

VERMONT FREEMAN

Volume 5 Number 18

Latter September, 1973

35 cents



Eyewitnesses:
in Quang Tri, Vietnam
at the Gainesville Trial
with striking grape workers

Pictures from Sugarbush

You may not agree with those publishing judgements, but it isn't often the decisions are easy to make.

Pictures with the strike story are from *El Mileriado*, the journal of the United Farm Workers. Other graphics are by Bill Mauldin, Conrad, and Jerry Aye. The cover is an Aye sketch of Huntington Gorge that first appeared here two years ago.



THE GAINESVILLE EIGHT: Standing left to right: John Briggs, Peter Mahoney, Stanley Licholsen, William Patterson and Donald Perdue; seated left to right: Scott Camil, Alton Foss and John Kniffin.

editor's notes dogs

Almost a year ago there was a note about the Schoolhouse dog, Ania, and her puppies. One of that litter acquired a name, Charlie, and stayed with us. They are medium-big dogs of uncertain ancestry; most of the time excessively friendly, and you might still be able to take one of them home from the Humane Society in Burlington.

It wasn't an easy decision, but it was a necessary one. Our neighbors keep chickens and ducks. Months ago, Ania and Charlie raided the chicken coop. Neighbor Craig was more understanding than he should have been. We tied the dogs for several weeks, then agreed on times when they might run free. There being no further incidents, we stopped tying them, checking from time to time to be sure everything was OK.

Then last week a pet duck disappeared. There were duck feathers in our yard. Apologies are quite less than adequate in such circumstances.

We will miss Ania and Charlie, but the alternative was to tie them permanently, a form of cruelty we find not justified for the few hours of pleasure we have had in their company. The crying and barking of a dog as he trots at the end of his chain is one of the most dismal sounds I can imagine.

Our town has a newly-enacted dog ordinance which would apply in such circumstances. I'm glad Craig and Chris chose to entreat with us directly rather than call the constable. I can wish there were a way for the dogs to have the freedom they wanted, but the freedom to be marauders isn't and shouldn't be an open option for any of us critters trying to piece together workable relationships.

reasons I spend a moment now and then being grateful.

About a year ago I tiptoed into a part-time job writing copy at WVNY-radio, a regional FM station stereo-93 broadcasting from the top of Mount Mansfield. By the opening of '73 conversation had developed about some morning news coverage, and in April station manager Dean Slack and I started doing five full newscasts with commentary every early morning (6:30, 7:00, 7:30, 8:00, 8:30).

What with Watergate, Wounded Knee, Chavez in California, the Baltimore grand jury, the Gainesville trial, the secret bombings in Cambodia; plus the construction unions strike, the faltering nuclear plant in Vernon, the news of advocacy groups like VPIRG, and the beginnings of new political rumblings in Vermont, the newscasts are an interesting assignment.

Now yet another avenue has opened. Starting September 16, Dean and I began a Sunday afternoon television series called "Forum 22" (22 is the channel for WVNY-TV). It's an easy conversation thing; Burlington mayor Gordon Paquette was the first visitor;

Governor Tom Salmon is scheduled for September 30.

With the opportunities for expression afforded in the journal, both in words and graphics, the whole range of print, radio and television communications is open simultaneously, using a variety of skills acquired over the years. Each medium has its parameters; together they constitute quite a trip, and in daily function they supplement each other so that effort expended has results in two or even three ways.

An observation: in the metropolitan settings tasks are so specialized that few would have a chance for such diversity. Vermont, happily, is different, and there are enough engaged in multiple occupations (including part-time politics - our only kind) that it's not regarded as unusual.

Yes, it does make for some long days here and there, with the wake-up clock sounding off at 4:45 each a.m. Monday through Friday, and twice a month the sack still waiting after midnight while the journal is in production, but the times of boredom are just rare enough to be restful instead of annoying.

"The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places..."

Enclosed is my check for \$8.50 for a one year subscription



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diversity

How many people get a chance to do the things they enjoy and make a living at it? Certainly not everybody, which is one of the

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What Was the Trial About?

by David Ross

The reality of the Vietnam War has finally come full circle... from the pacification of rebellious Vietnamese peasants to the pacification of rebellious Vietnam Veterans. On July 13, 1972, just sixteen days after the Watergate break-in, eight members of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War/Winter Soldier Organization (VVAW/WSO) were indicted by a Federal Grand Jury on charges of conspiracy to incite riots at the Republican National convention in Miami. According to the indictment, VVAW/WSO members were to be organized into numerous "fire teams", consisting of three to five men each, which would carry out an elaborate armed attack on the convention.

The government charged that the anti-war veterans and their supporters planned to create a confrontation between police and other anti-war demonstrators which would lead to large scale rioting. Once rioting began, "fire teams" located in downtown Miami, some distance from the actual convention site, would carry out widespread disruptions which included blowing-up and firebombing police stations and stores while simultaneously disrupting lines of communication. This elaborate diversionary action would cause

a good breakfast, low in calories but high in protein. Lunches and dinners were also good. The girls were limited to one cup of coffee per day, cake only once a week, and candy was eliminated completely. After one month, their physical illness symptoms disappeared, the fat lost weight, the thin ones gained and their attendance was greatly improved.

In another experiment, two small dormitory units were involved. In the control group, one had meals as they wished, while in the other, an attempt was made to serve good food. The control group had the usual run of colds, absence, and mid-morning fatigue, while those on good food had high resistance, vitality, and good attendance.

Although the health and nutrition program of Fairleigh Dickinson University did not continue for a multiplicity of reasons (rapid expansion of the school to various campuses; death of Pfeiffer, McCay, Rudkin and Marsh; dearth of organic food and high cost of what was available) our admiration of it is great as a pioneering effort. The spadework has been done. Now that the time is more propitious, these early attempts can be duplicated on many campuses. Indeed, the idea of health and nutrition on campus is an idea whose time has finally come. Our hats off to Dr. Sammartino, as an enthusiastic pioneer!

FREEMAN

sufficient pandemonium to draw off large numbers of police and National Guardsmen from the convention site, rendering the convention itself more vulnerable to attack.

The main thrust of the alleged conspiracy was to attack the convention itself. The tightly coordinated assault was to be carried out using weapons ranging from sling shots and cross bows to automatic rifles, hand grenades and mortars. The end result would assumedly be hundreds of dead and wounded Republican delegates and complete chaos in an election year.

The most recent in a long line of politically motivated conspiracy trials, the prosecution of the "Gainesville 8" is also the most blatant. The ultimate goal of this prosecution was nothing less than providing a justification for the Watergate break-in while simultaneously destroying, or at least discrediting, one of the administration's most outspoken critics, the Vietnam Veterans Against the War/Winter Soldier Organization.

Immediately following the Watergate break-in, the Nixon Administration began an elaborate coverup in hopes of keeping the facts from the public. As their deceptions began crumbling at an ever-increasing rate, it became obvious that the coverup could not be maintained indefinitely. After considerable deliberation, a "game plan" was finally approved which would, so to speak, kill two birds with one stone.

The government's game plan called for staging a conspiracy trial which would prove that the anti-war vets and their supporters had conspired to violently disrupt the Republican Convention. By linking VVAW/WSO to the McGovern campaign, and by stating that the Vets had offices in the Democrat's Watergate Headquarters, the break-in could be justified on the grounds of "national security". In this new light, the activities of White House Plumbers would be seen as a legitimate effort to uncover the violent disruptions allegedly planned by the Vets rather than as an attempt to spy on the Democrats. Also, by linking the "violence oriented" veterans to the McGovern Campaign, the administration's game plan would serve to discredit the Democrats in an election year.

In the Senate Watergate Hearings, Gerald Arch, former consultant to James McCord, convicted wiretapper and chief of security for the Committee to Re-Elect the President (CREEP), testified that he and the defendants spent six days discussing what kind of defense to use against the charges stemming from Watergate. They finally settled on a plea of "duress"...the inherent right to break the law in order to prevent

a greater harm. In Arch's words, the greater harm they were trying to prevent was "violence directed against Republican officials including, but not limited to, the President."

Both Jeb McGruder and James McCord testified that the break-in was ordered to gather evidence against the Viet Vets. McCord perjured himself by stating that VVAW/WSO had offices in the Watergate and that the Vets were working in the McGovern Campaign. (There was a group called "Vets for McGovern," but it was unrelated to VVAW/WSO which does not endorse or support candidates as a matter of policy). Basel Petersen, vice-chairman of the Democratic Committee testified that "I knew of no VVAW/WSO office within the committee headquarters at any time."

McCord told the Senate investigators "We had reports that people in the McGovern Campaign were working closely with violence-oriented groups." Both he and McGruder mentioned VVAW/WSO as a violent group with which they were particularly concerned. McCord stated, "VVAW/WSO was already saying in the spring of 1972 that they were going to cause destruction of life and property at the August Republican Convention using, in their own words, their own bodies and weapons as spearheads of the attack".

Prior to the indictment of the "Gainesville 8", VVAW/WSO's reputation as a well organized, disciplined, nonviolent organization had never been called into question. The May 24 Washington Post noted "The charges against the "Gainesville 8" contrast sharply with the observations of numerous federal officials that both the leaders and rank and file of the VVAW/WSO had frequently acted to diffuse potentially violent situations and isolate troublemakers in Miami last summer".

The reports McCord claims to have based his decision to break into Watergate on originated in the Internal Security Division of the Justice Dept. These reports were authored by James Mardian, Assistant Attorney General under John Mitchell, and were compiled by both Mardian and Guy Goodwin, the division's special grand jury prosecutor. Much of the reports were falsified by Mardian and Goodwin and have subsequently been disputed by most of the law enforcement agencies involved in security in Miami. A check made by the *New York Times* into the Secret Intelligence and Operations Leg of the Dade County Public Safety Dept shows no sign of Federal, state or local reports of the alleged plot. Guy Goodwin is, by the way, the man responsible for the Grand Jury Witch hunts conducted in Chicago, Seattle, Detroit, New Haven, New York, Camden, Harrisburg etc. - all of which ended in acquittals

As the government's "conspiracy" thickened, even Attorney General John

Mitchell was forced to perjure himself. In testimony at a pre-trial hearing on governmental misconduct in the case, Mitchell stated that McCord wasn't involved in any surveillance activities and that the Justice Dept. had not been involved in any illegal bugging of the Vets. The prosecutor has finally been forced to admit that it was exactly this kind of activity that the Justice Dept. was involved in.

Several other Watergate notables have cropped up in the -ainesville case. It is now known that Howard Hunt sent numerous agents to Miami to infiltrate and disrupt protest groups, particularly the Vets. Convicted White House Plumber Gordon Liddy hired Alfred Baldwin to infiltrate the Vets for the express purpose of creating an "incident" which would serve to "discredit" the Vets and "embarrass" the Democrats. As seen in H.R. Halderman's now famous memo, the Nixon Administration was all in favor of having violence directed against itself. Such violence served to discredit the peace movement as hypocritical while strengthening the apparent need for "law and order". In pursuing its goals, the Nixon Administration is hardly above initiating the very violence it publicly deplors with such moral indignation.

Pablo Fernandez, a counterrevolutionary Cuban, became involved in the case shortly after returning from Washington where he had gone with Watergater Bernard Barker to beat up Daniel Ellsberg. Fernandez was hired by the F.B.I. and Miami Police as an agent- provocateur. His assignment was to sell machineguns to VVAW/WSO members. Major Adam Klimewski, head of the Special Investigation Unit of the Miami Police, admits, "We were hoping for the overt act necessary to produce a charge of conspiracy". Klimewski now admits that Fernandez never was able to provide evidence that could be used against the Vets. "In fact", he stated, "I guess Fernandez might make a pretty good witness for the defense".

Angelica Rehan, another police agent present at the meeting with Fernandez and the vets, stated, "There was no indication whatsoever that they intended or desired to purchase one single bullet. All they wanted was peace."

In addition to being infiltrated by countless government agents bent on disrupting VVAW/WSO's legal activities and denying the Constitutionally guaranteed rights of association and political activity, in addition to trying to entrap the Vets. through the sale of machineguns and other activities there have also been a number of "plumber style" burglaries connected with the case. On Thanksgiving Day, 1971, defendant Scott Camil's house, which serves as a VVAW/WSO

office, was broken into. Membership list, background questionnaires and transcripts of war crimes testimony were taken. Less than a month later, the process was repeated. On July 8, 1972, the office of Camil's attorney, Carol Wild, was burglarized. The only item taken was Camil's legal file.

Felipe De Diege, self-confessed burglar of Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office, admits that there were numerous other burglaries conducted by the White House Plumbers, but says he won't talk unless given immunity. DeDiege's getting immunity is doubtful though, since it would be the government he would be testifying against.

In another incident, defense attorney Larry Turner was in route from New York to Gainesville with a briefcase containing the defense strategy and important legal briefs. Once seated on the plane, he was approached by two men who informed him that his briefcase was too big and that it would have to travel in the baggage compartment. Turner protested that the stewardess had told him he could place it on an empty seat. The men said there would be no empty seats on the flight. Reluctantly, Turner turned over the briefcase. When the plane took off, Turner noticed that not only were there empty seats, but that other passengers had briefcases similar to his. The briefcase did not arrive in Gainesville until a full day later and had been thoroughly gone through. The defense moved for a dismissal on grounds of "invasion of the defense camp", but the motion was denied as irrelevant.

On July 31, the first day of the trial, two F.B.I. agents were discovered bugging the defense consultation room in the Federal Courthouse. Defendant Pete Mahoney noticed two men hiding in a broomcloset which housed the building's telephone terminal boxes. The room also had a knee high grating through which defense conversations could be directly overheard. When Mahoney announced his discovery, a passing reporter asked, "Hey...did you find a bug?" "No", Mahoney replied, "We're watching them do it!"

Since the door was locked, the matter was brought to the attention of trial Judge Winslow Arnow, who dispatched two Federal Marshalls to unlock the closet. Arnow called an immediate hearing in his chambers. The agents, Carl Ekbal and Robert Romans of the Jacksonville F.B.I. Office, claimed to be making a routine check of government lines for possible bugs. In their possession were two amplifiers, headphones, a propane torch, soldering equipment, a jummy bar and other "plumber tools" including a book titled "The Electronic Invasion".

As the defense tried to build its case around the two F.B.I. agents, Judge Arnow accused them of making "mountains out of molehills." The defense demanded that the room be sealed off until electronics

experts could be called in to investigate, but the request was withheld until the following day by which time it was too late. The judge responded to a motion for dismissal by saying that he had found no evidence to suggest anything improper had transpired.

Arnow prevented the defense from effectively questioning the agents by telling them not to answer many of the questions. Once, when the prosecutor did not object to a particular question, Arnow muttered "Ob...Object! ah...if there's no objection, I sustain it anyway. Don't answer that question."

Throughout the hearings and the trial itself, Judge Arnow was anything but impartial in his handling of the case. Despite inescapable connections between the trial and Watergate, Arnow quashed all subpoenas for Watergate related witnesses and disallowed any mention of the subject. In a pretrial hearing on governmental misconduct, Guy Goodwin, of the Justice Dept... testified under oath that there had been no illegal electronic surveillance in the case. After two instances of illegal bugging were established through non-governmental sources, Goodwin finally admitted that there had indeed been bugging. Nevertheless, Arnow maintained, "There is nothing in the record to show me there is any illegal surveillance in this case."

In an early pretrial hearing the Vets did manage to subpoena former Attorney General John Mitchell to testify about bugging and other illegal acts directed against the defendants. The defense asked Mitchell thirty six questions of which Arnow disallowed all but six. Apparently angered, the judge informed the defense that he would charge them \$25 for each subsequent question he didn't like. One of the defendants wryly observed



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that the price of justice would come pretty high at that rate.

Arnow also imposed a "gag rule" which prohibited the defendants, their attorneys or anyone "acting in concert" with them from speaking about the trial. He even fined CBS \$500 when one of its artists drew a picture of the courtroom proceedings from memory. The gag rule severely hampered efforts to raise defense funds and made it difficult to get information out because participants in the trial couldn't give the inside story to the press without fear of being jailed for the duration of the trial.

During the trial, there was a marked tendency for objections and motions by the prosecution to be upheld while those of the defense were denied. What is presented here is just a brief sampling of the "impartiality" Judge Arnow displayed throughout the trial. But then Judge Arnow is an employee of the government.

The trial itself followed the same circus pattern as the events leading up to it. In all, the prosecution called 28 witnesses, but only a handful had sufficient impact to merit discussing. The first witness was Charles B. "Tex" Marshall who testified that he was a private investigator and former police officer who had served as rent agent for the house rented by defendant Scott Camil. Marshall told the jury that he had seen two M14 rifles in Camil's house and that Camil had told him about plans to violently disrupt the convention. On cross examination, it was brought out that the weapons Marshall described must have been M16s which have the pistol grip handles Marshall described...the M14 lacks such grips. Marshall was then asked if what he had seen could possibly have been some toy M16s of the type used in "guerrilla theatres" by the Vets. He said he didn't think so...no, the guns were real. At one point, defense attorneys caught the prosecutor coaching the witnesses answers with head nods. In overruling their objection, Arnow became angered and stated that the prosecution wouldn't do a thing like that.

If the jury had any doubts about Marshall to begin with, his credibility was further strained when it turned out that the police dept he claimed to have worked for had never heard of him, that he had never been licensed as a private investigator and that his gun license had been revoked because he was chasing his wife's lover with a pistol.

It turned out that Joseph Fennell, another major prosecution witness who testified about alleged plans for violence, is currently under investigation by the F.B.I. for possible mishandling of HUD funds stemming from his activities as director of the Alachula County Housing Authority. -Fennell received a general discharge from the Navy for indebtedness and has been twice

arrested for passing bad checks. When the defense sought information on the charges pending against Fennell, they were told by the F.B.I. that Fennell's file was in the hands of "Gainesville 8" prosecutor Jack Curruth. Asked to comment, Curruth said, "I certainly couldn't comment about that, not at this time anyway." (Two other prosecution witnesses have gun and drug violations pending against them. Draw your own conclusions.)

The government's case against the "Gainesville 8" rested predominantly on the testimony of 24 year old William Lemmer, an exparatrooper, Vietnam vet, and activist-turned-informer. Lemmer became active in the VVAW/WSO while still in the service and continued his activities after his discharge. Among other things, Lemmer suffered from the notion that Army Intelligence was "out to get him" and many believe that he went to work for the F.B.I. because he felt they would protect him. Lemmer's psychological complexities are to be involved for the scope of this article but it will suffice to say that he is a very confused young man suffering from the guilt and paranoia common to many Vietnam vets. That the F.B.I. exploited his weaknesses for their own ends would be an understatement. Most members consider him a "misguided brother" and feel pity towards him rather than hatred.

From the beginning, Lemmer's membership in the organization was controversial. His estranged wife, Mary, and others who knew him, point out that he has a long history of emotional instability, including the offer of a psychiatric discharge from the Army. He frequently urged violent or disruptive activities on the group and his actions had led to a number of arrests in the past.

In April, 1972, this writer attended a National Steering Committee Meeting in Houston, Texas. At that meeting, Lemmer stated that he had seen a Rand Corporation report on what public opinion would be if the elections were postponed and all the "radical organizers" incarcerated. He said it was time to stop fooling around, that we should break down into small groups, pick up the gun, and go underground. Lemmer talked a lot about guns and violence. His attitudes were in direct conflict with the majority of the membership which had adopted a philosophy of nonviolence. There

were many who wished to expell Lemmer from the organization.

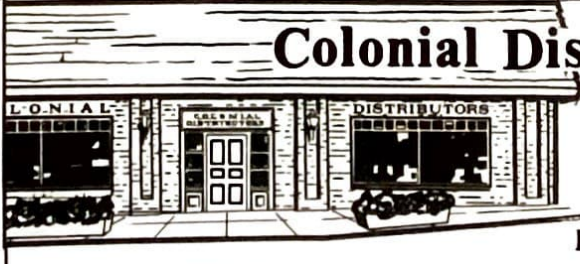
Over a period of several months, some of the proposals Lemmer made included taking over a radio station, stealing weapons from an R.O.T.C. building, conducting armed demonstrations and even blowing up the Washington Monument. It was later discovered that, among many episodes, he had set up a drug bust which resulted in several arrests, a demonstration at an Air Force Base base that ended in 36 arrests, though he himself was immediately released, and an attempted arson which netted a seventeen-year-old a four-year jail sentence. His most elaborate proposal called for members to break down automatic weapons, strap them to their bodies, enter the Republican Convention and shoot delegates. No one took him seriously. However, this last proposal apparently became the model upon which the conspiracy charges were fabricated. As his wife put it, "That's the way he is, anytime he gets to close to anything or anybody, he destroys them."

Lemmer presented the jury with a detailed account of the meetings he attended in Gainesville at which the alleged conspiracy was worked out. His testimony was damning, but it also contained inconsistencies and left many questions unanswered. Despite continued objections by the prosecution, the defense brought out enough of Lemmer's background to raise questions about his credibility. The defense was able to convince the jury that Lemmer was acting as an agent-provocateur who, rather than simply reporting what he observed, was actually trying to precipitate the events alleged in the indictment. For instance, when asked, "When you were in Columbus, Georgia, and you made plans to blow up the water tower, were you an informer?" "Yes", he replied, thereby proving that he was both an informer and a provocateur. The only conclusion the jury could draw was that the whole thing was a set up.

The only real shock during the five week trial came when the prosecution called Emerson L. Pee to the stand. Until that moment, defendant Scott Camil had considered Pee his best friend. It turned out that Pee, who had been serving as Camil's Assistant Regional Coordinator, was a paid F.B.I. informer. Pee testified that Camil had demonstrated the use of an incendiary device at one of the meetings. The defense again

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moved for a dismissal on grounds of invasion of the defense camp.

During the original Grand Jury inquisition, the defense had asked whether or not any of the people they were representing agents of the government. Special prosecutor Guy Goodwin testified under oath that none were, even though Pee was in the group. Camil testified that he and several others had discussed defense strategy with Pee on a number of occasions. Judge Arnow ruled, predictably, that there had been no invasion of the defense camp. Pee's testimony did, however, benefit the defense in one way. Asked whether or not he had heard Camil discuss plans to violently disrupt the convention, Pee answered that he had not.

In all, the prosecution called 28 witnesses to the stand. When the courtroom was turned over to the defense, attorney Doris Peterson informed the jury that she had a "pleasant surprise" for them. "After carefully reviewing the evidence", she told them, "the defense has decided to call only one witness and then rest its case." The defense witness was a chemistry professor who testified that the firebomb Camil allegedly demonstrated wasn't a bomb at all.

The defense rested its case by moving for a dismissal on grounds that the government had failed to prove a conspiracy had existed. Representing himself, Camil stated, "All the government has proved is that 1984 is a lot closer and that there is no such thing as privacy anymore. I move for a directed verdict of guilty against the government for..." Camil was cut off abruptly by Arnow who threatened him with a contempt of court charge. Repeating a phrase he has grown fond of in answering defense charges of governmental misconduct, Arnow told Camil, "You and your fellow defendants are on trial here, the government is not on trial."

In considering the charges against each of the eight defendants, the jury deliberated just over three hours before returning with its verdict. The jury foreman slowly read each of the defendant's names, pausing briefly to declare "not guilty" after each one. When the last verdict had been read, five weeks of pent up emotions broke loose. Defendants, attorneys, jurors... laughing, crying, embracing. The odyssey of the "Gainesville 8" had ended. As defendant Alton Foss put it, "We beat the government, and they knew it."

The trial is over and the "Gainesville 8" are free. But it is only a beginning. The jails of this country are filled with political prisoners. Most are poor and few have organizations to back them. Until there is finally an end to political repression, until there is finally an end to economic exploitation, until we have finally built that better world we speak and dream of, none of us are truly free.

Statement to the Court by Scott Camil

My name is Scott Camil and I am one of the defendants in this case. I am representing myself for many reasons, and one of those reasons is that I want you to know me as a human being, not a silent object of controversy.

Before you here, sit 8 men who have all been charged with very serious violations of the law. During the next few weeks the prosecution will try to make you believe that we are violent criminals, who have broken the law. But we will show that, in fact, none and I emphasize none, of the charges against us are true.

We will show that, not only are the charges not true, but that they are a fabrication. The prosecution will attempt to take a number of unrelated, legal acts and a number of completely fabricated tales and try to piece them together for the purpose of silencing Vietnam Veterans Against the War.

Why does the Justice Department want to silence us? The evidence will show that this whole case is nothing more than a concerted effort by the Justice Department and its confederates, to abuse its prosecutorial powers for political purposes. The facts will show that if there ever was a conspiracy, it was a conspiracy on the part of the government to maliciously attack and destroy an organization known as Vietnam Veterans Against the War, of which 7 of the defendants, including myself, are all active membership leadership positions, and that the other defendant is a supporter of the goals of this organization.

Why would the Justice Department so obviously want to violate our constitutional rights? Why would the Justice Department undertake to destroy Vietnam Veterans Against the War? The facts will show that the reason is quite evident. The Vietnam Veterans Against the War has been one of the most effective anti-war organizations in this country.

The facts will show that the reason we have been so effective is that we have been to Vietnam, so the government could not say that we weren't willing to serve our country. We have first-hand knowledge of what was really being done in Vietnam, in the name of the American people, and the government can't claim that we don't know what we are talking about because we did it. We will show that this is an attempt to discredit VVAW in order to help cover-up the criminal acts committed against the people of Indochina by the United States of America. The evidence will show that the magnitude was such that

all over the country the leaders and members of VVAW started getting arrested. The evidence will also show a direct correlation between the escalation of murder in Vietnam, the escalation of our attempts to bring the truth out, and the escalation of attacks by the government against VVAW.

The evidence will show that the 7 of us, who went to Vietnam, spent a total of 111 months over there, received 57 medals, and citations, and were all honorably discharged. The evidence will also show that we threw our medals away, out of shame because we knew that what they stood for was wrong. For myself, the throwing away of the medals I once cherished, was the cutting of the umbilical cord between myself and the government lies, such as "we are helping the people of Vietnam," "we are not murdering unarmed civilians," "we are not bombing hospitals," "the immorality such as "Free Fire Zones" where all life was fair game. To show the American people back home that we were winning the war by giving them a tool of measurement to judge and that tool of measurement was the use of dead human beings; it was called "body count."

The facts will show that I joined the Marine Corps in 1963 and volunteered for two tours in Vietnam and that I was wounded once each tour. I was proud I served my country. I bragged about by my body count. I wrote home how I was killing all those "Commie Gooks" -- and my parents wrote back saying, we are proud of you.

The facts will show that I, as my brother defendants, changed from men of war to man of Peace. Why did we change? The facts will show that I knew what was really going on in Vietnam and I knew that was not what our government was telling the people at home. I studied the war after I returned home and discovered how much we had all been lied to, I came to the realization that my life and 3 million other American lives had been made expendable, for profit. I realized that I was a murderer. I murdered Asians under the guise of National Security: while the arms companies made huge monetary profits. My buddies died in the rice paddies while the President watched the All-Star game.

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Asians were murdered for defending their homes and families while their only crime was their geographical place of birth. It all made me sick. I saw my buddies lying in VA Hospitals without sufficient care because my government thought it was more important to pay for bombs, than to pay for more medical equipment and doctors. I saw the President make a big deal out of the sacrifices of the POW's, who owed their lives to the humanity of the Vietnamese people, while not doing anything about the sacrifices of my brothers with out parts of their bodies, rotting away in VA Hospitals because their sacrifices weren't politically important enough to do anything about their lack of adequate medical care.

We will show that it was for these reasons and many, many reasons that are just as comparable that VVAW was formed.

We tried every method that was constitutionally available to us, to correct this unconceivable situation. We testified at Winter Soldier Investigations all over the country, to try to educate our fellow citizens to the truth. We testified before Congress with hopes of Congressional action. We went to Washington and discarded our medals to show the world that something had to be done to stop the carnage and suffering. We spoke in schools, churches, and synagogues. We voted, we worked on voter registrations, we wrote our Congressmen. We visited our Congressmen, we had protest demonstrations to bring this terrible problem to the attention of the American people.

We will show that all of our efforts were non-violent, because we learned in Vietnam, that you can't use violence to make people believe you. It never has worked and never will work. We will show that right here in Gainesville, Fla. in May of 1972, when Nixon mined Hai Phong Harbor, it was VVAW who tried to stop the violence by pulling the barricades out of the streets so the cars could pass,

after the police permit to block the streets expired. It was VVAW that had a candle light march and a slide show in the Plaza, with the support of Mayor Jones and Father Michael Gannon, in order to try to stop the violent confrontation out in the streets. In fact, VVAW has a clear history of non-violence.

The indictment charges that we were going to cause violence in Miami Beach during the Republican National Convention; but the facts will show that VVAW was the major peace keeping force among the non-delegates to choose an honest man for President that would promise to stop the war and reorder the priorities of our country. We had waited for four years since that promise was made and broken in the 1968 election. The facts will also show that we were quite concerned about what happened in the Chicago convention in 1968 and that we did not want a repeat of that violence, so we took every precaution that we could. The facts will show that we had many meetings with the police in Miami and Miami Beach. We had many meetings with the Miami Beach City Commission. We met with: the City Manager, the head of civil defense, the senior citizens, and the Governor's task force. We even played a soft-ball game — VVAW vs. the Miami Beach motorcycle police. We met with many of the other organizations to try to insure that there was not another Chicago. The facts will show that we even met with the most militant right-wing Cuban organizations in order to be assured on non-violence.

After all of this the Department of Justice in Washington, D.C. sends Guy L. Goodwin, the man who was responsible for the indictments against Leslie Bacon, the Harrisburg 7, the Camden 28, and many other such political cases, to get an indictment against members of VVAW. But we will prove the real purpose of this prosecution is to punish us for effectively exercising our Constitutional rights — for trying to uncover what the War was really about, for showing the American people that they were being deceived and lied to by the Executive branch of the government. Yes, we will show that VVAW motivated by an extensively strong sense of justice, truth, and patriotic love for the ideals that our country was founded upon; the same motivation that caused us to all volunteer for Vietnam.

Finally, we will show that the conspiracy that exists is a conspiracy on the part of the Nixon administration to silence any person, organization, or political party whose actions do not reinforce the Nixon administration.

In the last few months we have all learned a lot about the political conventions and all the "dirty tricks," but the government prosecution of this case is the dirtiest trick of all.



SORRY

We're always flattered to see one of our articles reproduced in another paper - but how about a credit line perhaps?

D. Trowbridge Elliman, Jr.
Publisher
The State Reporter

Colleague Elliman refers to the "Soundings from Shuteauville" on the editorial page in the most recent edition. We try to be careful about crediting sources and apologize for the lapse in this instance. H.A.

energy

The New England Coalition on Nuclear Pollution regrets the shortsighted energy policy that is emerging from the White House. President Nixon's statement of September 6, emphasizing the rapid development of nuclear power, shows a disregard for the increasing scientific evidence that basic nuclear safety questions are as yet unresolved.

The Administration also is apparently unconcerned about the dangers to the security of the U.S. by a proliferation of nuclear power plants. The possibility of diversion of nuclear materials and nuclear blackmail were recently highlighted in a CBS 60 Minutes program. Columnist Jack Anderson has said that there exists a secret Ford Foundation report full of serious warnings on this subject.

The White House announcement is especially disappointing because it ignores a host of energy alternatives which promise to be clean and safe compared with our presently used energy sources. The national policy seems to be one of starving out such energy alternatives by providing little or no money for research and development, and then declaring these alternatives to be unproven and questionable. We feel that this lack of funding especially applies to all forms of solar energy, including wind and ocean thermal power. We are convinced that an objective evaluation of energy alternatives could lead to decreasing the emphasis on nuclear power.

We urge the Administration to widen the circle of its scientific advisers and to include some of the many distinguished scientists who question the present fission-oriented, AEC-dominated energy policy.

Diana Sidebotham
Putney

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