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Vietnam Veterans Memorial Institute
PO Box 25005
Wilmington, DE 19899
(302) 571-2108

A Living Memorial to the Service and Sacrifice of Vietnam Veterans

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August 21, 1987

Ronald Reagan, President
The United States of America
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

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Dr. Eugene Watts

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Institute (VVM I) is an organization that proposes to build an educational research facility dedicated to the preservation of the history of Vietnam (See Attachment 1). The funding of the Institute will be solely through private and corporate contributions, and the long-range financing of the Institute will be by a Military Museum Complex that will present the major efforts of the United States in our fight for democracy.

On October 12, 1987, the VVM I will hold its second annual Advisory Board Conference. There will be several key activities presented that day (See Attachment 2). A fund-raising dinner is the final event of the day. At that dinner, we will present our project to the press. The identifying logo of the VVM I will be a "THUMBS UP AMERICA" campaign represented by posters and t-shirts (see Attachment 3). At the dinner, we will present General William C. Westmoreland an award for his lifetime achievement in preserving and communicating the history of the Vietnam Era. To us he is the epitome of the Vietnam veteran and he has supported the VVM I concept from the beginning.

With your approval, Mr. President, we would like to call the award the "Ronald Reagan Service Award" because it represents your commitment to service to the country. It is our hope that you will accept our invitation to attend our dinner on October 12th, to present that award to General Westmoreland, and to receive the first "THUMBS UP AMERICA" t-shirt. We are aware that chances of your schedule being open are slim. If you are unable to attend the dinner, could we hope that you would designate a representative to act in your place?

The VVM I Board of Directors believes as you do, sir, that the progress, growth, and services this nation needs must come from the commitment and involvement of its citizens. We also believe that to keep America strong, each citizen must try to reach beyond his/her personal boundaries. The VVM I incorporates these principles into its

August 21, 1987

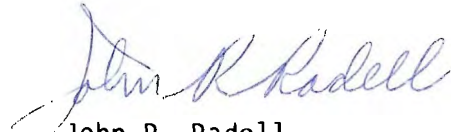
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projects. The Vietnam veterans who compose the VVMI want to make a contribution to today's society. We were truly blessed to have been given the opportunity to serve our nation in time of crisis. We are still proud to serve in whatever capacity we are needed. We would like to share the leadership skills our service provided. What better contribution than an accurate accounting of a portion of this nation's history?

We hope you find these efforts worthy of your support on October 12th. I am at your service to answer questions. You may reach me at the above address or on the following numbers: (302) 774-6511 (7:30 AM - 5:00 PM); (302) 764-8633 (evenings).

Thank you for your outstanding leadership and commitment to democracy.

Very truly yours,



John R. Radell
Chairman, VVMI
Board of Directors

JRR:pr
Attach. (3)

cc: Matthew Zachary
Room 196 OE0B

(Attachment 1)

VVMI

- MILITARY HISTORY MUSEUM COMPLEX
 - INSTITUTE FOR HISTORICAL RESEARCH
- ON THE VIETNAM ERA

VVMI
PO BOX 25005
WILMINGTON, DE 19899

The VVMI project is dedicated to those men and women who served in the Armed Forces of the United States and have given of themselves for the protection of human rights and freedom.

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I

VVMI CONCEPT

Background

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Institute (VVMI) is a historical research organization that seeks to develop a mechanism through which the entire Vietnam experience could be reviewed, studied, analyzed, and perhaps, ultimately understood. By Vietnam experience it is not intended that the review be limited solely to a combatant's view. Rather, the focus of the concept is to analyze the whole process of the conflict and the impact that it had on virtually every person living in the U.S. during that period of our country's history. Thus, the idea for an institute, dedicated to the study of the complexities of the Vietnam conflict, was created.

To more fully understand and appreciate the spirit of service to country shared by all America's veterans, the concept of a military history museum complex, depicting the various wars that involved the United States, was developed.

To test the validity of these proposed entities, various veterans' organizations were polled. Among them were the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Non Commissioned Officers. They uniformly gave a resounding endorsement to the concepts. Encouraged by the response, a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation, known as the VVMI, was brought into being.

Principles of Operation

The research facility aspires to hold the world's single largest collection of paraphernalia related to the Vietnam Era. While the end purpose of the Institute is to formulate an accurate unbiased history of the era, it will solicit and sponsor individual study and analysis.

It is our hope that the research might also lead to the expansion of the Institute to champion the energies and talents of the veteran community, and to convert those commodities into continued service to their communities and

the nation. This will not be a static monument, but rather it will be a living, growing, contributing memorial to the spirit of all veterans, fostering the development of one of this nation's most valuable resources - the veteran.

While we solicit donations, the program is designed to provide a product that will return something back to the community. The institute/museum concept will provide a place for veterans to bring their families to view their contribution to the nation and for non-veterans to witness and study the experiences of combat.

Incorporation Information

The VVMI was incorporated in Delaware on June 21, 1984, as a non-profit historical research organization.

II

VVMI PROJECTS

Institute for Historical Research on the Vietnam Era

The goal of the Institute is to develop and preserve an apolitical, broad, and thorough record of the history of the Vietnam Era. The Institute will serve as a clearing house on all facets of the war. The results of the accumulated research will be broadcast through as many avenues as possible. For example: published texts, seminars, films and journals, as well as teaching materials for educators from elementary school to college level courses.

The materials will include a historical accounting of the influences on our government and citizenry during the Vietnam War. Where appropriate, comparisons to World War II and the Korean War will be drawn. Of necessity, cultural structures of American lives and sociological evolutions which occurred during the 1960's and 1970's will need to be analyzed in order to define what caused the diverse faces of support and protest to develop.

The preservation of historical facts, unbiased by predetermined cause and effect analysis, will hopefully lead us to an objective view about the Vietnam War. It is our contention that the preservation of the historical facts of that era is pertinent to the continued dedication of the standards to which this nation was founded, among them being honesty, freedom, and sacrifice for ideals greater than any single individual. To preserve and record the separate facts that accumulate to make the whole history will require a dispassionate analysis from all factions and groups involved in what the VVMI perceives to be the most volatile and controversial period of this country's history. We are developing an Advisory Board that will represent a broad range of professions and interests (education, military, political, etc.) in order to broaden the spectrum of input, observation, and mediation in the recording process.

It is the contention of the VVMI that, to date, the attempts at presenting the history of this country's involvement in Vietnam have been a

mixture of facts, points of view, and emotional commentary. For example, the motion picture and television industry initially created a distinct portrayal of Vietnam veterans as villains and assassins; unstable and searching for who they are and where they fit. More recently, the industry has endeavored to "glorify" the Vietnam veteran, but this portrayal continues to convey an aura of suspicion about such individuals. To permit the distortion of such an honorable commitment to one's country, and the creation of history through the imagination of a writer's pen, places this nation in the dangerous position of losing not only its heritage, but a sense of service to our nation.

With the obvious conflict that surrounds Vietnam, and the emotions involved in the defense of all groups' actions during that period, the question remains: can an unbiased and accurate history be written and broadcast? The Board of Directors and members of the VVMI believe that for a large portion of that history the answer is yes.

Our tentative proposal for accomplishing that task is as follows:

- 1) Identify and involve all groups and agencies with a vested interest in that period. Create group "task teams" to participate in the research and reporting effort.
- 2) Create a mediation group that was, and is, removed as far as possible from the conflict as can be reasonably expected.
- 3) Once the task team for each group has been developed, each group will write the historical facts of their group's involvement in the Vietnam Era.
- 4) Each group's "history" will be reviewed and constructively critiqued by the other task teams, who will make observations and comments wherever they think the history is correct and/or incorrect.

- 5) Develop a forum for the groups, with the mediation group as the forum leader; identify and separate undisputed facts, questionable facts, and points of view.
- 6) Write and record the facts and present those facts separately from the perceptions and points of view. In separating the truth from perception, a dispassionate analysis may occur, while allowing for the publication of the other influences, feelings, and their expansion. In essence, it communicates the truth in conjunction with the human workings and the effect of those facts on the people. Both have a place and are needed to understand and preserve our history.
- 7) Create a museum to display the artifacts and environs of that era. This gives those who write and study the Vietnam Era history the opportunity to touch, see, and experience the separate influences of that era.
- 8) Within the museum/institute complex, include a theater to permit artistic display of the era through art, plays, and films based on the history developed at the Institute. (This can be expanded at a later date to include outside influences. Our primary goal is to return the facts and remove the myths about Vietnam.)
- 9) Create an archive for the collection of papers, documents, and films pertaining to the Vietnam Era. Included in this portion of the complex will be a library for the public use and for research purposes by the Fellows of the Institute.
- 10) Create an environment for individual research and study.

There are issues that must remain clear in our minds as this effort is undertaken in order to avoid repeating mistakes and permitting emotions to rule the facts. The issues are:

- 1) Vietnam has been largely portrayed (to date) to fit the views of the portrayer.
- 2) When battle lines for opposing viewpoints were drawn, and defense of position rather than the recording of history became the primary issue, objectivity was lost.
- 3) The "truth" about Vietnam exists and is capable of recordation. To date, perceptions have obscured the "truth" and thereby have affected the history.
- 4) The service of the American soldier has fallen into second place relative to what each faction in Vietnam was attempting to accomplish.
- 5) The service of our allied forces has not been documented and reviewed.
- 6) The South Vietnamese have been treated as a minor part of the equation. Their heritage, contribution and plight have been unimportant to who and what North Vietnam and the United States were and wanted.

Placing blame is not the intent of this Institute. Documentation of historical facts is the purpose. Other goals of the Institute are to study the effects that losing South Vietnam to the Communist movement has had on the American public's perception of itself and its government, and how that perception has affected the lives and attitudes of our children in the process.

Military History Museum Complex

The intent of the Military History Museum complex is to portray a visual history through exhibits of the artifacts and paraphernalia of the period represented by that museum. It is not the intent to write a history of that period. The Institute, once it completes Vietnam, may select other periods of history to examine.

It is envisioned that each war will be housed in a separate building. This approach permits the recreation of that era, so that one can flavor the environment of that period of time.

Museums will present static exhibits of weapons and artifacts, but will also provide films of actual combat situations, personal video accountings and simulations that permit visitors to accompany troops on a helicopter assault, jet fighter run, etc.

Each museum will be a living museum in that displays will be constructed to allow visitors to visit within the environs and touch the exhibits.

The complex will be connected building to building to permit traveling the complex without exposure to the elements. Also, a large parade ground will permit outside exhibits of planes, heavy equipment and villages or towns from each war.

This military history complex will have a park for informal outside dining as well as period restaurants in each building.

III
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION
COST AND REVENUE PROJECTIONS

Project Implementation and Cost

The Vietnam Historical Research Institute and Military History Museum complex is designed to be implemented in five stages. Stages two through five will begin only as revenue and resources become available and only after substantial monies to build Phase I have been raised. The Vietnam Museum and Research Institute is Phase I. Total five year implementation cost for Phase I is \$23 million for building, construction cost and \$8.3 million for salaries, furniture, equipment and additional design costs (see Exhibit A).

Phase I commits to additional staff as the project grows. The five-year implementation and construction forecast is subject to change according to the securing of financial resources. The projected means of raising the needed revenue for Phase I is outlined in Exhibit B.

COST FOR PHASES I THROUGH V

<u>Phase</u>	<u>Estimated¹ Construction Cost</u>	<u>Estimated^{1*} Additional Cost</u>	<u>Estimated Start Date</u>	<u>Basic Building Design Concept</u>
I - Vietnam Museum and Institute	\$23,000M	\$8,500M	Spring 1990	<u>Institute</u> Five-story structure that will house library, archives, computer archives, print shop, research rooms and conference center. <u>Museum</u> Four-story structure with air, land, and sea war rooms. Vietnamese villages, theater, art rooms, rotating exhibit room, and simulator room.
II - Korean War and World War II Museums	\$15,000M	\$7,000M	Fall 1992	<u>*Korea museum</u> - 2-story structure <u>*World War II</u> - 3-story structure
III - World War I and Spanish American War Museums	\$15,000M	\$5,000M	TBD	<u>*World War I</u> - 3-story structure <u>*Spanish Amer. War</u> - 2-story structure
IV - Civil War and Revolutionary War	\$20,000M	\$8,000M	TBD	<u>*Civil War</u> - 3-story structure <u>*Revolutionary War</u> - 2-story structure
V - Special Exhibits Building	<u>\$8,000M</u>	<u>\$2,000M</u>	TBD	2-story structure
TOTALS	\$81,000M	\$30,500M		

*All museums will contain the same room make up and theme concept as the Vietnam Museum.

M = thousands

¹Based on 1988 dollars

Revenue Projections (upon completion of all stages)

<u>Phase</u>	<u>Admission Fees</u>	<u>Memberships</u>	<u>Programs</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
I VIETNAM	\$10,000M	\$12,000M	\$1,000M	\$23,000M
II KOREA/WW II	20,000M	12,500M	1,000M	33,500M
III WWI/SPANISH AMERICAN	1,500M	500M	100M	2,100M
IV CIVIL/REVOLUTIONARY	10,000M	2,000M	1,000M	13,000M
V SPECIAL EXHIBITS	<u>2,000M</u>	<u>500M</u>	<u>500M</u>	<u>3,001M</u>
TOTALS	\$43,500M (1)	\$27,500M (2)	\$3,600M	\$74,600M

(SEE ATTACHMENT 1) Estimated Operations Cost	\$58,000M
Net after cost	\$26,600M*

*Net after cost revenue will be assigned for museum and exhibit upgrade, grants for studies, and cash reserves.

(1) Based on projections for tourists from discussions with the following organizations: Policy and Planning for U.S. Tourism, U.S. Travel Data Center, Smithsonian Institute, Colonial Williamsburg, military museums.

(2) \$25 membership at 1 million plus members (count is less than 5% of veteran and educator community)

M = thousand

IV
EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES AND SALARIES

Employees/Salaries

	<u>Employees</u>	<u>Salaries</u>
Phase I	108	1,700M
Phase II	120	2,300M
Phase III	80	1,000M
Phase IV	130	2,900M
Phase V	<u>65</u>	<u>910M</u>
TOTALS	503	\$8,810M

Employment Categories

<u>Category</u>	<u>Estimated # Employees</u>
Director	2
Deputy Directors	4
Finance Department	10
Administrative	30
Archivists	5
Curators	5
Security	10
Clerical	50
Caretakers	10
Historians	50
Support*	<u>327</u>
TOTAL	503

 *Tour guides, janitorial, theater personnel, supplies and museum set-up staff, Institute support staff, etc.

M = thousands

V
TOURIST AND REVENUE PROJECTIONS

	<u>Estimated Tourists</u>	<u>Estimated VVMi Revenue</u>	<u>Estimated Associated Tourist Revenue</u>
Phase I	3,500M	\$23,000M	\$100,000M
Phase II	5,000M	33,500M	200,000M
Phase III	700M	2,100M	500M
Phase IV	2,500M	13,000M	100,000M
Phase V	<u>500M</u>	<u>3,000M</u>	<u>300M</u>
TOTALS	11,200M	\$74,600M	\$400,800M

M = thousands

(Exhibit A)

PHASE I
IMPLEMENTATION EXPENSE BUDGET

	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992*</u>
Executive Director	\$42,000	\$44,100	\$46,300	\$47,600	\$48,600
Deputy Director	46,000	48,300	49,750	51,850	53,000 (2)
Finance Director	28,000	29,200	30,000	30,600	31,600
Administrative Assistant	17,900	18,800	19,700	20,200	54,000 (3)
Archivists	-	-	24,800	44,300 (2)	69,000 (3)
Clerical Personnel	12,500	40,000	42,000 (3)	43,100 (3)	47,000 (3)
Additional Staff	-	-	-	-	1,410,000 (94)
Fringe Benefits	21,960	27,060	32,000	66,000	512,640
Payroll Taxes	12,000	14,000	18,000	24,000	141,000
Insurance	1,800	2,000	6,000	25,000	175,000
Professional Fees/Consultant	200,000	200,000	125,000	140,000	205,000
Office Rental	9,500	12,000	18,000	21,000	-
Storage Rental	5,000	10,000	20,000	22,000	-
Furniture/Equipment/Supplies	10,500	10,000	17,000	235,000	-
Printing/Mailing Costs	200,000	280,000	280,000	246,000	250,000
Utilities/Maintenance	1,900	2,500	5,000	100,000	290,000
Travel	10,000	15,000	20,000	55,000	75,000
Conferences	25,000	25,000	35,000	100,000	100,000
Architectural Designs	40,000	100,000	1,000,000	500,000	-
Archival Collection	-	15,000	20,000	50,000	75,000
Curator	-	-	24,000	24,900	25,900
Construction Financing			240,000	480,000	-
Total Operations	684,060	892,960	2,072,550	2,326,550	3,201,725
Building Fund	2,970,000	2,625,000	5,210,000	6,220,000	5,000,000
	<u>\$3,654,060</u>	<u>\$3,517,960</u>	<u>\$7,282,550</u>	<u>\$8,546,550</u>	<u>\$8,201,725</u>

 *Full Operation

(Exhibit B)

PHASE I
PROJECT REVENUE BUDGET

IMPLEMENTATION

	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>
Conference fees	-0-	-0-	25,000	25,000
Veteran Donations	175,000	675,000	2,800,000	3,000,000
Corporate and Private Donations	3,480,000	3,850,000	5,460,000	7,050,550
Interest Income	<u>100,000</u>	<u>281,000</u>	<u>320,000</u>	<u>800,000</u>
	<u>\$3,755,000</u>	<u>\$4,806,000</u>	<u>\$8,605,000</u>	<u>\$10,875,550</u>

FULL OPERATION

	<u>1992</u>
Museum Admission	\$10,000,000 (1)
Membership Fees	12,000,000 (2)
Journals & Publications	500,000
Other Functions	<u>570,000</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$23,000,000</u>

(1) Based on \$4.00 admission/per person of 2,500,000 visitors for one year of operation. This figure was determined through initial conversations with the Director of Policy and Planning of U.S. Tourism. U.S. Travel Data Center, Smithsonian Institute, Colonial Williamsburg, and military museums.

(2) Based on \$25.00 annual membership fee for 480,000 members.

(Attachment 2)

VVMI ADVISORY BOARD CONFERENCE

October 12, 1987

Agenda

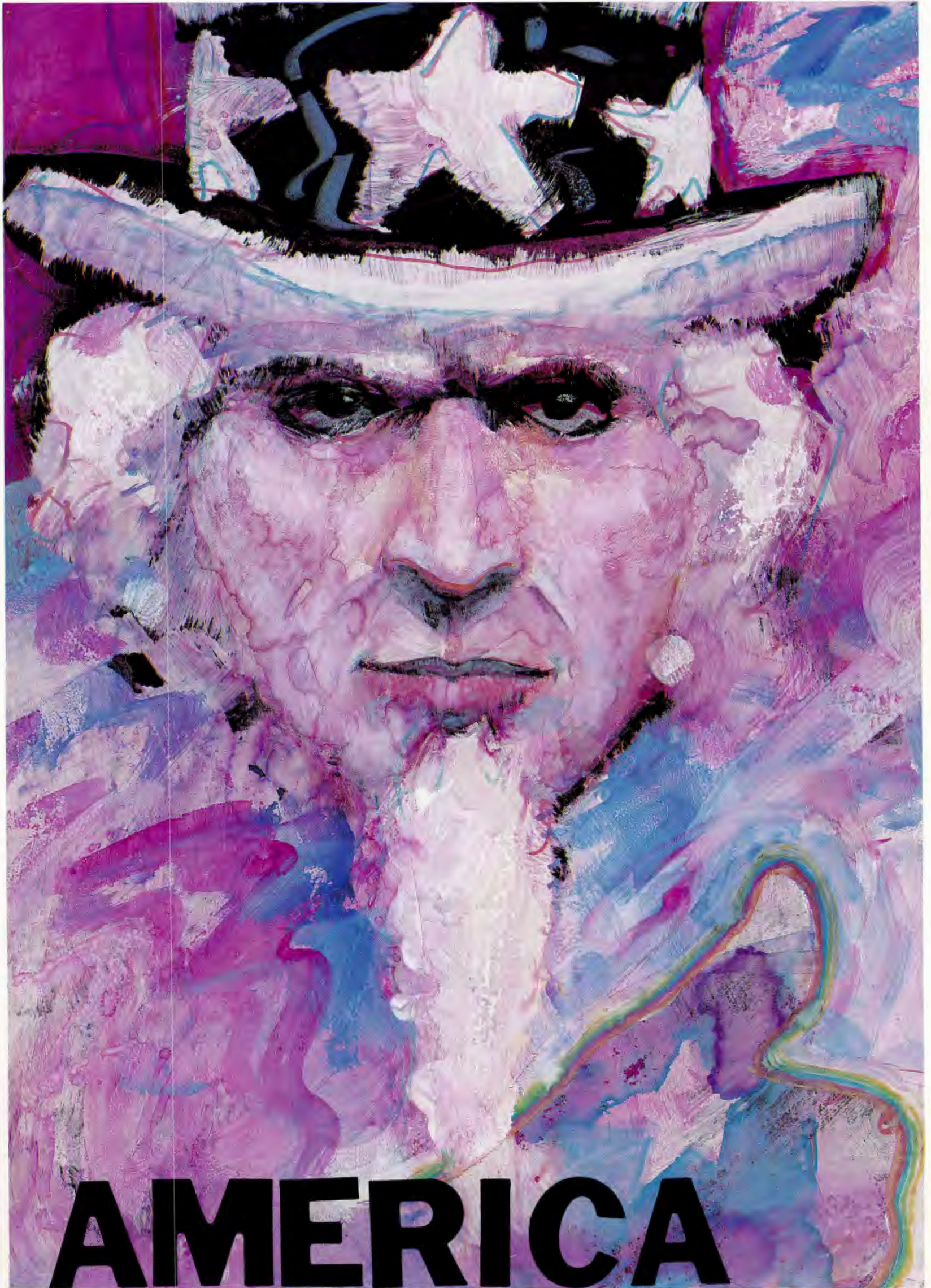
9:00 to 12:00 Noon - **SYMPOSIUM ON VIETNAM**

- I. Questions surrounding the Vietnam Era and VVMI purpose
 John Radell, Chairman, Board of Directors
- II. Vietnam - Historical Impact (15 min. each)
 - Historian - Effects of Vietnam on Political and Social America
 Col. Robert Summers, U.S. News and World Report
 - Veterans' Representative - A Combatant's View
 John Dramesi, New Jersey Veterans Affairs
 - Press - The Impact of the Press on Vietnam History
 Fox Butterfield, New York Times
 - Religion - Clergy's Involvement in Combat
 Reverend Ray Stubbe, U. S. Marine Corps
 - Image - Movie Industry's Responsibility in Recording of History
 Lionel Chetwynd, Director of film "Hanoi Hilton"
 - Response - Military History: The Military's Role in the Political Decisions Concerning War
 General William Westmoreland
- III. Forum - Open question and answer period to include audience

1:00 to 3:00 PM - **ADVISORY BOARD LUNCHEON CONFERENCE**

6:00 to 9:00 PM - **FUND-RAISING DINNER**

THUMBS UP



T H U M B S U P

