

America in Protest: Records of Anti-Vietnam War Organizations – Vietnam Veterans Against the War

From six soldiers in 1967, the ranks of Vietnam Veterans Against the War grew 30,000 strong

Date Range: 1967-1975

Content: 20,117 pages

Source Library: Federal Bureau of Investigation Library

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Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) launched in 1967 with six veterans marching for peace in New York City. Their mission: give voice to the returning service members who opposed the ongoing war in Southeast Asia. During this time, the Federal Bureau of Investigation maintained surveillance of the VVAW through 1975, when the United States ended its presence in Vietnam.

More than four decades later VVAW – 30,000 strong – still exists, making this *Archives Unbound* collection highly relevant for scholars interested in today's antiwar movement and its history during the Vietnam War era.

America in Protest: Records of Anti-Vietnam War Organizations – Vietnam Veterans Against the War offers FBI reports dealing with every aspect of antiwar work carried out by the VVAW. Researchers will also find reports on surveillance of other antiwar groups and individuals, with an emphasis on campus groups like Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and Communist organizations.

The collection's wide range of activist-written position papers supports research in political science, American history and radical studies. In many instances these papers were open letters to the broad antiwar movement, incorporating topics such as sexism and racism in the movement, the struggle for amnesty, and the debate on pacifism as a strategic tactic. The anti-imperialism controversy, an ever-present debate in the movement, pervades numerous position papers.

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America in Protest: Records of Anti-Vietnam War Organizations – Vietnam Veterans Against the War

This collection opens with numerous reports, newsletters and position papers, as well as an FBI overview on the leading antiwar organizations during the Vietnam War era. In-depth reports include surveillance of national and steering committee meetings where decisions and elections took place.

America in Protest also includes legal cases revolving around constitutional rights, wiretapping and civil rights. Plaintiffs included students, veterans and activists who sued on the grounds that their civil liberties were infringed upon.

Specific documents of historical importance include:

- Winter Soldier Investigations of alleged atrocities in Vietnam by American soldiers
- Activities of John Kerry as congressman and VVAW national steering committee member
- Implementation of Dewey Canyon III Protest and Reactions
- Statue of Liberty Occupation and local police response
- FBI accusations of a conspiracy to riot during the 1972 Republican National Convention
- The arrest of a Connecticut VVAW member with an explosive device en route to a speech given by Vice President Spiro Agnew
- Informant reports on protests in California, Florida, New York and other states

Possible research topics include:

- Students for a Democratic Society-VVAW factionalism/infighting
- Campus activities by various VVAW chapters
- Communist influence in the antiwar movement and the Fourth International
- Gainesville 8 trial
- Support for the Impeachment of President Nixon
- Activities during the National Republican Convention, 1972
- Role of Jane Fonda in the Antiwar movement and pro-war backlash

LA 100-68654
PAGE NINE
BEGIN AT LAFAYETTE PARK, MARCHERS USING SIDEWALKS TO PROCEED DOWN WILSHIRE BOULEVARD TO FIGUEROA STREET AND NORTH ON FIGUEROA STREET TO LOS ANGELES CITY HALL FOR RALLY. PLANS ONLY TENTATIVE TO DATE. 4
62
67D
[REDACTED] ADVISED ON OCTOBER SEVEN LAST
LAONC SPONSORED REGIONAL ANTI-WAR CONFERENCE HELD OCTOBER TWO LAST ATTENDED BY APPROXIMATELY ONE HUNDRED TWENTY PERSONS, AMONG WHOM WERE ABOUT TWENTY MEMBERS SWP AND YOUNG SOCIALIST ALLIANCE (YSA) IN LOS ANGELES. ACTIONS TO BE HELD LOS ANGELES AREA OCTOBER THIRTEEN NEXT, MORATORIUM DAY, OCTOBER TWENTY FIVE, DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH VIETNAM VETERANS AND GIS AGAINST THE WAR, NOVEMBER THREE, STUDENT STRIKE ON HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE CAMPUSES, AND NOVEMBER SIX, DAY OF MASSIVE REGIONAL ANTIWAR DEMONSTRATIONS, [REDACTED] ADVISED LAONC TO [REDACTED]

Memorandum
TO : DIRECTOR, FBI DATE: 9/20/67
FROM : SAC, NEW YORK (100-160644)
SUBJECT: VIETNAM VETERANS AGAINST THE WAR IS - C (OO: New York)
ReBulet to Albany dated 1/30/67 entitled, "INVESTIGATION OF NEW LEFT GROUPS; IS-C".
"The Worker" dated 9/10/67, page five contained an article entitled, "Vets of Vietnam War Form End-The-War Organization". The article identified this organization as "Vietnam Veterans Against The War" organized in New York last June. Its Secretary - Treasurer is FRANCIS R. BROCKS, who "spent 13 months in Vietnam as a communications sergeant with the 39th Signal Battalion". The organization is non-membership and is located at 17 East 17th Street, New York City. 5

After looking at the documents, the veterans issued a statement which said: "We have been successful beyond our wildest expectations in some respects, but we are appalled to see our message was too late to save 300 men at a North Vietnamese hospital."
Earlier yesterday the veterans had agreed to leave the monument if the government allowed them to broadcast their position over the American Forces Network and to print it in Stars and Stripes, the armed forces newspaper.
In Philadelphia, 23 antiwar veterans and two well-known sympathizers invaded the Retsy Ross house, once occupied by the woman who made the first official American flag, and held it for 45 minutes. Tourists were herded from the tiny, three-story building. Then the protesters locked the doors and climbed to the top.
other National Park Service personnel left the statue. The vets came out of hiding and began barricading the three entrances in the base of the statue with heavy boards taken from the museum construction site.
The doors, which swing outward, had already been locked from the outside by the departing guards. To keep guards from opening the doors and storming the barricades, the veterans put wooden bars and metal tubing through the inner door handles.