



Vietnam Veterans' Association of Australia

P.O. BOX 902, SALE, VICTORIA, 3850

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING OF

THE

NATIONAL CONGRESS

Held at the Kew R.S.L. (Victoria) Sunday 28 Jun 87

MOTION 4

METHOD OF VOTE

THAT THE ELECTIONS BE BY AN OPEN SHOW OF HANDS
CARRIED (13FOR/1 ABSTAIN)

MOTION 5

METHOD OF VOTE

MOVED: JOHN THOMPSON (QLD)

SECONDED: COL BRUCE (ACT)

THAT IN THE EVENT OF MORE THAN TWO CANDIDATES THAT THERE BE AN EXHUSTIVE BALLOT
CARRIED (9 FOR/3 AGAINST)

NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES

NATIONAL PRESIDENT

DON WILSON NOMINATED BY JOHN THOMPSON(QLD) SECONDED BY JOHN HAINES(NSW)
TIM McCOOMBE NOMINATED BY PAUL WELLS (SA) SECONDED BY GRANT COLLINS (SA)

RESULT OF BALLOT DON WILSON 4 , TIM McCOOMBE 10
TIM McCOOMBE DECLARED NATIONAL PRESIDENT FOR 1987/88

NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT

KEVIN GILL NOMINATED BY TIM McCOOMBE(WA) SECONDED BY JOHN PRINTZ(VIC)
JOHN THOMPSON NOMINATED BY JOHN HAINES (NSW) SECONDED BY PAUL WELLS(SA)

RESULT OF BALLOT KEVIN GILL 9 , JOHN THOMPSON 5
KEVIN GILL DECLARED NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT FOR 1987/88

NATIONAL SECRETARY

JOHN PRINTZ NOMINATED BY PAUL WELLS(SA) SECONDED BY JOHN DELACCA(VIC)
THERE BEING NO FURTHER NOMINATIONS

JOHN PRINTZ DECLARED NATIONAL SECRETARY FOR 1987/88

NATIONAL TREASURER

GRANT COLLINS NOMINATED BY TIM McCOOMBE(WA) SECONDED BY PAUL WELLS(SA)
THERE BEING NO FURTHER NOMINATIONS

GRANT COLLINS DECLARED NATIONAL TREASURER FOR 1987/88

MOTION 6

MOTION OF APPRECIATION

MOVED: KEVIN GILL (ACT)

SECONDED: JOHN PRINTZ(VIC)

THAT DON WILSON BE CONGRATULATED AND THANKED FOR HIS HONEST AND FAIR ACTIONS
WHILST HOLDING THE POSITION OF NATIONAL PRESIDENT

CARRIED

NOMINATION OF NATIONAL SOLICITOR

R.L.WHYBURN NOMINATED BY KEVIN GILL(ACT) SECONDED BY GRANT COLLINS(NSW)

McGUIR, JAMES HALL
AND ASSOCIATES NOMINATED BY MICK SCRASE(NSW) SECONDED BY JOHN THOMPSON(QLD)

RESULT OF BALLOT R.L.WHYBURN 10 , McGUIR, JAMES HALL AND ASSOCIATES 4
R.L.WHYBURN APPOINTED NATIONAL SOLICITOR FOR 1987/88

NOMINATION OF NATIONAL AUDITOR

P.SAINT AND Co NOMINATED BY GRANT COLLINS(SA) SECONDED BY PAUL WELLS(SA)
THERE BEING NO FURTHER NOMINATIONS

P.SAINT AND CO APPOINTED NATIONAL AUDITOR FOR 1987/88

GENERAL BUSINESS

MOTION 7

TABLING OF ACCOUNTS/STATEMENTS

MOVED: JOHN PRINTZ(VIC)

SECONDED: PAUL WELLS(SA)

THAT THE NATIONAL TREASURER SUPPLY A STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL REPORT QUARTERLY

CARRIED

A STATEMENT OF DISTURBING INSTANCES WHICH HAPPENED IN QUEENSLAND WAS TABLED BY JOHN THOMPSON AND DISCUSSED IN LENGTH WITH THE RESOLVE THAT KEVIN GILL CORRESPOND WITH JOHN THOMPSON ON SOME MATTERS ARISING FOR JOHN'S USE AT STATE COUNCIL

CLASS ACTION

MOTION 8

DELEGATES TO THE TRUST FUND COMMITTEE

MOVED: JOHN THOMPSON (QLD)

SECONDED: JOHN DELACCA (VIC)

THAT DON WILSON AND TIM MCCOOMBE BE THE ASSOCIATION DELEGATES TO THE CLASS ACTION TRUST FUND COMMITTEE
CARRIED

IT WAS ALSO RESOLVED TO CONTACT JIM GREENWOOD AND GIVE HIM OUR APPRECIATION FOR HIS EFFORTS ON THE TRUST FUND COMMITTEE AND INFORM HIM THAT HIS REPLACEMENT IS ONLY TO ASCEND TO THE JUDGES DIRECTION THAT ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS SHOULD BE VIETNAM VETERANS (TIM MCCOOMBE TO CONTACT, JOHN PRINTZ TO WRITE)

IT WAS RESOLVED IN DISCUSSION THAT KEVIN GILL WAS TO CONTACT MAJ J.F. THOMPSON TO ASK IF HE WAS AGREEABLE TO BE THE VVAA NOMINEE TO THE COMMITTEE FOR THE FORMULATION OF THE DISPERSAL OF THE TRUST FUND

MOTION 9

EMPLOYMENT PREFERENCE TO VETERANS

MOVED: PAUL WELLS (SA)

SECONDED: MICK ALLWRIGHT (TAS)

THAT THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE PERSUE THE PREFERENCE TOWARDS VETERANS AS LISTED IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT, CLAUSE 47a (REHABILITATION AND RETRAINING)
CARRIED

WELCOME HOME PARADE AND REUNION

MICK SCRASE ASKED THAT THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION BE PASSED TO ALL VIETNAM VETERANS WHO ARE DISABLED AND REQUIRE CARE BUT WISH TO ATTEND ARE TO GIVE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION TO

TONY HUNTLY

PO BOX 247, CROYDON PK, NSW. 2133

PHONE: (HOME) 02 799 1224, (WORK) 02 290 7777

LISTING:-

NAME
ADDRESS
PHONE
MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS
NO OF PERS

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS PASSED TO THE MEETING

ACCOMODATION FOR 112 SINGLE MEN AT RAEME, 101 Fd WORKSHOPS
CONTACT IS THE ASM

COMPUTER INFORMATION

GRANT COLLINS (NATIONAL TREASURER) HAS PROGRAMMES FOR VIETNAM VETERAN ORGANISATIONS TO AID ADMINISTRATION BUT SHOULD HAVE IBM COMPATIBLE SYSTEMS CONTACT GRANT

MEETING CLOSED 12.50PM



VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

NATIONAL OFFICE

(P.O. BOX 369, PARRAMATTA 2150)

National Patron:
Mr. J.H. Greenwood OBE

RANDWICK COMMUNITY CENTRE, BUNDOCK STREET, RANDWICK (02)525-8635

NOTICE OF SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING.

A SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION SHALL BE HELD AS FOLLOWS:

DATE: SUNDAY JUNE 28, 1987

TIME: 10.00 AM

VENUE: KEW R.S.L. CLUB, 63 COTHAM ROAD, CNR CHARLES STREET, KEW, VIC.
tram 42 ex Collins Street, stop no. 37.

THIS SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING HAS BEEN CALLED AT THE REQUEST OF OUR SOUTH AUSTRALIAN AND WESTERN AUSTRALIAN BRANCHES FOR THE PURPOSE OF

- I) CLARIFYING THE EXECUTIVE POSITIONS OF THE NATIONAL OFFICE.
- II) RE-ELECTION OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION.

AS THE CONSTITUENTS OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE AND IN PARTICULAR THE STATUS OF THE VICE PRESIDENTS POSITION MUST BE RATIFIED NOMINATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED FROM THE FLOOR IN ACCORDANCE WITH THOSE ACTIONS TAKEN AT PREVIOUS NATIONAL CONGRESSES THOUGH STATES WISHING TO NOMINATE IN WRITING MAY DO SO PRIOR TO THE SO CALLED SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING.

DON WILSON.
NATIONAL PRESIDENT.



VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

NATIONAL OFFICE

National Patron:
Mr. J.H. Greenwood OBE

(P.O. BOX 369, PARRAMATTA 2150)

RANDWICK COMMUNITY CENTRE, BUNDOCK STREET, RANDWICK (02)525-8635

TO: ALL STATE PRESIDENTS.
NATIONAL VICE PRSIDENT.

9 JUNE 1987

FROM: DON WILSON, NATIONAL PRESIDENT.

A) NATIONAL EXECUTIVE.

Following my letter of 26 May 1987, specifically item A) the R.L. Whyburn letter, I have received requests from the South Australian and Western Australian Branches to call a Special General Meeting to clarify the makeup of the National Office and to elect those office bearers as deemed necessary by the Members of The National Council.

I have discussed with a number of other states who do not believe a Special General Meeting is necessary but if such a meeting will resolve the problem and enable us all to get together and work together then the earliest meeting time as requested is recommended.

We have a Federal Election coming up on the 11th July and i believe that we must be organised prior to the election. Who the next Minister for Vetarans affairs will be is not known as there are conflicting reports on whether Senator Gietzelt will seek a portfolio, and there is always the possibility in such a volatile electorate that the current opposition could be in government, so I believe that the earlier we can get our full National Executive elected and operating then the better prepared we will be to present our case.

I would like you all to consider also, before the meeting, the makeup of the National Executive. My short time in the chair has shown that an Executive spread all around Australia is not the most effective. I believe that the President and at least one other member, preferably one with plenty of spare time, should be in the one state. So I would recommend that when we come to the Special General Meeting that each state prepare their nominations accordingly for that state in which they would like to see the National Office resident.

I therefore call a Special General Meeting as Follows;

DATE: SUNDAY JUNE 28, 1987

TIME: 10.00AM

VENUE: KEW R.S.L. CLUB, 63 COTHAM ROAD, CNR CHARLES STREET, KEW. VIC.

B) AUSTRALIAN VETERANS AND DEFENCE SERVICES COUNCIL.

I attended the meeting of AVADSC held in Sydney on 1st June. There were a number of items raised including

i) Monitoring Committee for the V.E.A. ans I enclose copies of correspondence which offers some guidance;

ii) Withe the coming election the Chairman thought it would be a good idea for each member to write to those election candidates seeking their promise to support veterans. I recall such a programme was organised by Phil for the last election. I have discussed this with a couple of



National Patron:
Mr. J.H.Greenwood OBE

VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

NEW SOUTH WALES BRANCH

CNR. BLAXCELL & WILLIAM STREETS, GRANVILLE (P.O. BOX 170 GRANVILLE 2142)

PHONE: (02) 682 1788

Regd. Charity No. CC24654

Thursday, 14 May, 1987.

National Office,
Vietnam Veterans Assoc.
of Australia.

President,

Following our telephone conversation on Tuesday, 12th May, 1987 regarding the Financial problems at the National Office I spoke to a number of N.S.W. Branch committee members and suggested a sum of money be forwarded to you to pay for the following National Office debts.

- (1) Four weeks payment for the Office rental at the Randwick Community Centre (Total (\$60.00) This calculated at \$15.00 per week for 4 weeks.
- (2) \$220.00 towards the outstanding Telecom Account.
- (3) \$220.00 towards the outstanding Sydney County Council Electricity Account.


The members I spoke to have agreed to this proposal and I am sure the majority of Committee members will support this matter when it is tabled at the next Committee meeting.

I also mention any other request to help with the known debts of the National Office, by the N.S.W. Branch will be treated on its merit, as discussed at the N.S.W. Branch committee meeting on Friday, 8th May, 1987.

It would seem that there is still some antagonism towards N.S.W. by the other States, this contribution may help to alleviate this concern by the other States towards the N.S.W. Committee.

I would suggest you write to the President/Secretary's of the other States outlying what I have said in this letter.

Yours sincerely,


JOHN HAINES
President
N.S.W. Branch

Recvd 16/87



MINISTER FOR VETERANS' AFFAIRS
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA A.C.T. 2600
- 3 JUN 1987

Dear Mr McCombe,

I am writing to let you know that, as agreed, I have established a Veterans' Entitlements Act monitoring committee to report to me upon the first year of operation of the Act.

The purpose is to ensure that the Act is achieving its aims as set out in explanatory material to the Parliament when the Bill for the Act was introduced.

A news release is enclosed giving details of the composition of the monitoring committee, and setting out the terms of reference.

You will note that the committee is chaired by the Hon. Paul Toose, a former judge of the New South Wales Supreme Court, who is widely experienced in veterans' affairs matters and who was the Returned Services League nominee.

I advised Mr Toose that I would write to each ex-service organisation regarding the establishment of the committee, its terms of reference and its composition.

I understand that the committee will shortly be calling for written submissions.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'A. Gietzelt'.

(A.T. GIETZELT)

Mr T. McCombe,
National Secretary,
Vietnam Veterans Association
of Australia,
P.O. Box 369,
PARRAMATTA. N.S.W. 2150



News Release... News Release...

GIETZELT ANNOUNCES VETERANS' ENTITLEMENTS ACT MONITORING COMMITTEE

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Senator Arthur Gietzelt, has announced the establishment of the Veterans' Entitlements Act Monitoring Committee.

The Committee will report to the Government within a year on the operation of the Veterans' Entitlements Act (VEA), which came into effect on 22 May 1986.

The independent chairman of the committee is The Hon. Paul B. Toose, a former judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, who has had extensive experience in veterans' affairs matters and who is held in high regard by the ex-service community.

Senator Gietzelt said that while Parliament was considering the VEA last year, he gave an undertaking that he would establish a committee to report on the first twelve months of operation of the Act. As he had indicated then, the committee membership includes representatives of the ex-service community.

He said the committee will begin work promptly, with administrative support from the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Other members of the committee are.-

Mr Ian Gollings, National Secretary of the Returned Services League of Australia

Mr Peter Alexander, Honorary Secretary to the Australian Veterans and Defence Services Council

Mr A.G. Robertson, a Legacy nominee and former member of the Advisory Committee on Repatriation Legislation Review (1982-84)

Mr Lionel Mead, a former Deputy Commissioner in New South Wales for the Department of Veterans' Affairs

Miss Jocelyn McGirr, Deputy President of the Repatriation Commission.



MINISTER FOR VETERANS' AFFAIRS
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA A.C.T. 2600

12 MAY 1987

Dear Mr Alexander,

I am writing to express my appreciation of your agreeing to be a member of the monitoring committee to report on the first twelve months' operation of the Veterans' Entitlements Act.

I propose to make a formal announcement shortly of the membership and terms of reference of the committee as agreed by Justice Toose.

Attached is a list of members of the committee. Justice Toose has agreed to chair the committee.

The terms of reference of the committee will be as follows:

"Having regard to:-

- (a) the stated objectives of the Government in the passage of the Veterans' Entitlements Act (as amended) and the Veterans' Entitlements (Transitional Provisions and Consequential Amendments) Act (as amended), as outlined in the explanatory material provided to the Parliament;
- and
- (b) the operational experience of that legislation;

the Committee shall meet to discuss the effectiveness and efficiency of the legislation as outlined in (a) above and shall report as soon as practicable to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs on those aspects and on the extent to which the Government's objectives are being met by the legislation.

The Committee shall commence its deliberations one year after the proclamation of the VEA and report to the Minister within the succeeding year."

An officer of my Department's Sydney office will be providing administrative and secretarial support to the committee. That officer will assist in the co-ordination and presentation of material to the committee for its consideration.

The committee will meet in Sydney using facilities available at my Department's office in the Grace Building at 77 York Street, Sydney. It is envisaged that the committee will meet monthly and the first meeting has been set down for Friday, 22

MINISTER FOR VETERANS AFFAIRS
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA A.C.T. 2600

7 MAY 1987

Dear Admiral Griffiths,

A copy of your report to the Annual General Meeting of the Australian Veterans and Defence Services Council has been brought to my attention. There are the number of issues discussed in your report which I believe could give a false impression of the Veterans' Affairs portfolio. I have, therefore, taken this opportunity to respond and would be grateful if my response could be given similar publicity to your report.

Repatriation Determining System

Your report expressed concern regarding the backlog at the second level of the Repatriation Determining System, the Veterans' Review Board.

Firstly, I should point out that considerable improvements have been made at the first level of the determining system. Most of the backlog at that level has now been brought under control. Moreover, most Veterans' claims are finalised at the first level. Only 30% of those decisions are appealed to the Veterans' Review Board.

Your comments regarding the backlog at the Veterans' Review Board level are simplistic. The build up of cases at the Veterans' Review Board level is to a large extent a consequence of the recent huge increase in decisions at the primary level. That backlog at the first level is now passing to the second level. That is inevitable. The delays now existing at the Veterans' Review Board level will in turn be brought under control also.

The Principal Member of the Veterans' Review Board is looking at ways to improve the efficiency of the Veterans' Review Board. A number of measures have already been taken and the recent management review of the Board's activities has suggested a number of ways to further improve efficiency. I have set up an Implementation Task Force headed jointly by the Deputy President of the Repatriation Commission and the Principal Registrar of the Veterans' Review Board to assess and implement the recommendations of the management review.

I should also point out that of the 20,000 or so applications for review now before the Veterans' Review Board only 43% have in fact filed a certificate of readiness for hearing. Of those cases approximately half will be adjourned, withdrawn or postponed after the matter is listed. This occurs

appeal framework by the Veteran, the instances when a Veteran might lose a TPI pension would be limited to those where fraud or misrepresentation was involved.

Contrary to your assertion, I am not aware of any decision given by a court in which it has been said that there could be a review of a TPI pension some years after its grant. TPI pensioners have no cause for concern that their TPI pensions granted some years ago will be reviewed by the Commission unless there has been fraud or misrepresentation. Accordingly, I stand by my assurance that the Veterans' Entitlements Act will not affect existing TPI pensions.

Australian War Memorial

As to your concern whether the Government's decision regarding the dismissal of the Director of the Australian War Memorial was justified, you will now have seen my statement to the Parliament on the matter. I suggest you should draw that to your members' attention.

I repeat that there is no threat to the independence of the AWM. I have no legal power to control the AWM's affairs. The AWM Council continues to control the affairs of the AWM. The Government has never made, nor will it make, any attempt to control the policies of the AWM.

VEA Monitoring Committee

As regards the establishment of a committee to report on the first 12 months of the Veterans' Entitlement Act's operation, I expect this committee to be established in the near future. I suggest any assessment of the impact of the VEA should await its report.

Finally, let me again assure your members of the Government's commitment to the Veteran community. There has been a 40% increase in expenditure on the Veterans Portfolio during this Government's period in office. Major improvements have been made to the Repatriation Determining System. The Veterans' Entitlement Act is now in place. New Home Care and Joint Venture programs have been developed. Plans to upgrade the Repatriation Hospital System are in hand. This Government is strongly committed to meeting the needs of the Veteran community and stands on its record.

Yours sincerely,



(A.T. GIETZELT)

Rear Admiral G.R. Griffiths,
A.O., D.S.O., D.S.C.,
P.O. Box Q314,
Queen Victoria Building,
Sydney. 2000

THE AUSTRALIAN VETERANS and DEFENCE SERVICES COUNCIL

"AVADSC"

Member Associations

Royal Australian Air Force Association
Australian Legion of Ex-Servicemen and Women
Ex-Prisoners of War Association of Australia
Federated T.B. Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen's Association of Australia
Partially Blinded Soldiers' Association
Royal Australian Armoured Corps Association
Regular Defence Forces Welfare Association
Rats of Tobruk Association
Citizen Military Forces Association
Netherlands Ex-Servicemen & Women's Association of Australia
Naval Association of Australia
WRAAC Association (Australia)
Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia
Council of the 2nd A.I.F.
Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps Association
Australian Nuclear Veterans Association
Thirtyniners Association of Australia

Patron: HIS EXCELLENCY THE RT. HON. SIR NINIAN STEPHEN,
A.K., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., K.B.E.

P.O.Box Q 314, Queen Victoria Bldg.,
York Street, Sydney, 2000.

May 22nd 1987.

MONITORING COMMITTEE--SUGGESTED PROCEDURES. SOME INDICATED AREAS FOR INQUIRY.

I feel strongly that the Committee should not rely on its members' personal experience and information but should:

a) Invite all National ex-service organisations to give viva voce evidence to the Committee, supported by a written submission;

b) by Press advertisement invite members of the public to send in written submissions and, where desirable, invite the writers thereof to appear personally.

c) Seek from the Department the supply of some carefully selected statistics (we do not want to be swamped with an indigestible mass of irrelevant figures).

2. My own knowledge of the feelings of my Associations indicates the following areas of discontent with the operation of the Acts

a) Application of the reasonable hypothesis

b) Effect on many totally disabled veterans and their (potential) widows;

c) Effect on assessments generally of the use of 100% for the totally disabled (in many cases)

d) Effect of G.A.R.P. and the Lifestyle Questionnaire

e) Varying results between States

f) Possible use of Sect.31 by the Commission

g) There will certainly be other matters submitted.

P.C.Alexander.

National Patron:



VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA QUEENSLAND BRANCH INC.

Mr. J.H. Greenwood O.B.E.

c/o P.O.Box 238 BEENLEIGH, 4207 Ph:075-466 367

The National President,
V.V.A.A.
c/o -P.O.Box 319
GYMEA NSW 2230

Dear Don,

I have received your correspondence of 11th May, 26th May, and notice of special general meeting, Whyburn's and Col Evans' correspondence too; consequently I am now convinced that the association is possessed with the desire to self-destruct. Therefore, I have restricted the distribution of same to the State Executive.

It is very obvious that some members believe that they are above the association or that they are the association; therefore, must belly-ache if, they don't get their own way. If this is a correct assesment of the situation, our arch antagonists will have the pleasure of seeing the demise of the association.

At the May, congress you were democratically elected National-President, I personally voted in favour of Col Evans. On my return to Brisbane I reported to the State Council that you had been elected and would receive my full support. If, I must attend the meeting in Melbourne, you will receive full support from Qld. The 'National Constitution' does not state how the election of the National Executive will be elected: Rule 19 (when & for what period) Rule 18e (would cover the vice president if, this has not been formally adopted at a previous meeting) Rule 15h (refers to a resolution not an election)

Therefore, in the absence of directions in the constitution, if it is clear that no injustice is being done to anyone, all persons entitled to vote may determine the method to be adopted. (JOSKE)

As you stated in your letter of 26th May, a (SGM) is going to involve additional costs which the association can ill afford, personally I can not see The State Council agreeing to attend the meeting as we have insufficient funds.

A copy of this letter will be distributed to all parties concerned and I sincerely trust that you receive the support you morally deserve.

John C Thompson

John C Thompson
(State President)

14th May, 1987



National Patron:
Mr J.H. Greenwood OBE

VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOC. OF AUSTRALIA

WESTERN AUSTRALIA BRANCH (09)4475585

I Acacia Way Duncraig WA 6023

Reg. Charity No. 454

Mr Don Wilson
VVAA National Office
Room 13 Randwick Community Centre
Bundock Street
RANDWICK NSW 2031

16th June 1987

Dear Don,

1. I acknowledge receipt of your "NOTICE OF SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING" and attached correspondence dated 9 June 1987.
2. I feel it's necessary to express my disappointment of what appears to be an arbitrarily appointed date and time and place, without adequate consultation with States. I do know that Kevin Gill and I were not consulted as to the suitability of date, time, place.
3. The weekend you have chosen creates a clash of commitments for me, for example:
 - a. my Silver (25th) Wedding Anniversary arrangements;
 - b. VVAA(WA) General Meeting 28th June 87;
 - c. employment commitments(I work three weekends out of four); and
 - d. the balance of financial capacity.
4. Because it was not anticipated that a Special Meeting would have been convened at such short notice, this branch had placed the possibility of this meeting and it's associated expenditure on the agenda for b. above, along with other subjects, vital to this State branches future functions.
5. Therefore with those considerations in mind and in the event that I myself am not able to attend the Special General Meeting on 28th June 1987, this branch hereby appoints Mr Tim McCombe to represent and vote on behalf of this branch, in accordance with the Constitution. Tim is a current financial Ordinary member of this State Branch.

6. In view of the proceedings of the 8th National Congress 2/3 May 1987 which have led to the current situation, may I stress that:

a. any election of office bearers be in accordance with the Constitution, that is first past the post, by show of hands.

(to eliminate the current feeling of distrust generated by the exhaustive and secret ballot system-political type voting strategies are not appropriate here);

b. delegates don't again fall for the trap of voting for an individual. When considering their votes they also consider the "team". It is pointless electing an individual if no one will work for/with that individual. The best solution is to elect a compatible "team" which, even if not co-located, can and are, willing to work together for the genuine benefit of the Vietnam veteran community, rather than for personal gain, power or kudos;

c. delegates assess the credibility rating of potential office bearers, in relation to their rating with the current Ministers office. It is extremely important that our National Executive has the acceptance and confidence of that office, if we are to achieve maximum benefits.

(as the longest continuous serving member of the National Council I don't believe that is the case at the moment).

Yours sincerely,



Colin Evans

President

P.S. With reference to John Thompsons(QLD) letter which I received today I draw your attention to I5(j) which does state the method of voting (and makes no reference to a "resolution" as does I5(h).

The spirit of the constitution encourages open honesty and for obvious reasons this has been the traditional method of voting by the VVAA- something which newcomers may not be aware of.

I have remained consistent with my stated views on this issue from the outset.





VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

NATIONAL OFFICE

National Patron:
Mr. J.H.Greenwood OBE

TO: ALL STATE PRESIDENTS.
NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS.

26 MAY 1987

FROM: NATIONAL OFFICE, DON WILSON.

A) R.L.Whyburn letter.

I have had calls from and made calls to states since the receipt of this letter. Victorian and Tasmanian branches had not received a copy so I include a copy for them.

I rather feel that not all the information has been given to Bob Whyburn. We are all aware that we were under pressure to vacate Legacy House on Sunday 3 May but my understanding is as follows;

Vice President.

There were several motions put forward to expand the size of the National Office. Finally it was agreed that the position of National Vice President be formally included as an executive decision rather than an appointed decision.

Hence Kevin Gill was appointed by a majority decision.

Secretary and Treasurer.

All nominees for these positions withdrew their nominations prior to voting and no further parties wished to nominate or accept nomination. Accordingly it was felt that Tim McCombe was the best man for these positions and it was left to the National President to liase with Tim in the hope that he would reconsider his decision and agree to return to the positions of secretary and treasurer. I was given one month to resolve this decision.

National solicitor and auditor.

These appointments were left pending the resolution of the secretary and treasurer positions.

It is my belief that all decisions made and actions taken were agreed to by all states delegates and presidents, the members of the National Council. To call for a resumption of the National Congress or a Special General Meeting will involve additional costs which the Association can ill afford and may not lead to any great changes.

This office of President exists to action the decisions of the states, not to make decisions without consultation with the states.

THEREFORE THE DECISION TO RECONVENE THE NATIONAL CONGRESS LIES WITH THE STATES AND I ASK ALL OF YOU THAT YOU DISCUSS THIS MATTER WITH YOUR STATE EXECUTIVES AND ADVISE YOUR REQUIREMENTS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BUT NO LATER THAN 7TH JUNE.

AGAIN ALL STATES MUST BE BOUND BY THE MAJORITY DECISION AS IS OUR PRACTICE.



THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES,
MACLEAY BUILDING A12,
N.S.W. 2006.

Telephone: 692 2222 02 692 2832.
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DX1154

The National President,
Mr. Dominic Wilson,
Australian Vietnam Veterans Association,
Post Office Box 369,
PARRAMATTA. NEW SOUTH WALES. 2150.

Dear Mr. Wilson,

On behalf of the Australian Press Corps, Vietnam I wish to thank you for your most valuable time on the 22nd instant.

Attached is the proposed petition relating to Service in the Vietnam Conflict, by Official Correspondents. As discussed on the 22nd instant, we seek your support in this matter. Once completed and duly signed the petition will be presented direct to the Prime Minister of the Day and his Ministers for Veteran Affairs and Defence, The Honourable Leader of the Opposition and The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, should this need to be the case. Copies of the petition, with attached documents of support, will also be distributed to a wide range of Organisations representing Veterans.

As well as being a signatory to the Petition, we ask, if you see fit, for a letter of support to be attached to the Report that will accompany the Petition to the Prime Minister.

Yours, most sincerely,

Denis S. Gibbons, B.A., M.Sc.,
22nd June, 1987.

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER AND MEMBERS OF THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED:

The humble petition of certain citizens of Australia, electors of various Divisions of Australia respectively showeth--

That Members of the Australian Press Corps, from recognised Media Organisations based in Australia, and therefore being duly accredited by the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV), as Official Correspondents, with the Honorary Rank of Major, and as such, being recognised, provisioned, housed, and assisted in all matters by the Australian Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, to carry out their duties, their Status therefore, because of the aforesaid acts, was recognised by the Parliament/s Assembled during the time period of the Australian Military and Civil involvement in The Vietnam Conflict 1962 to 1973.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that the aforesaid duly accredited Official Australian Correspondents be awarded the Australian Awards and Decorations as forthwith described;

1: (a) For Service between the Twenty - fourth Day of December, in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Sixty Two, and the Twenty -fifth Day of May, in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Sixty Four, The General Service Medal with Clasp - South Vietnam.

(b) For Service between the Twenty -ninth Day of May, in the year of our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and Sixty Four, and the Twenty-seventh Day of January, in the year of our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventy Three, The Vietnam Medal.

(c) For Service between the Thirty-first Day of July, in the year of our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and Sixty Two, and the Twenty -seventh Day of January, in the year of our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and Seventy Three, The Vietnamese Medal.

(d) The Award of The Return From Active Service Badge, and where applicable The Combat Infantry Badge.

(e) The recipient for any of the above Awards and Decorations, shall have satisfied all the requirements of Australian Military Serving Personnel, as well as the afore-said Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, (MACV).

(f) That the appropriate Awards and Decorations be Posthumously Awarded to the Next-of-Kin of Mess'rs Michael Birch, John Cantwell, Ronald Laramy and Bruce Pigott, killed in action on the Fifth Day of March, in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Sixty Eight, at Cholon, Republic of Vietnam.

2: Let it be known that the afore-said Members of the Australian Press Corps, Vietnam, make no claim for any other benefit, assistance or favour which is entitled to Members of the Australian Military, covered under the various Acts, Rules and Regulations of the Department of Veteran Affairs.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Denis S. Gibbons, B.A., M.Sc.

On behalf of the Australian Press Corps, Vietnam.

Dominic Wilson.

National President, Vietnam Veterans Association.

Sir William Keys, OBE., MC.

National President, Returned Services League of Australia.

Rear Admiral Guy R. Griffiths,

Chairman, Australian Veterans and Defence Services Council.



MINISTER FOR VETERANS' AFFAIRS
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA A.C.T. 2600

23 JUN 1987

Dear Mr Wilson,

Thank you for your letter of 19 May 1987 which brought to my attention three resolutions passed at the 8th National Congress of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia.

The first of your resolutions concerned Defence Force Retirement Benefits. This is a matter outside my portfolio responsibilities and I have forwarded a copy of your letter to the Minister for Defence.

Your second resolution concerned Financial Institutions Duty. As I understand it, all State Governments except Queensland have introduced a charge referred to as Financial Institutions Duty. In Tasmania, the duty applies to withdrawals from accounts while in the other States, it applies to deposits. The charge itself is levied against the financial institutions but they then pass that charge on to their customers.

As a result of my representations, the State Governments of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia introduced amendments to their legislation which, from 18 April 1985, provided an exemption from the duty for Repatriation pensions which were direct deposited into a pensioner's account. The exemption does not apply to those pensioners who are paid by cheque and subsequently deposit that cheque into an account with a financial institution. In the case of Tasmanian residents, the exemption from the duty imposed in that State applies only to holders of a Pensioner Health Benefits card or its equivalent.

If any of your members believe they are being incorrectly charged duty on their pension payments, they should discuss the matter with the manager of their bank, building society or credit union.

Your third resolution was about the recovery of treatment costs for privately insured patients. The new arrangements enabling beneficiaries to use their health insurance when treated at either a Repatriation General Hospital or a public or private hospital were brought into place to assist the Department in ensuring resources are used in the most effective way possible.

There is absolutely no risk to health insurance entitlement of either the individual veteran or his family. The arrangement operates only in respect of the basic table. Basic table benefits are available 365 days a year and cannot be reduced by being drawn upon in the way higher table benefits are.

The decision to use private health insurance in lieu of Repatriation entitlement is entirely voluntary. I would ask, however, that in making the decision, your members consider the potential benefits. By reducing hospital costs, my Department is better able to use its resources to enhance existing programs and develop initiatives which will improve services.

Yours sincerely,



(A.T. GIETZELT)

Mr D. Wilson,
National President,
Vietnam Veterans Association
of Australia,
P.O. Box 369,
PARRAMATTA. N.S.W. 2150



MINISTER FOR VETERANS' AFFAIRS
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA A.C.T. 2600

23 JUN 1987

Dear Mr McCombe,

Thank you for your letter of 29 April 1987, regarding the staffing levels of the Vietnam Veterans Counselling Service (VVCS).

I am advised that there have been some difficulties within my Department in identifying the exact complement of VVCS staff in program terms, because of new Departmental budgeting arrangements.

For this reason, a review of VVCS workloads and resource requirements has been initiated to define the VVCS resources and workload requirements. This review is expected to be made available by the next National Advisory Committee meeting on 7 July 1987.

However, I again assure you that the Government has no intention of reducing the present staffing levels in the VVCS.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'A. T. Gietzelt'.

(A.T. GIETZELT)

Mr T. McCombe,
Secretary/Treasurer,
Vietnam Veterans Association
of Australia,
P.O. Box 369,
PARRAMATTA. N.S.W. 2150

Tim McCombe,
29 Girraween Rd.,
GIRRAWEEEN, 2145.

The State Presidents,
V.V.A.A.

Dear Presidents,

I wish to advise you that I am seeking nomination for the position of Federal President of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia, at the 28th June Special Congress.

The team I am proposing will work together for the betterment of this association and Vietnam Veterans generally.

I wish to outline the team I propose and the reasons why I should gain your support in the elections.

FEDERAL EXECUTIVE:

I have approached Kevin Gill, John Prince and Grant Collins to stand for the positions on the Executive. John Prince has not, as yet, given me a definite answer. The positions I propose are:-

KEVIN GILL: VICE PRESIDENT.

As the immediate Post President, Kevin is well known within the Association. His employment in the Human Rights Commission and his former membership of the Legislative Assembly have established him within the political circles of Canberra. Kevin is experienced and skilled in dealing with politicians, and the media. This experience, combined with contacts in Canberra will make Kevin an ideal member of the Federal Executive.

JOHN PRINCE: SECRETARY.

John, if he accepts the position, would serve the Association well. He is well known and respected in the Veteran Community in Victoria, especially through his representation as a delegate on the Vietnam Veterans' Council in Victoria.

John also has acquired expertise in repatriation matters through his role as an advocate to the VRB. As an advocate he was responsible for two excellently prepared cases which won favourable decisions for Vietnam Veterans, who were claiming that exposure to chemicals was the cause of their cancer. His success in these cases is remarkable in that he succeeded, despite the adverse findings of the Royal Commission.

The current political conflicts in Victoria, where the Bramston organisation claim to be the only representative for Vietnam Veterans, make it essential that there be a member of the Federal Executive based in Victoria.

GRANT COLLINS: TREASURER.

Grant is the immediate past President of the South Australian Branch. Grant's experience with this Association and his compassion towards Vietnam Veterans are well known.

Grant has agreed to take on the enormous task of placing this Association and Debriefing Mailing List on the computer.

His access to, and knowledge of computers will be an asset to the Federal Executive.

Grant has agreed to carry out the duties of Treasurer.

MY CONTRIBUTION TO THE ASSOCIATION:

My background within the Association is:-

I have been with the Federal Executive since late 1981. My contributions have been:

- 1) Organising the marginal seat meetings which extracted a promise from the now Prime Minister, a Royal Commission would investigate the problems of Vietnam Veterans.
- 2) Involved in the research on the 30,000 Army files files pertaining to Vietnam, which are held at the War Memorial in Canberra. Many of the documents extracted from these files were presented as evidence to the Royal Commission.
- 3) Mainly responsible for raising of over \$30,000 for the Royal Commission Trust Fund. This was achieved through a concert at the Entertainment Centre in Sydney, plus the sending of letters to Trade Unions, R.S.L. Sub-Branchees and to Companies.
- 4) Involved with the late Phill Thompson in negotiations with the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, which resulted in changes to the Repatriation Act that made the National Advisory Committee for the Counselling Service independant from the Department of Veterans' Affairs, and moved that responsibility to the Minister himself.
- 5) Travelled to the United States during the Royal Commission. Liaised with, and made arrangements for scientific witnesses to travel and appear before the Royal Commission.
- 6) Attended most of the hearings of the Royal Commission.
- 7) Researched the Agent Orange issue continuously since 1981, acquiring a very good knowledge of the issue.
- 8) Researched the comprehensive critique of the Royal Commission Report which was submitted to the Government on the 8th April, 1984 for their appraisal.
- 9) Researched and compiled the second critique of the Royal Commission Report which was submitted to the Government on the 20th March, 1987.
- 10) Held negotiations with the Government in regard to the appointment of Bob Hogg as a special consultant to the Minister of Veterans' Affairs with regard to the Agent Orange Royal

Commission.

- 11) Have been the Associations' Representative to the Australian Veterans and Defence Services Council for four years, attending meetings on the first Monday of every month.
- 12) Have accepted the position of Assistant Secretary to the Australian Veterans and Defence Services Council.
- 13) At the request of the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, I accepted an appointment to the V.V.C.S. National Advisory Committee.
- 14) Over the years there has been a network of lawyers, which are willing to give legal advise to me on a voluntary basis; Bob Wyburn (solicitor), Alan Hill (Barrister), Adrian McInnes (Queens Council), Chris Enwright (Senior Lecturer of Admin Law, Macquarie Uni), Steve Crawshaw (Barrister), Max Kimber (Barrister)
- 15) Also, over the years, there has been a network set up with scientists, here and overseas who are willing to advise me; Dr. John Pollock (Aust), Dr. George Humphries (Aust.), John Evans (Aust), Dr. Alister Hay (Eng.), Dr Elen Silbergeld (U.S.A), Dr. Deborah Barrsotti (U.S. A.), Dr. Ruth Shearer (U.S.A.), Dr. Sneiderman (U.S.A.), Prof. Alan Ascleson (Sweden), prof. Tennant Hardell (Sweden).
I have met the above scientists and have been communicating with them on a first name basis before and after the findings of the Royal Commission.
- 16) Manned the various offices at the Association on a voluntary basis.

DEBRIEF:

If elected as President, and with the approval of the State President, priority will be given to the resurrection of the Association's magazine on a monthly or bi-monthly basis, making sure that strict conditions will be placed on the publisher in regard to advertising in the Journal.

Grame Walker, Jock McCulloch (author of Politics of Agent Orange; Asbestos, It's Human Costs), Greg Lockhart (Ex Capt., Vietnam Veteran, Unit of Pacific Studies AMU Uni.) are

willing to contribute articles to the Journal.

FINANCE:

John Schumann (Ex. Red Gum) has agreed to help with organising a concert similiar to the one held at the Entertainment Centre. John advises me that it is a matter of timing if the Association is to recieve maximum benifit from the concert.

The previous Publisher of Debrief was paying the Association \$500 an issue for the editorial from this association. If the Journal is published monthly the income would amount to \$6,000 per year.

MANNING OF THE OFFICE:

If elected President, I would be able to man the office at Randwick between twenty and thirty hours a week. Of course this would be subject to other committments I would have for the Association.

For your consideration,

Tim McCombe

TIM McCOMBE.