an escape hatch for the connected.

Fallows's conclusion--that service or jail were the only honorable options--seems too harsh. The young men of the '60s weren't responsible for the choices thrust upon them. And they were only young men. If they took an easy out, surely a statute of limitations applies 20 years later.

Yet those who seek to invoke that statute--especially those seeking office--should at least be required, in return, to grapple candidly with what is so far the great test of their generation. Politicians who still support the war should be required to make some public assessment of their conduct. Well-born politicians who escaped should, as former Nebraska governor and Vietnam veteran Bob Kerrey argues, at least "understand that...wealth and privilege enabled (them) to do things that other people weren't able to do."

Quayle's Yuppie Defense ("My desire was to continue to law school") fails to meet this standard. It contains an element of denial (he never thought about saving his skin?) and it's pitched at the wrong order of moral magnitude. Equally deficient is California Democrat Tom Hayden's grotesque suggestion of a memorial for antiwar protesters--as if their sacrifice were comparable to that of those who fought.

If the Quayle Rules require a generation of political careerists to stop and do some rethinking, maybe that will be enough.

CHAPTER 106 PARADES

The newly formed color guard has been quite busy the last couple of months. We started out on May 29th at Catalina. We had a good turn out and we received a ribbon for participating in the parade. The wind gave us our first real test. It was gusting up to 45 mph. After the parade most of the flag bearers were walking on a slant -- this was even before any of them had any beer. We rounded out the day by having a picnic at Catalina State Park -- afterward the rest of the color guard was walking on a slant. On the following day most of the color guard made it to the parade at Tucson Estates. They were so impressed with us that they asked us to lead the parade! We were then asked to post the colors for their ceremony. The folks at Tucson Estates were really nice to us. They gave us free food and even let us go to the head of the line. Of course when we ate up all the food they realized their mistake but by then it was too late. They have invited us back for their Veteran's Day Parade and it is unfortunate that we have to turn them down. As most of you know, we always participate in the Tucson parade. On July 4th we had a parade at Reid park. A dozen hearty souls braved the heat. Finally, on August 12th, the color guard posted the colors for the first-day issue of the new wheelchair stamp at the VA hospital. As the date and time were during most folks working time, only four members of the color guard could make it. Things went off real well and a good time was had by all. One final word. Even though we now have a parade committee and a color guard it is a whole lot better if more folks come to these parades than just the color guard. Our next big event is the Veteran's Day Parade in Tucson. It will be on Friday, November 11th, you know--the day before NAM JAM. Hope to see ALL of you there!





*****ANNOUNCEMENTS*****

V.V.A. #106 is sponsoring an evening at the Gaslight Theater, 7000 E. Tanque Verde Road. "Phantom of The Opera" (melodrama) will be the presentation. Doors Open: 6:15 PM
 Curtain: 7:00 PM Date: 29th Oct. 1988 (Sat.) Admission: \$10.00 per person. For more information see Gary Morgan at General Membership meetings, Sept. and Oct. 1988.

 PLEASE---Anyone still having in their possession "Judicial Review Petitions" return them (A.S.A.P.) to: Barry Arcala, 941 N. Evelin, Tucson, Az 85710.

BOARD TALK

Treasurer's report -- Harold Leigh -- balance of \$4581.71.... Announcements.... The post office will be issuing a new wheelchair stamp at the VA hospital Aug 12th. The chapter has committed the color guard to post the colors. There will be barely enough members of the color guard available due to the fact it is during the day on a work day.... Fund raising -- Gary Morgan. He has obtained tickets for the Gaslight Theater. The chapter will get a portion of the money for the tickets. Lets all get some tickets from Gary to sell or atleast buy a couple from him so we can all get together.... NAM JAM -- Things are going well and we hope to have a bigger and better show this year. We are going to need LOTS of volunteers to man the booths.... Gary Morgan -- the chapter has been getting "freebies" when we order product sales items from certain companies. It was voted that any proceed from the sale of these items be donated to the women's memorial.... Ed Gildner gave a synopsis of articles he had collected. Ed also told of a possible donation to the color guard for reimbursements for uniforms and the purchase of rifles.... John Shirley said the ACLU was now authorized to represent Agent Orange victims.... Dave Croteau said that the POW/MIA flag going across the US whereabouts is unknown at this time. Last we heard that it is in Texas.... Barry Arcala our Legislative Coordinator gave a report on his efforts. He has gotten Jim Kolbe to come to the next general meeting.... It was voted to have candidates night at the next general meeting. We will invite all candidates that are running in the next election to speak.... It was voted to have petitions that Barry Arcala drew up for Judicial Review reproduced and passed around.... Dave Croteau is to educate the chapter at the next meeting on the history of judicial review and the reasons that VVA is supporting it.... We have an opportunity to have VVA 106 night at Raven Raceway on Sept 3 or 4.... The chapter has been offered a billboard at Raven Raceway. It was voted on what was to be on the billboard and that we look into getting someone to paint it for us. Anyone out there want to give us a hand on it?.... Ed Gildner announced that we finally got the parade equipment that we had ordered.... We have been invited to participate in the Veteran's Day parade at Tucson Estates. As we have always attended the Tucson parade in the past we will regretfully have to turn it down. It is unfortunate -- we had a really good time at the Memorial Day Parade there this year....

Till next month.....

YOUR BOARD

Agent Orange battle

Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt Jr., who ordered the use of Agent Orange in Vietnam, says the cancer death of his son moves him to work harder for compensation for other veterans affected by the toxic defoliant.

"There are still many hundreds of veterans who do need help," Zumwalt said Saturday, the day his son died. "I believe very strongly now that the evidence is clear that the Agent Orange is responsible for the problems many veterans are having."

Elmo R. Zumwalt III, 42, who was exposed to Agent Orange, died at his home in Fayetteville. He was diagnosed in January 1983 as having non-Hodgkins lymphoma. Two years later doctors found he had lumphoma Hodgkins disease.

Zumwalt's son, Elmo Russell Zumwalt IV, suffers from a congenital dysfunction that confuses his physical senses.

Since the war, Adm. Zumwalt and his son had pushed for government assistance to veterans affected by Agent Orange.

On June, the U.S. Supreme Court removed the last legal obstacle to a \$180 million settlement between Vietnam veterans and the manufacturers of Agent Orange. The justices let stand rulings that dismissed lawsuits by about 300 veterans who had challenged the 1984 settlement.

In Washington, a White House spokesman said, "The President and Mrs. Reagan are deeply saddened and extend their prayers to the Zumwalt family."

The younger Zumwalt was commanding a boat along the rivers of the Ca Mau Peninsula when his father, the American naval commander in Vietnam, ordered the spraying of Agent Orange to defoliate the jungle along the waterways in order to save servicemen by depriving the enemy of concealment for ambushes.

Before the spraying, U.S. forces had a 6 percent casualty rate each month. Afterward, that figure dropped to less than 1 percent.

"I do not second guess the decisions Dad made in Vietnam, nor do I doubt for a minute that the saving of human life was always his first priority in his conduct of the war," the younger Zumwalt once said.

The Zumwalts chronicled their battle with cancer in 1986 with the book, "My Father, My Son," which they wrote with Author John Pekkanen. The book was presented in a made-for-television movie in May.



VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

**Membership in Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. is open to Vietnam Era Veterans
Associate Membership to the Public at Large**

Name _____ Phone _____

Present Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

\$20.00 Annual Dues Enclosed _____

Copy of DD Form 214 Enclosed _____

Return this form to

• VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA •

Tucson Chapter 106, P.O. Box 40903 Tucson, Arizona 85717

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- I am not a Vietnam era veteran, but would like to be an Associate Member.

Your Local Chapter No. _____

I want to give more. Enclosed is my check for \$20, \$50, \$ _____ New Member or Renewal

(All contributions are tax deductible.)

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A CONGRESSIONALLY CHARTERED VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION

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P.O. Box 40903 Tucson, Arizona 85717 (602) 790-7602

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CALENDAR *** CALENDAR *** CALENDAR *** CALENDAR *** CALENDAR *** CALENDAR *** CALENDAR

SEPT. 8th - BOARD MEETING: Thursday at D.A.V. 18 4656 E. 1st St. at 7:30 P.M.

SEPT. 22nd - GENERAL MEETING: Thursday at D.A.V. 18 4656 E. 1st St. at 7:30 P.M.

OCT. 13th - BOARD MEETING: Thursday at D.A.V. 18 4656 E. 1st St. at 7:30 P.M.

OCT. 27th - GENERAL MEETING: Thursday at D.A.V. 18 4656 E. 1st St. at 7:30 P.M.

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