

# WINTER ★ SOLDIER



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AGAINST THE WAR / WINTER SOLDIER ORGANIZATION

25

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## MASSIVE UNEMPLOYMENT

# LAY-OFFS SOAR



VETS' DAY ————— 4

LAW'TON ————— 11

AMNESTY ————— 6

PALESTINE ————— 14

INDOCHINA ————— 7

GI ————— 15



# EDITORIAL

As the year 1974 draws to an end, it is important to look back at the great struggles that occurred and reflect upon the lessons the people have learned. 1974 was a year of great upheavals, a year of far-reaching victories that have left the system of imperialism in a state of great crisis and turmoil. The peoples of Indochina have continued to push the U. S. -backed dictators against the wall. In Vietnam, General Thieu is facing opposition by all segments of the population. In Cambodia, the liberation forces govern all but a small section of the territory and the population.

In Africa, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau have gained independence from Portugal, while the struggle in Angola comes closer to victory. All over the world, unpopular governments are toppling like so much timber. Here at home, one of the greatest criminals in history, Richard Nixon, was forced out of the Presidency by the anger of the American people. His successor, Gerald Ford, faces mass actions of protest wherever he goes, as the people realize that it is not the man, but the system that is the real oppressor enemy.

VVAW/WSO played an important role in many of these struggles. Our firm support of all struggles for liberation and self-determination has shown that we, as well as the entire anti-imperialist movement in the U. S., are an integral part of the worldwide struggle against imperialism. The active fight we have waged in the campaign to oust Nixon has helped the American people see who our real enemy is. Putting politics in command, VVAW/WSO exposed the government's attempt to mislead veterans and their struggle by clearly pointing out the reformist nature of the American Veterans Movement. Our demonstrations in Washington, DC and across the country helped raise the issue of universal, unconditional amnesty and its relations to the nature of the continuing war in Indochina.

All this, and more, has taken place in 1974. By learning from the struggles that have taken place, we will strengthen the anti-imperialist movement and contribute even greater efforts in the coming year. Winter Soldier takes this opportunity to call on all people to deepen their commitment to our common struggle and our victory over the system of imperialism



UNITY-STRUGGLE-VICTORY

WINTER SOLDIER

## Lon Nol Office Occupied EMBASSY TAKE-OVER

On October 29, ten people liberated the Cambodian (Lon Nol) Mission to the United Nations in New York City, in support of the struggle of the Cambodian people. Members of the Indochina Peace Campaign-NYC, Indochina Solidarity Committee, Revolutionary Student Brigade, VVAW/WSO, and White Lightning seized the Mission at 8:45 in the morning as the receptionist and one Lon Nol "diplomat" fled the scene.

The action is part of a growing campaign to build support for the seating of the Royal Government of National Union (GRUNC) in the UN, and the expulsion of the government of Lon Nol which is financed and kept in power by the US government. Since the coup in 1970 when the US government (through the CIA) put Lon Nol in power, the United Front of Cambodia forces have liberated all but 10% of the territory of their country; only 15% of the Cambodian people remain under the dictatorial control of the Lon Nol government. GRUNC is in fact the legitimate representative of the people of Cambodia.

At the liberated Mission in New York City, pictures of Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Head of State of GRUNC, replaced the pictures of Lon Nol; a banner was put up declaring that the Mission was liberated. Documents found in the building reported on the activities of Cambodian residents in the US who actively support GRUNC. And when the GRUNC representatives in Paris were notified by phone about the action, they asked, "What is the phone number of our new Mission?"

After two hours the NYC Police Department and the FBI broke through the heavily barricaded door and took the ten people off to jail. They were charged with criminal trespass, harassment, and a Federal charge of "felonious assault on a foreign diplomat." They were released on their own recognizance; the "felonious assault" charges were later dropped.

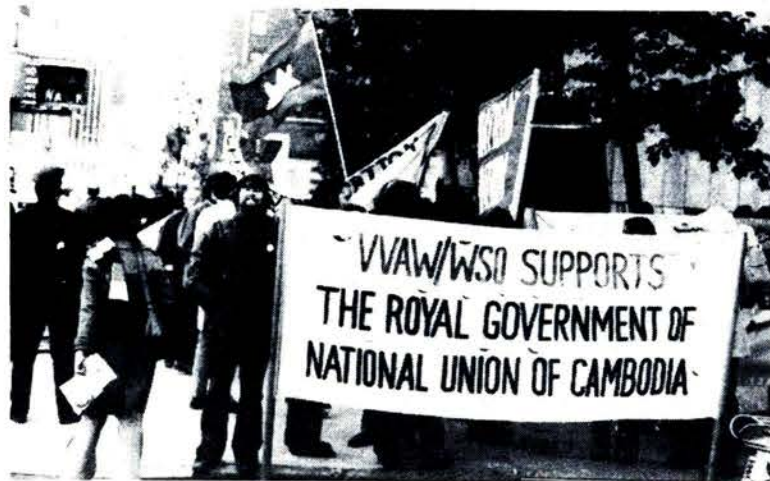
The UN vote is due in late November unless US government attempts to have it postponed are successful. GRUNC is already recognized as the legitimate

Cambodian government by 62 nations around the world; last year, when there was a similar vote, the US managed to table the vote in favor of GRUNC through tricky maneuvering--the vote was called when many of the supporters of GRUNC were at other meetings. Having already tried all kinds of big-power pressure tactics (things like threatening to curtail food programs or foreign assistance in exchange for votes), the US government is now pushing for the seating to be taken up in the Security Council where the US has veto power. The importance of the UN vote is explained in the words of Prince Sihanouk: "With our government universally recognized as the sole legitimate representative of the Cambodian people, will it be possible for the US Congress to go on spending more than \$700 million a year to support the Lon Nol puppets?"

The takeover of the Mission was a direct follow-up to a demonstration and rally to support the Restoration of the Lawful Rights of the GRUNC in the UN. That demonstration ended with the presentation of an eviction notice to the Lon Nol representatives, warning them that if the eviction notice was not heeded, the American people would take further action. Both the demonstration and the takeover were either ignored or distorted by the press: the history of US involvement in Cambodia has been one of keeping the war a secret from the American people. And the continued progress of the United Front forces to bring freedom to the Cambodian people is seldom mentioned in the US corporate-owned press. \$700 million of US taxes keep Lon Nol's mercenary army supplied--and have kept Lon Nol and his cronies living in comfort--during 1974. Meanwhile, the American people never hear about the 40,000 Cambodians who have left areas under Lon Nol control in the last year and moved to the liberated areas--just one more sign of the wishes of the people to see their real government installed throughout their country.

END ALL AID TO LON NOL

SEAT GRUNC IN THE UN



NYC VVAW/WSO in support of GRUNC



## CRISIS THROWN ON WORKERS

# UNEMPLOYMENT



Workers join growing unemployment lines

Well, they've come out and admitted it. The United States is officially headed into a recession. President Ford has finally had to admit that all is not well in Mudville these days. We don't think this news comes as a surprise to millions of Americans -- those of us who have been trying to keep up with inflation and increasing unemployment, while noticing the big monopolies' super-profits. In fact, our whole economic system is really in deep trouble, so deep that it is scaring the hell out of our supposed leaders.

For the third straight quarter in a row, the production level of this country, the GNP, has continued to fall. Used as a prime indicator of economic health, the fall in the GNP heralds what for most Americans has become an increasingly desperate fight to stay above water. However, it is another aspect of economic health that really lays bare the crisis now facing this system -- the amount of people out of work. The rate of unemployment is steadily on the rise and is now at a national rate of 6%. But that's the government statistic -- pampered and juggled to reflect the lowest possible rate.

What is really happening is that millions of people, after looking high and low for jobs, are giving up that search. These are the figures that are not reflected in government statistics. Their figures also omit the fact that a large percentage of those considered employed are actually working part time, unable to find full time jobs. What is the government afraid of? They are afraid that when the real facts come out, people are going to get fighting made. And what are those facts? That the national unemployment rate is almost double what they say it is, when adjusted for all the people government figures leave out. Instead of 6%, unemployment is at a rate of almost 12%, and things are getting worse every day. Particularly brutal is the fact that many urban Black

communities face an unemployment rate of 40% and over.

Auto workers are some of the hardest hit by the current tidal wave of layoffs. General Motors has announced that it will have 75,000 less workers by the end of the year, let alone the fact that GM already has 73,000 less workers than they had last year (1973). Chrysler is closing down almost all of its plants for the month of December, throwing an estimated 100,000 people out on the streets; a move which can cause thousands of related layoffs. This is particularly hard on Black workers in Detroit because they constitute 80% of that plant's workforce. Ford Motor Co. is also moving rapidly to cut back on its number of employees. All over the country, auto plants are cutting back and each new cutback in direct production causes a whole "wave" of layoffs in related industries.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. The jobless rate in the construction industry, the people that make our buildings and homes, is around 12%. The rate is also high in furniture, clothing, rubber goods, glass goods and machinery. The hardest hit are the so-called blue collar workers with a 7.3% unemployment rate, while white collar workers face almost 4% unemployment. As stated by John Bregger, an analyst for the Bureau of Labor Statistics, "The typical unemployed person is blue-collar and semi-skilled, probably an assembly-line worker." However, that's no cause for joy amongst white-collar workers, as their jobs are literally dependent on what happens in heavy industry.

You think it couldn't be worse? You're wrong, especially if you are a young veteran. Carefully hidden away in all those statistics is the ugly fact that the unemployment rate for vets between 25-34 years of age is a rousing 9.9%, and that's the "official" figure. You can bet your last dollar (the one you're holding) that it's a lot higher than

that. Topping that off, in the same age group, Black vets face twice the jobless rate of white vets, and it doesn't look any better for other Third World veterans. In many cases, vets make up a majority of those being laid off, as is the case in the auto industry. This is the little gem the military recruiter never revealed. You get called on to fight a rich man's war, one that you have no interest in; and when you get back, the rich man could care less about hiring you. In fact, the conditions that veterans face contains one of the keys to understanding exactly what is happening, why the supposed "free enterprise" system is in crisis, why peoples' jobs are disappearing like snow in the desert.

Basically, our employment problems amount to the fact that the giant corporations, whose financial fingers extend throughout the world, are finding those fingers being chopped off little by little. A big chop came from the Vietnamese people who actively resisted the use of their country as a resource for U. S. corporate profits and resources, and their struggle has inspired other countries under the thumb of U. S. domination to remove the U. S. fingers from off their throats. At the same time, while the markets for U. S. corporate expansion abroad are closing, there is no market or room for expansion here in America.

All of this leads us back to the conditions that vets face. After pumping billions of dollars into the war in the futile attempt to stop the liberation struggles of the Indochinese people, the U. S. financial wizards have nothing left for the men and women they used to fight in that war. Not only are jobs scarce for all all, but because vets lost time in the military from the job market, because of the half-million less-than-honorable discharges, and because there are not training programs adequate to help, veterans have become less employable than many of their civilian counterparts. President Ford even considers a 23% raise in the GI Bill as inflationary, when it would have to be raised 300% to equal World War II levels.

Why doesn't the system provide help? Because it can't; it is too busy trying to force its crisis onto the backs of all poor and working people -- by speed-ups, runaway shops, price hikes, and most importantly, by unemployment. The giant monopoly corporations and their interests, the need for greater and greater profits, runs smack up against our needs -- decent jobs, good education, good health care and a decent life. The people of this country need jobs, and we need them fast!



## VVAW-WSO ON THE MOVE

# VETS DAY



Buffalo Vets Day demo

Veterans Day, 1974, saw VVAW/WSO chapters around the country take to the streets to bring to the people of their communities the four demands of the VVAW/WSO National Program:

- \*Universal, Unconditional Amnesty for All War Resisters
- \*Implement the Agreements; End All Aid to Thieu and Lon Nol
- \*Single-type Discharge for All Vets
- \*Decent Benefits for All Vets

From Long Beach, California, to Boston, Massachusetts, the US government which pushed the traditional Veterans Day activities, was not allowed to forget that the victims of the most recent war of US exploitation were raising demands far different from those of traditional veterans organizations. Members of VVAW/WSO, unlike the members of the VFW or the American Legion, were there to fight for real gains for vets, but more important, to fight for the rights and interests of all people.

In some places VVAW/WSO requested permission to march in the traditional Vets Day parades with all their patriotic trimmings and reactionary politics. In Long Beach, VVAW/WSO was told that they could not march because they were unpatriotic--they had people with less-than-honorable discharges marching with them, and besides, they supported amnesty for "draft dodgers and deserters." Chapters from around the area marched at the end of the parade, behind the street sweepers and garbage collectors--to the cheers of the watching crowd, some of whom joined in with the VVAW/WSO members in the parade.

In Milwaukee, VVAW/WSO was granted permission to march, but it was withdrawn two days before the parade, since "only non-political groups could march." So, VVAW/WSO, with 85 people, marched on the sidewalk passing out leaflets. They were the only Vietnam-era vets in the parade, and the only volunteer marchers present. In Columbus, Ohio, the request to join the parade was turned down because, according to parade organizers, "You don't follow the program."

Veterans Day happened twice this year; the Federal holiday was on Oct. 28 while, in 41 states, the state holiday was on the traditional Nov. 11th. In the VVAW/WSO National Program, there

was a call for regional actions on which ever day the holiday happened in that state; some regions were active on both days, some did regional actions on one day and local actions on the other. What follows here is a cross-section of some of the actions that took place around the country.

\*In Buffalo, New York, on Nov. 11, 12 members of the Buffalo, Syracuse and Rochester chapters disrupted the offices of the Federal attorney in downtown Buffalo, while 60-70 members picketed outside raising the four demands. The political focus of the day was "Expose the Sham of Ford's Clemency" (which is administered by the Federal attorney). The demand for a Single-Type Discharge, as part of the overall Universal, Unconditional Amnesty campaign pointed to the need for Decent Benefits for All Vets. After two hours inside, people joined the picket line; teams of people then spread out to neighborhoods and shopping centers, leafletting and explaining the four demands.

\*In Boston, 30 VVAW/WSO members arrived at the staging area for the October 28th Veterans Day parade. Though the chapter had requested permission to march, they had gotten no response and, when they picked their own place in the parade, they were pushed out by mounted police (once again demonstrating the "interest" which traditional vets organizations have in the veterans of the Vietnam era). VVAW/WSO members fell in at the end of the parade and, by the time they passed the reviewing stand, there were 90-100 people demanding Amnesty for War Resisters.

\*In Minneapolis/St Paul, the Twin Cities chapter of VVAW/WSO began the day of Nov. 11th with 25 people gathered

at the Ft Snelling Veterans Cemetery for a memorial service to remember the victims of the Indochina War. From there, demonstrators drove to the Federal Building; 40 people sang, chanted, and held a picket line around the four demands. Employees from the building listened to a speech about the vets movement and its relationship to the anti-imperialist struggle; spectators bought newspapers and applauded the demonstrators.

\*In Washington, DC, 50 people marched through Northeast Washington to the Veterans Assistance Center. Following speeches from representatives of various groups involved, including the African Liberation Support Committee, 250 discharge papers were publicly burned to emphasize the demand for a single-type discharge for all vets. The ashes were collected and shipped to the VA by certified mail. The militant and spirited actions brought out a number of new people interested in getting involved in the VVAW/WSO program.

\*In Seattle, Washington, a picket line at the building housing the regional VA office was organized by the Tacoma chapter of VVAW/WSO. 25 people demanded Universal, Unconditional Amnesty and Decent Benefits for All Vets; midway through the demonstration, an effigy of Ford was brought out. One of the vets in the group announced: "This is what we think of Ford and his phoney amnesty plan"--the effigy was soaked in gasoline and burned. Five vets took out discharge papers and lighted them from the burning body.

\*In Philadelphia on Oct. 28th, VVAW/WSO members and supporters picketed the VA Hospital, receiving good response from patients, their families, and the VA staff. A march through the

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Washington, DC Vets Day demo



# MARCH BEGINS



Vets setting up camp at Anacostia

World War I was basically a struggle between Allied and Axis business interests for control of the world's economy. When it began, the big businesses that had pushed the US into the war in the first place set up a plan to ensure that once having used GIs to fight the war for them they would not have to pay the burden of vets' compensation payments after it was all over. Thus they amended the War Risk Insurance Act of 1914, initially a federal insurance policy for US industry supplying war material, to further protect their "investment" in WWI by issuing "voluntary" War Risk Insurance to all US troops going to Europe. Although this insurance was supposed to be voluntary it was actually mandatory. GIs were not asked if they wanted to have the insurance payments, about \$8 a month, deducted from their pay--it was done automatically. The neatness of the plan was overwhelming. GIs had to pay for their own future vets' benefits with their own salaries. Given the fact that the pay of a private in WWI was \$1.00 a day for domestic service or \$1.25 for foreign, and that many had dependents' allotments for \$5 to \$25 a month deducted from their pay, the system was simple extortion.

To no one's surprise, most of the money paid by GIs for the insurance was never recovered. While over 5 million policies were issued, all but 600,000 had lapsed by 1932. WWI vets had got such a raw deal that even the government felt obliged to do something about it. Thus, in 1924, mass pressure forced Congress to admit that a debt was due to vets. (Industry had of course already received adjustment payments for their war time contracts through tax refunds, etc.) It decided to award them an "adjustment" in pay for their service.

Congress issued Adjustment Service Certificates to the vets that averaged about \$1,000 each in value. Catch 22 in all this, however, was that the certificates were not payable until 1945 (much like modern War Bonds, they were supposed to 'mature' for a period of years). What the government's PR men hyped as a "Bonus" for vets, the vets more correctly labeled as a "Tombstone Bonus." By 1945 few would be alive to collect it.

With the 1929 Wall St crash and the ensuing economic hardship that all Americans had to face, vets' discontent with the "Bonus" ripoff began to reach a head. Leading the high rate of unemployment and at the bottom of the heap in terms of what jobs they could get, vets rapidly became the shock troops of the depression. They needed the partial relief they could get from an immediate cash payment of the Bonus and they needed it fast. In 1932 the average vet's Bonus would have been worth about \$500: in the midst of the depression, that was a small fortune. The demand for the Bonus began spreading across the country like wildfire. Vets began making increasingly regular trips to Washington to lobby for the Bonus. Such was the rising pressure for relief that President Hoover himself felt obliged to act. At the 1931 convention of the American Legion Hoover addressed the rank-and-file vets there, asking them to wait for awhile since "better times were ahead."

But vets weren't going to wait for any pie-in-the-sky promises. By 1932 there would be 17 million people unemployed--according to government figures. It was clearly not the time for waiting. Vets, along with millions of other Americans, had lost their savings and had their farms and homes stolen

through mortgage foreclosures. When Congress did begin to act, it passed "economy" legislation that was designed to place the burden of depression on the backs of the American people. In terms of vets, not only did the "economy" legislation not give vets their Bonus, but it cut off 600 thousand veterans from compensation and threw thousands of disabled vets out of VA hospitals as well.

In the face of this worsening situation vets began organizing themselves to fight back. It was becoming clear to many of them that unity and mass action were the only means to deal with their problems. While leaders of the "traditional" veterans groups like the VFW and American Legion began giving lip-service to the demand for the Bonus they actually opposed seeing a real movement develop to fight for it. Dissatisfaction with these traditional vets groups led to the formation of rank-and-file vets groups as their only real hope. One such rank-and-file group was the Workers Ex-Servicemens League; founded in 1930, the W. E. S. L. later changed its name to the American League of Ex-Servicemen. In April 1932 members of the W. E. S. L. appeared before Congress and demanded that the 1945 "Tombstone Bonus" immediately be paid in full. When Congress refused to act on the Bonus, the W. E. S. L. sent out a call for a demonstration in D. C. But even without this call vets had spontaneously begun moving on their own; the main impetus was the condition of the ravaged economy.

In broken-down vehicles, on foot, in boxcars, riding the rails, hitchhiking, however they could make it, vets and their families began the trek to Washington to fight for the Bonus. The first contingent left Portland, Oregon, in May 1932 with 200 vets and their families. Several thousand of the Oregon vets arrived in Cleveland and physically seized the railroad switchyard, stopping all traffic until they were given a train to D. C. Some 500 left from Chicago, 600 from New Orleans, and 200 disabled vets left from the Soldiers Home in Tennessee. And so it went throughout the month of May 1932. On May 29th when some 300 Cleveland vets announced their intention of joining their fellow vets on the march to D. C., the papers started calling them the "Bonus Army" on the "Bonus March." The name stuck. By the time they began arriving in D. C. in late May and early June they were arriving in contingents as large as 1000 people.

Too late, the government officials realized the seriousness of the march. Telegrams were sent from Washington to governors all over the country demanding that the marchers be turned back and split up. But it was to no avail. Things had already gotten out of hand. The Bonus March had begun.



(Louisville, Nov 16) - Steve Grossman, a draft resister, who refused to be inducted into the military returned to the United States on Nov. 16th to discuss the reasons for his resistance to the war in Indochina. He announced that he would be travelling throughout the Northeast and Midwest to point out the total incorrectness of the Ford earned re-entry program during the fifteen-day period he has to turn himself in, in accordance with the punitive plan. Grossman made his plans public at the amnesty conference held in Louisville, Kentucky sponsored by the National Council for Universal and Unconditional Amnesty.

Steve will be speaking at the invitation of VVAW/WSO in ten cities. The purpose of the tour is to point out that resistance to the war in Indochina was right and that people in the United States must realize that universal and unconditional amnesty is the only resolution. Because Ford's earned re-entry plan is a deceitful sham, the exile community and VVAW/WSO, among others, has urged a boycott of the bogus amnesty.

One major point that Grossman made was that Ford's punitive plan negates the fact that the majority of resisters in need of amnesty are the 580,000 veterans with less-than-honorable discharges. He said, "The veterans of the Vietnam-era have been screwed by the American government. There are thousands and thousands of veterans who because of their resistance to the war in Indochina, and the repression of the military now suffer because of bad discharges. It is almost impossible for them to find jobs and besides, they're

# EXILE RETURNS



denied benefits promised to them under the GI Bill, and all because of their resistance to the imperialist military. "

Another point that he made at the Louisville conference was that in addition to the veterans, there were thousands of civilians who received jail sentences, fines, and criminal records because they opposed the war in Vietnam. He stated that veterans, civilians and exiles had to unite to fight together to insure that a real amnesty is given.

As for himself, Steve feels that he committed no crime; that his resistance was necessary in order to support the struggle of the Vietnamese people against the economic and military interference of the United States in Indochina.

He felt that it was important that an exile from Canada come to the US in order that they could speak directly to the American people. He stated, "By coming here and by speaking in many cities, I hope that people will see that the fight for amnesty is a fight against the system that continues to oppress the Indochinese and at the same time, the people in the United States. "

Steve urged all resisters who are eligible for the Ford earned re-entry program to boycott it. The plan, according to the exile, is designed to divide the amnesty movement and cover-up the crimes of Nixon. Steve said that "resisters are not criminals. The real criminals are the corporations, the politicians and the generals. "

# FORD PLAN SHAFTS VETS!

Much of the ballyhoo of the Ford administration around the earned re-entry program centers on the draft and military resisters. Included in the Ford plan is a provision for veterans who have received less-than-honorable discharges as a result of being charged with Absent Without Leave, (AWOL). The Pentagon says that there are 40,000 veterans who fit into this category and can apply for the Ford clemency.

The government contends that these 40,000 bad discharges for AWOLs is the total given out during the Vietnam-era, the dates for this era being August 4, 1964 to March 28, 1973. The government also implies that these veterans are the only ones who resisted the military in opposition to the Indochina war.

Of the 588,000 punitive discharges given by the military only 40,000 are included in the Ford plan! Veterans who actively opposed the war or the racism and repression of the military and who received bad discharges other than being charged with AWOL are not included.

If veterans surrender themselves to the program, they would have to do alternative service for periods up to two years. The length of time of alternative service is conditional on four factors, as stated in a Department of the Army directive issued from Ft. Benjamin Harrison: length of satisfactory service completed prior to AWOL, length of service in Southeast Asia in hostile fire zones, awards and decorations received, and wounds incurred in combat. This case-by-case review allows the military to pick and choose who gets less service. It is based on awarding clemency on how well you performed for the military. If a veteran went AWOL while stationed in the states for three months of harassment, he or she would be assured of the full two years. In fact, most veterans have been given the two years service.

Upon completion of alternative service the veteran could have his or her discharge changed from undesirable to a clemency discharge. This would be

even more punitive. According to Ford's proclamation, "Such clemency discharge shall not bestow entitlement to benefits administered by the Veterans Administration." Accepting a clemency discharge would effectively cut the veteran off from even the most meager of benefits listed in the GI Bill. In addition, when a veteran went for a job, (if he or she could find one), the employer would know immediately that the vet received a clemency discharge for only one reason -- going AWOL from the military, and you can be assured that the vet will not get the job.

It is not in the interests of any vet to accept Ford's clemency. The program is a sham and VVAW/WSO urges all veterans to boycott the plan and join the ranks of the thousands of Americans who are fighting for a universal and unconditional amnesty for all war resisters, a single-type discharge and decent benefits for all veterans including the 588,000 veterans with less-than-honorable discharges given during the Vietnam-era.



# People take to streets - THIEU GOING OUT!



Street Demonstrations in Saigon

Opposition to President Thieu is increasingly becoming more unified in South Vietnam. Over the past several months, various organizations of Catholics, Buddhists, press, veterans, lawyers and others have denounced Thieu and are calling for his removal from office. Much of the protest of these organizations centers around the corruption and repression of the Thieu regime.

Thieu has been charged in a widely circulated document with allowing the most corrupt, repressive conditions to exist in Vietnam. According to the manifesto, Thieu has been charged with making a killing on various illegal land and housing deals, that his wife takes a rake off from a supposedly charitable hospital she founded, that his brother-in-law made a fortune in fertilizer speculation and that his relatives illegally profited from government-subsidized rice shipped to impoverished central Vietnam. These charges have been leveled by relatively new forces in the political struggle being waged against Thieu.

In the wake of this manifesto, and with the continuing suppression of opposition press, thousands of Vietnamese have taken to the streets to demand the ouster of Thieu and the release of the over 200,000 political prisoners being held in his jails. Another factor in the growing public sentiment against Thieu is the fact that the economy of Saigon, one of the few areas still controlled by the regime, is rapidly deteriorating. Unemployment is now at 50% in Saigon and prices for staples skyrocket daily.

On October 20th, almost 2,000 people marched in Saigon. Thieu's police, in attempts to break up the demonstration, cordoned off streets and alleyways to stop others from joining the line of

march. Angered students began hurling rocks at the police, who in turn, hurled bricks and stones back at them. The students charged the police jeep, overturned it and burned the vehicle. These public displays of protest have been drawing all segments of the population. In another demonstration, held on National Day (November 1st), 1,500 Catholics rallied after mass and were fired on by police because they were demanding Thieu's ouster. Also on November 1st, over 3,000 people marched in Saigon despite police attempts to stop them, resulting in major clashes with the police.

## S. VIET STUDENTS FACE

# DEPORTATION

Six Vietnamese students continue to fight deportation back to Vietnam. (Originally seven, one now moved to Boston where his case is being dealt with separately.) The students who have been active in exposing the repressive conditions of the Thieu regime in Vietnam were refused extensions of their visas by the Saigon Consulate General's office in San Francisco.

They next applied for temporary political asylum from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) fearing arrest on return to Vietnam, and in order to finish their schooling here. The INS, in consultation with the State Department and the Saigon Consulate refused to grant asylum stating that they were assured by the Thieu officials that the students would not be harmed on returning to Vietnam.

The students have good reason to fear. In June, 118 Vietnamese had re-

As the increasingly militant protest grows, the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) has stated that they will no longer negotiate with the Thieu regime. In a press conference held in Paris PRG spokesman Colonel Vo Dong Giang said, "The present American government headed by Gerald Ford, continues to be bellicose and obstinate. The Nguyen Van Thieu administration, on United States orders, has sabotaged the Paris agreements and created a deadlock to all avenues of negotiation. Nguyen Van Thieu and his gang must be overthrown and a new administration formed."



On September 27, the Foreign Ministry in Hanoi announced that American reconnaissance planes flew over Hanoi and Haiphong in another violation of the Paris agreements. In the face of these continued violations, the Vietnamese liberation forces have liberated major portions of the country freeing the people from the US-backed regime in Saigon. Saigon military authorities have stated that another outpost in central Vietnam, Chuong Nghia, has been taken by the Liberation forces, thereby virtually cutting South Vietnam in half, and further isolating the Thieu government.

The military victories and the ever-growing unity between the neutral and the communist forces will force the removal of the US-backed Thieu regime, insuring a better climate in which they can negotiate a peace in accordance with the Paris Agreement on Ending the War in Vietnam.

quested asylum in Hong Kong and were refused. The officials in Hong Kong sent them back to Vietnam claiming they were illegal aliens. Upon returning to Vietnam the 118 were severely beaten at the Saigon airport, according to Amnesty International. Since then, reports state that 14 of the group have died on the penal island of Con Son off the coast of Vietnam.

The students are now appealing the ruling of the INS. These hearings are being conducted by the US State Department. The students are presenting witnesses who have recently been in Vietnam and have seen first hand the brutal repression of the Thieu regime on those opposing his rule. If the State Department rules against them their last recourse is to appeal to the 9th Federal District Court.

The students state that if they are eventually granted political asylum it will represent a victory as the US government will on one hand admit that repression exists in Vietnam under Thieu and on the other will continue to support the corrupt dictatorship.



VVAW/WSO was in the middle of many of the peoples' struggles during 1974. Whether walking picket lines with Harley-Davidson workers in Milwaukee; or setting up discharge upgrading projects in prison in Santa Barbara; or leafletting for the Attica Brothers in Buffalo; or passing out GI News at Rickenbacker Air Force Base in Columbus; most of the work of VVAW/WSO was day-to-day, grassroots work. It was not newsworthy, and got no headlines. It was the work needed to move the struggle against US imperialism forward. Throughout the year VVAW/WSO was guided by a national program, built around five (and later four) demands:

- \*Universal, Unconditional Amnesty For All War Resisters
- \*Implement the Agreements; End All Aid To Thieu and Lon Nol
- \*Single-Type Discharge For All Vets
- \*Decent Benefits For All Vets
- \*Kick Nixon Out

The success of this program in leading up to and building the July 1-4 national Demonstration in Washington, led the organization to adopt a similar program for the next nine months at our August National Steering Committee meeting.

#### AMNESTY

A campaign of VVAW/WSO for well over a year, Universal Unconditional Amnesty for All War Resisters drew growing support around the country. VVAW/WSO constantly raised the issue of the Indochina War, a war fought in the interests of US business by showing that the resisters were right to resist a war of aggression and exploitation. The way in which the sons and daughters of third-world, working and poor people were sent to fight and die in Indochina was brought out in the campaign for a single-type discharge, a part of the overall amnesty struggle. VVAW/WSO helped to build the amnesty movement, not by writing letters to Congress but by working to gain the support of, and mobilize the people. We fought to make sure that the 580,000 vets with less-than-honorable discharges would be seen as a major part of the amnesty movement, and through discharge upgrading projects, enlisted many of the vets in the struggle for amnesty.

In the face of the growing demand for amnesty, the US government under Gerald Ford reacted with the "earned re-entry" program, a bankrupt attempt to co-opt the amnesty movement. VVAW/WSO chapters around the country challenged the program and, a few days later, challenged the pardon of Richard Nixon. Often confronting representatives of reactionary veterans organizations such as the VFW or American Legion, VVAW/WSO members supported the boycott of "earned re-entry" called by exile groups in Canada, and continued the fight for a single-type discharge for all vets.

#### INDOCHINA

VVAW/WSO in all its actions through 1974 pointed out the nature of the war in Indochina, and the fact that the war has not stopped; US support for the dictatorship of Thieu allows him and his forces to continue to violate the Paris Peace Accords, and repress the struggle for liberation of the Vietnamese people. Recent demonstrations in Saigon, and the consistent battlefield victories of the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) show that Thieu's days are numbered. 1974 began with VVAW/WSO demonstrations around the country on the anniversary of the signing of the agreements on January 27th; in Washington, DC, VVAW/WSO members seized the Saigon Embassy there. In

# 1974 ★ THE PEOPLE WILL NEVER BE

late October, a similar action took place at the Cambodian Mission to the UN (see story on page 2).

Throughout the year there was a growing awareness on the part of VVAW/WSO that the US war of imperialism--the search for profits at the expense of the people of Indochina using third-world, working, and poor people to pursue those profits--was not the only issue. More emphasis was placed on the way in which the PRG and the United Front in Cambodia were rebuilding the liberated areas of their countries, and were in fact meeting the immediate needs of their people. Meanwhile, the US-supported governments of Thieu and Lon Nol were operating in the interests of no one but themselves and their US corporate masters.

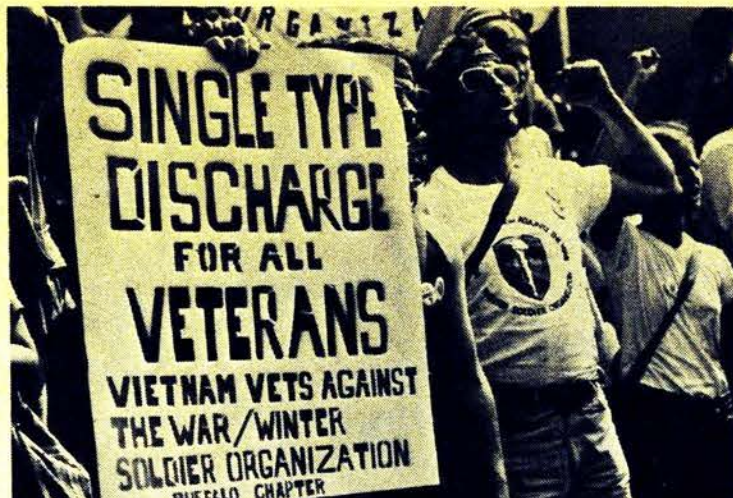
#### VETERANS

1974 saw a consolidation of the organizational work around veterans issues, and a growing understanding of the need to do anti-imperialist work around the demand of Decent Benefits for All Vets. As the US economy worsened, adequate vets benefits assumed a growing importance to millions of Vietnam-era veterans--they were often the only way to survive. Anger at the VA and the US government for their broken promises and inability to provide adequate benefits created a spontaneous movement of veterans, their friends and families, which led to the resignation of the VA head. The brief appearance of the reformist American Veterans Movement demonstrated the attempts of the government to sap the strength from the growing vets movement, and was thoroughly exposed.

Around the country many VVAW/WSO chapters began to confront the VA with demonstrations, picket lines, and takeovers of VA facilities. Veterans representative programs on college campuses were attacked, and contact began with the hundreds of thousand of unemployed vets for whom the economic crisis is an immediate, vital problem. Bad discharges--which mean no VA benefits--were another target of veterans work.

#### KICK NIXON OUT

The campaign to get rid of Nixon was a success. VVAW/WSO, often working with the many organizations with similar campaigns, built and participated in demos and actions around the country, until mass pressure from the people led to Nixon's resignation. With the pardon by Ford, the demonstrations continued: when Ford appeared outside Washington, he was guaranteed to be met by a militant demonstration, and VVAW/WSO was





# PEOPLE UNITED BE DEFEATED!

sure to be a part of it. Again and again we said that it was good that Nixon was gone, but the system remained, and it was that system that is not responsive to the real needs of the American people. Demonstrations against Rockefeller, when he was nominated for vice-president, carried the same message, and pointed to people like him as the corporate masters pulling the strings of the country.

## GI's

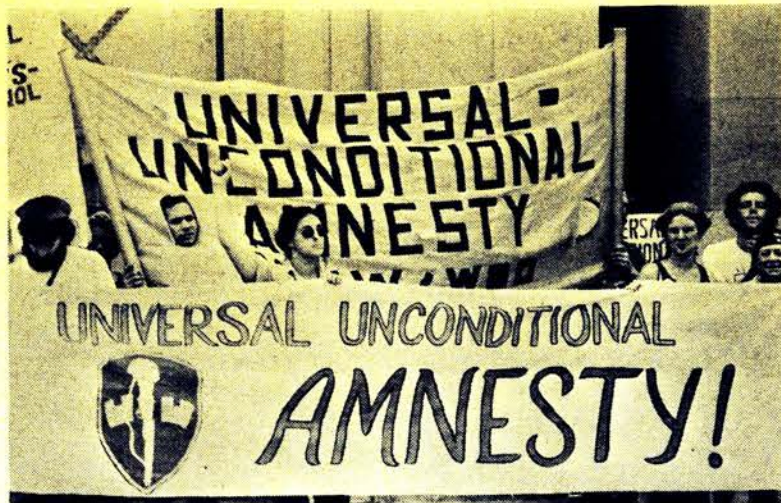
A growing understanding of the uses of the military as a potent weapon of the US government for exploiting people abroad and here at home led VVAW/WSO to increase its concentration on GI organizing. The VVAW/WSO chapter in Yokosuka, Japan, played an important role in support of Black sailors who left the USS MIDWAY in protest to the racism aboard that ship. In Iwakuni, Okinawa, VVAW/WSO worked with sailors arrested while pointing out the nature of the repressive regime in South Korea. And the end-point of military "justice"--the USDB at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas--remains a target of work, particularly around the cases of Melvin X Smith and Gregory Jackson. Local chapters distribute GI News (a newspaper version first appeared in August) on bases and to GI's in their areas.

## POLITICAL PRISONERS

Support for Gary Lawton and Zurebu Gardner grew throughout the country, despite the consistent postponements and delays in their third frame-up murder trial in Riverside, California. In October, charges against Gardner were dismissed, but the racist and repressive attack on Gary Lawton goes on. VVAW/WSO chapters sponsored several speaking tours for Gary, giving him the chance to take his case--and all that it represents--to the people, to build support for his struggle, and for local struggles against racism and repression.

1974 also saw police attacks on the organization in an attempt to intimidate VVAW/WSO members. In Oakland, Bob Hood was singled out for a brutal police attack, and charged with assault--his trial has also gone through numerous delays, and like other cases, has been used to expose the nature of police repression. During the DC Demo, in New York City, in Cincinnati, police assaulted members of the organization, vividly showing us the nature of repression in this country, and teaching us that our strength lies in unified action of the masses of people.

National work around the trials of the Leavenworth Brothers



has helped to point out the nature and uses of the American prison system (see page 10). In Buffalo, New York, the beginning of the trials of the Attica Brothers brought out 2000 people to a rally in early September, including VVAW/WSO chapters from the east and middle west. The case of Ruchell Magee has been a focus of prison support work in Northern California, and many local chapters have been active in support of community political prisoners and local cases of police repression and brutality.

## SUPPORT WORK

Local chapters and regions of VVAW/WSO have worked on a long list of local, national, and international struggles during the year, from tenants rights to the boycott of South African chrome. On a regional basis, VVAW/WSO concentrated on support for the truckers strike early in the year, not only working directly with the truckers but also talking with and leafletting members of the National Guard (acting as strikebreakers) and consumers (who were being told to blame high prices on the truckers). Support for the Independence of Puerto Rico focused on the Puerto Rican Solidarity Rally in late October. Chapters in the mid-west worked with strikers at a Borden's subsidiary in Columbus, Ohio, and helped spread the word about a national boycott of Borden's products, until that strike was resolved. Support for the miners in Harlan Country grew to support for striking coal miners around the country (see page 12).

## DC DEMONSTRATION

The high point of VVAW/WSO activity for the year was a national demonstration in Washington, DC, on the 1st through the 4th of July. At first, hundreds, and by the final day, thousands of people fought sleeplessness, the weather, police harassment and finally outright attacks, in order to bring the five demands of the demonstration to the American people. Demonstrations, marches, rallies filled the four days. While VVAW/WSO planned organized, and led the demonstrations, members of other anti-imperialist and progressive organizations, seeing the importance of the struggle around our five demands, joined in and helped to build the successful action. As with all VVAW/WSO's activities, there were important lessons which flowed from the demo: that leadership can never trail behind the militance of the people; and, more important, that the strength of our organization, and the peoples' movement in general, comes from real unity of purpose and action.

Building for the demonstration was the work of chapters for months before the demo took place. There were support and building actions around the country in mid-May, and day-to-day work constantly talked about the demo and its demands. Learning through our past practice, however, the organization did not see the demo as an end in itself--it was a tactic by which to continue to grow. New members and chapters did join the organization as a result of the demonstration; the lessons learned from the demo have been an important factor in seeing how we can continue to build, both in numbers and effectiveness. And work did not stop once the demo was over, but continued to grow and build toward 1975 and beyond, in the expanding struggle against imperialism.

## UNITY-STRUGGLE-VICTORY



## cont. from p.4

Penn Campus ended at an expressway overpass, where banners were displayed bringing a horn-honking, fist-raising response from motorists.

\*The first VVAW/WSO action in Cleveland in years took place on Oct. 26; the regional action began with a rally, then a march to Public Square in downtown Cleveland. At its height, there were 120 people, and the demonstration moved on to Cleveland Community College where VVAW/WSO members conducted workshops around the demands.

\*The Northern New Jersey chapter of VVAW/WSO brought out 85 people to a demonstration at the Regional VA on Nov. 8th. Following speeches, including one by the President of the Vets Club from nearby Essex County Community College, the demonstrators marched to Rutgers University, then back to the VA where the "War On the VA" continued.

\*In San Francisco, northern California chapters of VVAW/WSO participated in actions on both Nov. 10 and 11th. A large contingent marched in the traditional Vets Day parade on the 10th

with a color guard carrying, among others, the flags of the Liberation forces in Indochina. The following day saw a demonstration at the Federal Building in support of Universal, Unconditional Amnesty, with people pouring into federal offices demanding a single-type discharge.

\*The Chicago chapter of VVAW/WSO held a demonstration and picket line at the VA facility, both a hospital and regional office. Among the 65 demonstrators were patients and workers from the VA, indicating the success of the day-to-day work around that VA installation.

\*In New York City, a coalition of vets clubs, veterans organization, and VVAW/WSO united around demands to 1) Build a fighting veterans movement, 2) Fight the VA, and 3) Veterans unite with workers and oppressed people. Although they marched in the traditional Vets Day parade on Nov. 11th, they held a separate rally in order to bring out the real needs of the Vietnam-era vets, and present the four VVAW/WSO demands.

\*A militant Celebration and Rally

on Nov 11th took place in Riverside, CA where 60 people turned out. To the four demands in the National Program was added the demand to Free Gary Lawton (who was one of the speakers at the Rally).

Other actions--such as a militant march and picket in Oneonta, New York, and a picket-line at the Federal Building in St Louis--also raised the national demands. Veterans Day, 1974, was a day of unity and struggle for VVAW/WSO and other anti-imperialist forces.



New York City Vets Day demo

The trial of two Chicano Leavenworth Brothers began in Wichita, KS on October 21st. Jesse Lopez and Armando Miramon were brought to trial on charges of 4 counts of kidnapping (carrying a maximum sentence of 100 years each) and Miramon is charged with assault on a prison guard. These charges stem from the July 31, 1973 uprising which occurred inside Leavenworth Federal Prison as prisoners united and stood up against the inhuman and repressive conditions within the prison. Four black Leavenworth Brothers (Odell Bennett, Jessie Evans, Alf Hill and Alfred Jasper) were recently convicted of assault and inciting to riot charges by an all-white jury in Wichita.

Following the presentation of the prosecution's case, Judge Theis ordered that all charges against Jesse Lopez be dropped because the government had produced no evidence to warrant the continuation of the trial against Lopez. These charges were not dropped out of the goodness of anybody's heart, or as a show of fairness and impartiality of the court. These charges were dropped for the simple reason that there was no evidence against this brother and the government can only go so far in its frame-up attempts of people who resist the oppression of their daily lives. The "justice" system knew that any conviction of Lopez would be overturned by an appeal court, so after 1-1/2 years of harassment, many months in solitary confinement, and subjection to the pressures of facing many life sentences in prison, Jesse Lopez is no longer on trial. This may be seen as one small victory for the people in the struggle against the racism and repression of the prisons of this country.

The charges that these brothers were indicted on include the allegation that during the Leavenworth rebellion,

## Lopez Charges Dropped

# LEAVENWORTH

4 guards were held hostage by William Hurst and Miramon. (Hurst -- the only white Leavenworth Brother to be indicted -- would have been tried with Miramon and Lopez, but in May of this year, he was found hanged in his cell in the Wyandotte County Jail. Officials at the jail called Hurst's death a suicide, but a more apt term for his death is murder). The four hostages were released unharmed after the Warden agreed to meet with a prisoner grievance committee. During the presentation of the prosecution's case, the 4 hostages testified that they were treated well by Hurst and Miramon. One guard stated that "I treated the prisoners as humans and they treated me as such." While being held, the guards were made comfortable and were given chairs, cigarettes and coffee. Obviously, this treatment does not indicate that Hurst and Miramon were maniacal kidnappers.

During the defense presentation, a psychiatrist testified that Miramon could not have been responsible for his activities on July 31st, because he was suffering from "sensory deprivation psychosis." Miramon had spent many months in the Leavenworth "hole" and was released shortly before the rebellion erupted. The psychiatrist stated that people subjected to sensory deprivation cannot concentrate and do not always know what they are doing. Miramon also testified that he knew he was in the laundry (the room where the guards were held), but

that he did not know why he was there or how he had gotten there. Because of the psychological problems which developed as a result of his time spent in the "hole," Miramon has pleaded "not guilty for lack of criminal responsibility" to the kidnapping charges.

Miramon's case is being heard by an all-white, middle-class jury composed of 7 women and 5 men. These men and women have sat through 3 weeks of testimony concerning the conditions within Leavenworth Prison -- conditions that led to the taking of hostages as the only means left by which to struggle for a bearable life within a prison filled with brutality, severe repression and premature death. Often, the testimony given in this trial has brought several of the jurors to tears of disbelief and shock as these people have been forced to come face-to-face with the true nature of the prison system of this country -- a system used to prop up imperialism and a system which exhibits imperialism in all of its ugliness. This jury will decide whether or not Armando Miramon will be sentenced to four lifetimes in prison, or whether the right to rebel belonged to this man as the only course of action left to him. (For more information on this, and the previous, trial, contact: Leavenworth Brothers Offense/Defense Committee, 1715 N. St. Francis, Wichita, Ks).



# Courthouse shooting delays trial : GARY LAWTON



Gary Lawton on Vets Day

The third trial of Gary Lawton (VVAW/WSO member) began on November 12th. However, due to some recent events in Riverside, California, Gary's third trial has again been postponed, and is now set for Jan. 6th. Gary, a black man, is on trial for the shooting of two Riverside policemen who were ambushed and killed in April, 1971. The two previous trials on these charges ended with hung juries, with a majority of jurors voting for acquittal of this brother. In the words of one of the jurors who heard the first trial of Lawton, "It is a frame-up... They had no real evidence."

Gary's trial began quietly on Nov. 12th, and the jury panel was summoned for selection. The day after the trial began, a young man, Monroe, was stopped by Riverside Police near the front steps of the courthouse where the trial was going on. Police began harassing him and Monroe pulled out a gun and shot and

killed a member of the Riverside Police Dept. (RPD). Within seconds, other RPD members had opened fire on this young man. After Monroe had fallen to the ground, police hand-cuffed him and left him to lie in front of the courthouse. After several hours of lying hand-cuffed and bleeding, Monroe finally died. He never received medical treatment.

Lawton's trial was not the only important trial going on at this time. The trial of Chukia Lawton (Gary's wife) and Rusty Bronaugh, both members of the Riverside Political Prisoners Defense Committee and VVAW/WSO, had begun a few days earlier. Chukia and Rusty are facing charges stemming from a Riverside police attack which occurred last March. At the time of this attack, defense committee members were at the courthouse to show support for another defense worker, William Palmer, who was on trial for an alleged assault on a policeman. Though Zurebu Gardner (Lawton's former co-defendant on the murder charges who recently had all charges against him dropped for reason of "lack of sufficient evidence") and Chukia Lawton were seriously injured in this courthouse attack, Chukia was charged with a misdemeanor assault and resisting arrest, and Rusty was charged with interfering with a police officer in the performance of his duties. The first trial of Chukia and Rusty ended with a hung jury and they are to be retried.

When the courthouse shooting happened, people inside the courthouse rushed to windows and outside to see what had happened. A large majority of mem-

bers of the jury panels for both Gary's trial and Chukia and Rusty's trial saw the shootings, and saw Monroe dying on the sidewalk. Since the policeman that Monroe had shot was only the third Riverside policeman to be killed in recent years (Gary is standing trial for the shooting of the other two), local newspapers have been filled with news of the shootings. Newspapers have also been unusually full of articles about Gary Lawton and the charges he is facing. For these reasons, the defense moved to have the trial postponed and to have both of the jury panels dismissed on grounds that there was too much publicity surrounding the recent shootings to select a fair jury and allow Gary, Chukia and Rusty fair trials. The judge granted these motions, and Lawton's trial was postponed until Jan. 6th, while Chukia and Rusty's trial will begin on Jan. 13th.

So, once again we wait. By the time Gary finally gets to trial on these trumped-up charges, it will be almost 4 years since the harassment of this brother began. The trial of Gary Lawton is an example of the repression and racist brutality that is coming down in our communities all across the country as people struggle to overcome the oppression that the system of imperialism brings down on our daily lives. Gary Lawton is a fighter whose life is dedicated to combatting that oppression, and it is for this reason alone that the state will continue to bring him to trial either until they are satisfied or until the people of this country force Gary's freedom. Up until now, the mass outrage and support of the people has kept Gary alive, has kept a jury from convicting him, and has brought about the dropping of charges against Zurebu Gardner. Now, more than ever, that kind of continued support is vital. For information on how you can help or for the much needed financial contributions, contact: RPPDC, PO Box 244, Riverside, California 92502.

**VVAW/WSO**  
**827 w. newport av.**  
**chicago, il 60657**  
**312 935-2129**

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## LIFE & DEATH ISSUES

# MINER STRIKE

The 3-year contract between the United Mine Workers (UMW) and the Bituminous Coal Operator's Association (BCOA) expired on Nov. 12th. With a long tradition of "No Contract - No Work," the UMW has gone out on strike. Initial negotiations between the UMW and the BCOA lasted approximately 10 weeks with the UMW representing 120,000 coal miners who produce 3/4 of the country's coal. The BCOA is the bargaining group which represents most of the major coal producers.

The status of the miner's contract is unclear as we go to press. Arnold Miller (UMW President) and the BCOA have reached some sort of agreement, but it is not certain that the miners will accept the negotiated package. Since Miller replaced the corrupt Tony Boyle (who is currently in prison for plotting the murder of a union rival), the UMW rank-and-file upsurge has resulted in new democratic procedures for contract ratification. Every union member will vote by secret ballot on the contract, and though the entire procedure can take up to 2 weeks (weeks without pay), the miners realize the importance of having a voice in deciding certain aspects of their living and working conditions.

The demands of the coal miners include a wage increase and a cost-of-living clause in their contract. Inflation hits hard in mining communities, and just like everyone else, the miners have found it difficult to make ends meet. They are also demanding better job security (including seniority rights) and an improved grievance procedure. The miners are also fighting for paid sick-leave, increased benefits for disabled and pensioned miners and widows, and higher pensions.

The #1 issue with the miners is safety; they are demanding the right not to work under unsafe conditions. Negotiations between the UMW and BCOA began on Sept. 3rd, and during the following 10 weeks, 39 miners were killed. Since the Mine Safety Act went into effect in 1969, 830 miners have lost their lives in the mines. With facts like this, it is no wonder that safety is an issue of primary importance to the miners. They are demanding that they have the right to leave the mines anytime conditions are unsafe. They are also demanding that there be full time, specially trained help on all the dangerous machinery present at all times, and that union safety inspectors have access to any mine without company officials being present.

The major demand that deals with the question of safety is the right to strike over unsafe working conditions. Miners are specifically stating that they must have this right-to-strike clause clearly written into their contract. Miners had this right to strike over safety conditions ripped away from them several years ago and they are now fighting to get it back. As the miners are demanding this right, the companies are asking the unions to cooperate in the

drive for "increased productivity," and the companies have asked that there be no more wildcats at the mines. The wildcat strike has been one of the most effective tools the miners have used for fighting for their needs and protesting the conditions they are forced to work under. Since the miners cannot officially strike around safety conditions, they have averaged 100 wildcats a month during the last 5 years. This right-to-strike clause is one of the miners' major demands, and it is not only important for them. It is important for all working people. We have seen how the government, and the corporations that government serves, are trying to take the right to strike away from workers. The major attack in this respect was directed at steel workers in the form of the ENA. (The Experimental Negotiating Agreement states that steel workers cannot strike over their national contract and that contracts are not to be voted on by the rank-and-file). Now, the corporations are trying to continue to deny the coal miners this basic right to strike, and this attack on all working people must be resisted.

News of a coal strike has been circulating for some time and the government has tried to bill the strike as an attack on the people of this country by the coal miners. The government and corporations are doing this under the guise of "energy shortages" and the amount of lay-offs that a coal strike will create. Figures relating to lay-offs are being circulated widely, showing that lay-offs in steel and railroad industries will begin immediately with the strike.

After 3 weeks of a coal strike, lay-off levels will reach 400,000, and within a month, 1.7 million people will be out of work. These figures may be correct, but these lay-offs are not the fault of the coal miners who are fighting not just for themselves, but for the rights of all working people. These lay-offs, and the general economic crisis they are a part of, are the fault of the corporate owners -- that elite, wealthy few who rule this country.

The corporate owners don't want a coal strike because strikes do not fit in with their insatiable hunger for profits. A strike is not in their interests and they will be using every anti-strike scheme they have to try and prevent a long walk-out, including trying to build mass sentiment against a coal strike. But the coal strike is the right of the coal miners, and it is the responsibility of the people of this country to support that strike and to combat the anti-strike propaganda and possible strike-breaking tactics that the government will employ to try to cut this strike short and protect the profit-makers. The coal miners are waging a battle for decent living and working conditions. They are trying to stay alive in the mines, they are trying to put food on their tables, they are trying to live long lives with a decent standard of existence, and they are trying to protect the only way they have of winning these demands -- their right to strike. The struggle of the miners belongs to all of us. It may not be in the interests of the government and the corporations, but it certainly is in the interests of the people of this country.



Coal miners after work



## Regional Offices

### ALABAMA/LOUISIANA/MISSISSIPPI/TENNESSEE

contact National Office

### ALASKA/WASHINGTON

VVAW/WSO  
215 Viking Union - WWSC  
Bellingham, Washington 98225  
(206) 676-3460, ext. 22

### CALIFORNIA/NEVADA/ARIZONA

VVAW/WSO  
255 East William St.  
San Jose, California 95112  
(408) 998-4210

### COLORADO/UTAH/NEW MEXICO WYOMING

VVAW/WSO  
P.O. Box 18591  
Denver, Colorado 80218  
(303) 477-0587

### FLORIDA/GEORGIA

VVAW/WSO  
7610 Biscayne Blvd.  
Miami, Florida 33138  
(305) 757-0673, 0674

### N. ILLINOIS/IOWA

VVAW/WSO- Chicago  
827 West Newport  
Chicago, Illinois 60657  
(312) 327-0488

### S. ILLINOIS/E. MISSOURI/OKLAHOMA ARKANSAS

VVAW/WSO  
1023 Allen Avenue  
St. Louis, Missouri 63104  
(314) 621-2648

### MARYLAND/WASHINGTON DC/VIRGINIA

VVAW/WSO  
521 B Second St., NE  
Washington, D.C. 20002  
(202) 543-0817

### MASSACHUSETTS/NEW HAMPSHIRE/MAINE/VERMONT

VVAW/WSO  
15 Clymer  
Burlington, Vermont 05401  
(802) 862-8175

### KANSAS/W. MISSOURI/NEBRASKA/NORTH & SOUTH DAKOTA

VVAW/WSO  
1715 N. St. Francis  
Wichita, Kansas 67214  
(316) 264-7264

### NEW YORK/N. NEW JERSEY/RHODE ISLAND/CONNECTICUT

Steve Hassett, VVAW/WSO  
P.O. Box 902, Ellicott Station  
Buffalo, New York 14205  
(716) 886-8645

### NORTH & SOUTH CAROLINA

VVAW/WSO  
1003 West Lenoir St.  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27603  
(919) 833-0570

### OHIO/INDIANA/KENTUCKY/MICHIGAN W. PENNSYLVANIA/WEST VIRGINIA

VVAW/WSO  
P.O. Box 10116  
Columbus, Ohio 43201  
(614) 299-6921

### OREGON

Allen Tlusty, VVAW/WSO  
P.O. Box 5193  
Eugene, Oregon 97405  
(503) 485-0757

### E. PENNSYLVANIA/DELAWARE/S. NEW JERSEY

VVAW/WSO  
315 Peffer Street  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17102  
(717) 232-6794

### TEXAS

John Kniffin  
P.O. Box 12986  
Austin, Texas 78711

### WISCONSIN/MINNESOTA

VVAW/WSO  
2532 N. Holton  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53212  
(414) 264-0882

## Regional Contacts

### IDAHO/MONTANA

Travis Opdyke  
488 Lilly  
Boise, Idaho 83707  
(208) 376-0043

### National Office

VVAW/WSO  
827 W. Newport  
Chicago, Illinois 60657  
(312) 935-2129

## Project Offices

### GARY LAWTON DEFENSE COMMITTEE

RPPDC  
P.O. Box 244  
Riverside, California 92502

### AMNESTY CLEARINGHOUSE

VVAW/WSO  
827 West Newport  
Chicago, Illinois 60657  
(312) 935-2129

### POST-VIETNAM SYNDROME CLEARINGHOUSE

VVAW/WSO  
2532 N. Holton  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53212  
(414) 264-1242

### NATIONAL G.I. PROJECT OFFICE

VVAW/WSO  
827 West Newport  
Chicago, Illinois 60657  
(312) 935-2129

### NATIONAL PRISON PROJECT OFFICE

VVAW/WSO  
827 West Newport  
Chicago, Illinois 60657  
(312) 935-2129



**UNITY-STRUGGLE-VICTORY**



## Vietnam Veterans Against the War Winter Soldier Organization Objectives



1. To struggle for an immediate cessation of fighting and the withdrawal of all American troops, advisors, planes, and military and economic aid from Southeast Asia. We support as a basis for the cessation of these hostilities the various peace proposals of the people of Southeast Asia based upon their right of self-determination and actual control of their own destinies.
2. To struggle for the immediate termination of all other operations by the United States government, its agencies, and American business interests that are designed to suppress the rightful struggles for liberation and self-determination of the people of the world. This includes the creation and maintenance of dictatorial governments, economic domination and the theft of the natural resources of this and other countries.
3. To struggle for the goal that all military people (Active-duty, Reserve and National Guard) be afforded their constitutional rights which are denied by the Uniform Code of Military Justice. We condemn the use of the National Guard, Reserves and Active-duty personnel as strikebreakers, and we support the efforts of servicepeople in the struggles against military repression. We oppose the use of the military as an oppressive and policy-making force domestically and overseas.
4. To struggle for universal unconditional amnesty. This will include a single-type retroactive discharge for all vets, and amnesty for all persons in prison, underground, or in exile as a result of their resistance to the imperialist war machine as well as the clearing of all their resulting civil and criminal records.
5. To struggle for decent benefits, full medical care (including the recognition of Post Vietnam Syndrome as a service-connected disability), and productive employment for all veterans with parity for all war resisters. We demand an end to discriminatory corporate hiring practices based on Vietnam-era service or Special Processing Numbers or descriptions, and the exploitation of veterans as a tool to divide the working class.
6. To struggle against racism which is historically used as a tool of U.S. imperialism to prevent and destroy unity among the people and justify the oppression and exploitation of third world people at home and abroad. We must fight this dehumanizing tactic which divides us, and strive to build unity between all people.
7. Resolved to fight sexism, to show that sexism plays a major part in promoting war. We must show Americans our society is permeated by sexism, which forces an inferior status upon women, reducing them to subservient sexual objects, and which robs both men and women of their natural growth. This institutionalized sexism channels women into unfulfilling, lower paying jobs which are servile in nature and purpose; it exploits their bodies for sex and profit; and it degrades and dehumanizes them by a double standard of morality wholly dependent on the myth of male supremacy. This sexism is exploited by the military, officially defining servicewomen as subordinate and thoroughly subjugating them to servile work and the role of a sexual object. We resolve to fight sexism within our society, within our own organization and within ourselves.
8. To struggle for the right of all workers to organize and strike to protect their income and safeguard their employment. We support progressive struggles aimed at improving working conditions.
9. To struggle against the use of the criminal justice system (police, courts, prisons, grand juries) as a tool of political repression, recognizing that this system now serves the interests of the rich and powerful while suppressing the majority of poor and working people. We will fight for the freeing of all political prisoners.
10. To dedicate ourselves to these principles and objectives which directly relate to the imperialist suppression of the People of the World by the United States government. We understand this war is imperialist in origin and affirm that the membership of VVAW/WSO is not only concerned with ending this war, but with changing the domestic, social, political and economic institutions that have caused and perpetuated its continuance.



# PLO Wins Major Victory

# PALESTINE

Several dramatic events in October and November of this year have drastically changed the balance of power in the Middle East, weakening the hold that the U. S. had on the area during the years of the Nixon-Kissinger doctrine. Coming one-two-three, these events have strongly improved the political position of the Palestinian people, the most forgotten group in the Middle East.

First came the overwhelming vote of the General Assembly of the United Nations to invite a delegation from the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) to address the whole world-body in November. The General Assembly voted 105 to 4 to invite "the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, to participate in the deliberations of the General Assembly on the question of Palestine..." Only the United States, Bolivia and the Dominican Republic backed Israel's opposition to the invitation. Britain, West Germany and other Western European countries (except for France and Italy) were among the 20 abstentions, while almost the entire Third World voted in favor of the motion.

Then, a week later, at the Arab summit conference in Rabat, Morocco, leaders of 20 Arab nations agreed to acknowledge the PLO as the "sole legitimate" representative of the Palestinian people. When the Rabat conference began, Jordan and Egypt were still the hope of Kissinger's policy of ignoring the Palestinians. But strong pressure from the other nations at the conference, combined with pledges of annual military subsidies to Egypt, Syria and Jordan from the oil-rich Arab countries, caved in what pro-U. S. sentiment there was and the conference gave its unanimous support to the PLO.

For Israel, which has consistently refused to negotiate with the PLO, and for the United States, which has been trying to create a peace in the Middle East by getting Arab nations to abandon the Palestinians, these events are a crushing setback. The Arab unity that emerged from the Rabat conference is a clear rejection of the U. S. attempt to buy its way into the Middle East with promises of enormous aid to Egypt and Jordan. In addition, the recognition of the PLO by the United Nations sets a precedent in recognizing national liberation movements, something the United States has resisted for years -- largely because many of those liberation struggles are being waged against U. S. domination.

Israel quickly responded to the recognition of the PLO by reaffirming its refusal to negotiate with the PLO and by beginning preparations for war. Premier Yitzhak Rabin said, "There is no one to talk to about peace on the Eastern border. We will not negotiate..." Israeli newspapers are full of articles about how peace is dead and war is the only course open. Admitting the realities of Israel's refusal to negotiate with them, PLO leader Arafat said, "Victory is close at hand. This enemy, this military gang, is a pack of wounded wolves. They are preparing for a fifth war, and we must get ready for it."

A fifth war is exactly what the United States is trying to avoid, but not for humanitarian reasons. Israel's economy is already weak and massive aid from the U. S. is desperately needed. More importantly, the U. S. is seeking to avoid war in order to protect the reactionary Arab governments of Jordan, Saudi Arabia and others from being influenced by people's movements represented by the PLO. The PLO is a threat in that it could lead to the development of other liberation movements in Arab countries that would oppose the current feudal governments that are sympathetic to the West. "Energy crisis" rhetoric to the contrary, the U. S. oil companies maintain friendly relations with the governments of the wealthy Arab oil countries. The aim of the U. S. is to head off any shifts in power that would threaten the U. S. oil supply from the Middle East. The PLO represents just such a threat.

In his speech before the United Nations, Yasir Arafat (PLO representative) exposed the propaganda campaign that has been waged by Israel which says that the Palestinians want to drive the Jewish people into the sea. Addressing the United Nations, Arafat said, "Mr. President, we DO distinguish between Judaism and Zionism. While we maintain our opposition to the colonialist Zionist movement, we respect the Jewish faith. Today, almost one century after the rise of the Zionist movement, we wish to warn of its increasing danger to the Jews of the World, to our Arab people and to world peace and security. For Zionism encourages the Jew to emigrate out of his homeland and grants him an artificially created nationality."

Arafat continued, "For when what is proposed is that adherents of the Jewish faith, regardless of their national residence, should neither owe allegiance to their national residence nor live on



equal footing with its other, non-Jewish citizens -- when that is proposed we hear anti-Semitism being proposed. When it is proposed that the only solution for the Jewish problem is that Jews must alienate themselves from communities or nations, of which they have been a historical part, when it is proposed that Jews solve the Jewish problem by immigrating to and forcibly settling the land of another people -- when this occurs, exactly the same position is being advocated as the one urged by anti-Semites against Jews."

Since 1948, over 1,500,000 Palestinian Arabs have been forcibly exiled from their homeland. Since that time, the artificially created state of Israel has continued to expand the territory it holds by wars and terrorism. For years, the Zionists, those who wish to keep on expanding, have maintained an aggressive, hostile stance towards their Arab neighbors. The recognition of the PLO lays the foundation for a real settlement of peace in the Middle East because it forces the Zionists to deal with those people they would like to forget -- the Palestinian people.



# G.I.s STRUGGLE

## The Struggle Continues

### USS MIDWAY

(Yokosuka, Japan) Early in September, the USS MIDWAY was put into drydock in Yokosuka, Japan. Rumor has it that there was a crack in the hull, which is not surprising since this was the first time in 5 years that the ship was put in drydock for major repairs. It must have been serious since the drydock period caused the cancellation of a scheduled joint USMC-US Navy beachhead/air support exercise off the coast of South Korea. Such exercises are an important show of force for the US military in its mission of propping up shaky dictatorships in places like South Korea.

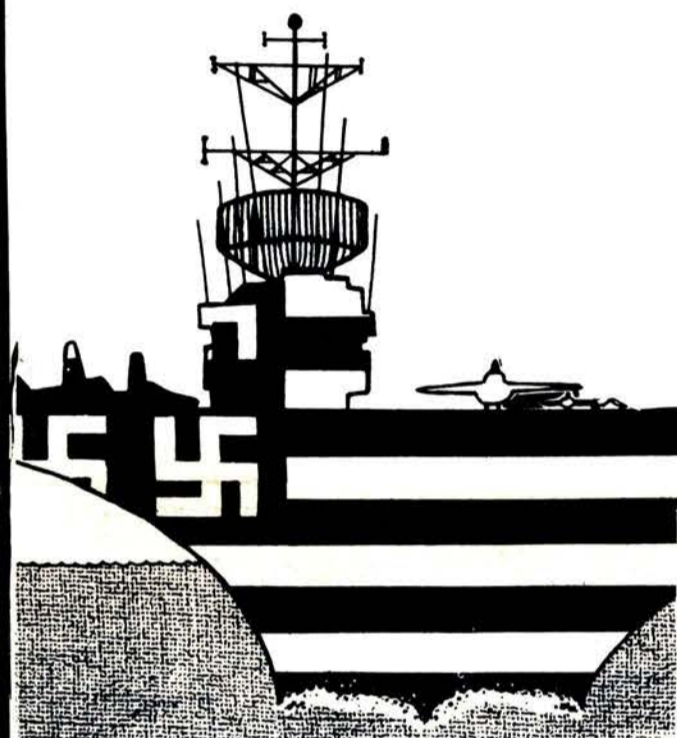
While the ship was in drydock, it was clear that the situation on the ship--bad working conditions and repression--haven't changed in the months since 40 crewmen walked off in protest last summer. One of the sailors working on the ship, SA Lefevbre, was killed while painting a mast without a safety harness and fell to the deck. Similar unsafe conditions have caused many accidents like this in the past.

Some of the black brothers on the ship have been receiving anonymous phone calls in the middle of the night threatening their physical well-being. Captain's Masts (Article 15) are continuing at an astounding pace -- with the MIDWAY brig remaining the ultimate form of punishment resulting from Mast. Some people were saying that the brig guards began refraining from physical contact (i. e. beatings) with the prisoners. This "relaxation" of policy

is only temporary, according to inside sources; but the change in policy, even if it is only temporary, can be attributed directly to the strength of the brothers who walked off the ship and used their court-martials as a forum for dissent. By and large, the unity of the MIDWAY brothers is still under attack. The brass's tactics of shipping out the more advanced and vocal brothers coupled with increased repression is meeting with temporary success on the boat.

The MIDWAY left drydock and sailed for Pusan, South Korea on September 26th. While the ship was out, the stories about nuclear weapons being brought to Japan on the MIDWAY and other ships came out in the Japanese press, after retired Admiral Larocque testified before Congress. The Japanese people were outraged and took to the streets in protest. Some of the sailors who walked off the MIDWAY had been, in part, protesting the nuclear weapons and it is likely that they will join the struggle of the Japanese people when they return to Yokosuka.

The MIDWAY is an important part of the U. S. military's policy of maintaining U. S. imperialism in Asia, as well as the oppression of GIs who are being used to do the military's dirty work. VVAW/WSO has been working with the MIDWAY brothers in their fight against the Navy and the military in general. Their struggle did not end with the walk-off; it will continue as long as they are used as tools of U. S. imperialism.



## FT. MEADE:

### G.I.s SUPPORT BASEWORKERS

(Ft Meade, MD) On October 2, workers belonging to Amalgamated Local Union 1231 went on strike to fight the contract offered them by Eastern Service Mangement, Inc.(which supplies base workers to Ft Meade). They work as janitors, buffing floors, and doing general clean-up at various Ft Meade buildings. In August, at the time of an election to recognize the union, the workers were scheduled for a raise to \$2. 92 an hour for general workers, and \$3. 07 an hour for waxers and buffers. But, since the recognition of the union, the company's wage offer sank to \$2. 56 an hour for all employees. The workers resisted this blatant attempt at union busting by striking for wage increases and decent benefits.

The union asked the post commander, Col. Patterson, for the right to picket the management office on base, but the request was denied. Col. Patterson claimed that picketing would violate military regulations which say that the military must be neutral in labor disputes

and that pickets would present a safety hazard on the base. Col. Patterson, however, is keeping open the management office to hire workers to break the strike. Further, the union charges that the Army is using active duty people in the meantime to do the work, thus using GIs as strikebreakers! This is just one more example of the military bosses using lower-ranking enlisted people to perform the jobs of striking workers. The military has a long history of strike breaking--GIs attacked striking miners in Ludlow, Colorado in 1914 all the way through GIs being used to sort mail during the postal strike in New York City in 1970.

The VVAW/WSO GI chapter at Ft. Meade, HIGHWAY 13, is calling on GIs to support the strikers who are picketing across the street from the base. Enlisted people have performed the job of suppressing people for the rich bosses for a couple of hundred years now--but GIs are organizing to fight being used as scabs by the military.

G.I.s ARE NOT  
STRIKEBREAKERS



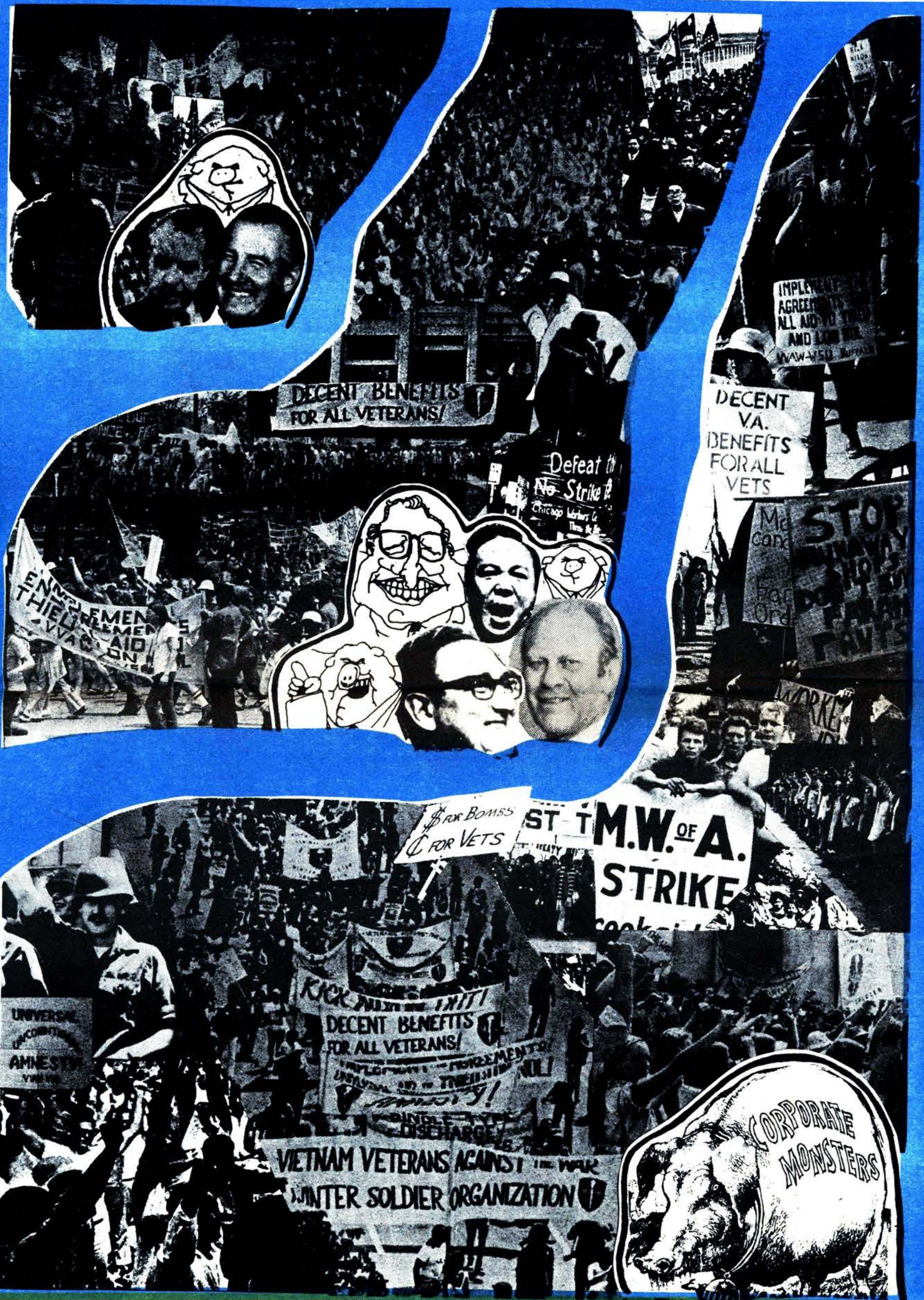
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# 1974 THE STRUGGLE GROWS