

VVAW Truth, and half-truths & lies of the Swift Boat Veterans

With this opportunity I wish to set the record straight about what I said and did not say as it relates to the VVAW, John Kerry, and any talk of violence against senators who were the primary hawks supporting the Vietnam war. But, first I wish to thank the Texas Tech University and The Vietnam Center for conducting open and honest discussion of this important time in our nation's history. The division in the country over Vietnam and its effect on the nation needs to be understood, for I fear we are now repeating aspects of this history that are not yet completely comprehended.

For this discussion, I will take quotes from the literature of the so called "Swift Vets and POWs for Truth" [sic], and point out the half-truths and lies as one who was present at the events.

On their web pages the not so "Swift Vets" have the following statements about my alleged activities: (Quoted verbatim from the URLs noted at the bottom of the quotation. The use of ellipses (two and three dots) scattered throughout the quote appears to mean that the writer omitted words, a dangerous practice when attempting to show unbiased facts. While they post these things under my name, almost none of them had anything to do with me. I certainly didn't get any trips to meet Jean-Paul Sartre in Norway paid for by rich New Yorkers. I have no idea where they got this mess, it isn't in the FOI FBI file sent to me in 1979.)

"DuBOSE, Terry (former VVAW)

--6/71: FBI File (S8,p135): DuBose is VVAW Regional Coordinator for TX. (S8,p161-162): "Nat'l VVAW News: Conf. of VVAW regional coords. was held in St. Louis on June 4&5. Terry DuBose..attended this meeting. Several upcoming nat'l. programs were discussed.. vets to lobby and fast in support of the Hatfield-McGovern amendment.. On 6/19, there will be a National Day of Solidarity with the United Front of Cairo, IL.. open race war in the streets in recent months..will meet to find concrete ways VVAW can support them... Other news (redacted) will be attending the Int'l. Peace Conf. with such notables as Jean-Paul Sartre, in Norway this month. They are being flown to the conf. by some NY peace people.. If you can pick up the Dick Cavett show on TV, you can see a debate between VVAW people and reps. of the newly-formed VV For a Just Peace on 6/30...you know that the debate won't be much of a contest, but it should be amusing.."

--11/71: At VVAW meeting re assassination; said Kerry was there.

--8/4/04: Supports Kerry. ("Those who take issue with John Kerry's military record should compare it to George W. Bush's.. 'Winter Soldiers' was shown at the Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival last year. Anyone who believes Vietnam was not a mistake should watch this film" <Letter to the Editor, Arkansas Democratic Gazette, Aug 4 2004, <http://www.knowledgeplex.org/news/38172.html>>¹

<http://horse.he.net/~swiftpow/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?t=12535&postdays=0&postorder=asc&start=0&sid=b34b39573deced7b3b26d7b62583bad4>

John O'Neill very skillfully joined three half-truths to form two very complete lies. In the book "Unfit for Command", O'Neill stated: "Then Lipscomb found two VVAW members, Randy Barnes and Terry DuBoise [sic], who had attended the meeting and were willing to go on record stating that they remembered Kerry being there."² This quote came from an article by the yellow journalist Tom Lipscomb (New York Sun, March 12 2004)³, and was picked up and repeated by others who did not follow-up on the accuracy of the statement and none of whom called me for verification.^{4, 5}

Here is my recollection of what happened during that time.

As a VVAW State Coordinator and National Steering Committee Member, I attended two of the national VVAW meetings. The first was in St. Louis in the early part of 1971. At that meeting I remember the discussions about the racial tensions in Cairo, Illinois, that VVAW voted to support the United Front of Cairo, and several other national issues. I also remember talking to John Kerry while sitting on a back porch in St. Louis after dinner one evening. However, I did not talk to John Kerry in Kansas City six months later, and do not recall his being there, though others have said he was present.

On the day in question, the Kansas City VVAW meeting took place in the education building of a church with a grassy campus in the bend of a creek. The Steering Committee meetings were serious, long, and tiring. We broke for lunch and the members were standing up, stretching, and heading out to eat when a vet approached me and asked me to come down to the creek behind the building where some vets wanted to talk. I followed him around the building and down the grassy slope to a group of 6 or 8 vets. I knew two of the vets; I did not know the others. One vet came up and introduced himself; we shook hands. I was introduced to the others, but I don't remember their names or states.

At this unofficial group there was emotional talk about the fact that the Vietnam War was not slowing down, thousands were continuing to die, and we could probably bring the war to an end by simply "blowing away" about six to eight of the hawks' ringleaders. While I understood their logic, I felt that this was not a good direction, and would be disastrous to VVAW. I did not say much, just that war and violence are the problems, not the solutions. I did not agree to violence and left at the first opportunity to return to the main building.

The discussion down by the creek was simply some angry Marine veterans who were frustrated by the continuing war, and who were grieving their lost buddies. No assassination attempts on anyone were ever made by any of them. John Kerry was not present in this informal group, and to my knowledge he knew nothing about the cantankerous talk.

While this topic did come up late in the official VVAW Steering Committee meeting, my recollection is not the best. The VVAW Chicago office told me last month that one person was insistent that the "Phoenix plot" be addressed, and it was flatly defeated in a unanimous NO vote. However, the FBI report posted on Mr. Scott Swett's website (<http://www.kerrystreason.com/Nov12Meeting.htm#Camil>) states, "The delegations from New England and the East Coast proposed activities a week before Christmas and advocated non-violent civil disobedience."⁶ And this was Kerry's delegation. In both versions, we, the VVAW, did not propose any violent activities; yet, the Swift Boat Vets for Truth [sic] conveniently and completely ignore this fact.

The Swift Vets' apparently took their inaccurate information from Thomas Lipscomb, with whom I did speak by phone. Lipscomb found out about the violent talk from FBI records and an oral history of VVAW.⁷ He called me and I described the talk down by the creek, and I specifically stated that it was a "rump meeting", was not a part of the real VVAW meeting, and that John Kerry was not there. Lipscomb conveniently left most of what I said out of the article. Then instead of checking for accuracy as most good writers of history do, John O'Neill and Jerome Corsi took Tom Lipscomb's malicious article and cherry-picked information from the FBI, and used that information in their book. These were the half-truths that the Swift Vets turned into full-blown lies trying to paint VVAW and John Kerry as endorsing violence, when the truth is that we (VVAW) rejected even the suggestion of violence.

Because many have doubted that VVAW was made up of Vietnam War veterans, my records are open, unlike the records of our current President. I graduated from Hardin-Simmons University in May 1966 with a Bachelor of Business Administration and enlisted in the Regular Army in August that year. The first year was spent in Basic Training at Ft. Dix, N.J., Advanced Infantry Training (AIT) at Ft. Ord, CA, Officer Candidate School, Quartermaster OCS, at Ft. Lee, VA, and Airborne School at Ft. Benning. During OCS, I put "Vietnam combat unit" as first choice on my "Dream sheet". I received orders for the 5th Special Forces Group; however, after arriving in Vietnam my orders were changed to Hq. and Hq. Company 53rd General Support Group. The 53rd was a large organization that supplied troops in the Mekong Delta area. After the Tet Offensive in 1968, a buddy, Lt. Charles Dickey, and I went to Hq. and requested transfers to combat units. Dickey's transfer was accepted and mine was declined. Dickey was killed in combat in July just before we were due to rotate back to "the real world".

After an honorable discharge, I went to Austin for a position as Tax Examiner in the Texas State Comptroller's office, but I became more and more disillusioned with the war. After the Kent State Massacre, I left state employment and hitch-hiked to California and down the West Coast. Knowing few in California, and running low on funds, I returned to the University of Texas at Austin to utilize the GI Bill. I was doing graduate studies, and was starting to protest the Vietnam War. In 1970 I helped organize a veteran's antiwar group we called "Vets for Peace", but soon after that we received word about VVAW and the Dewey Canyon III protest in Washington. A

contingent from Texas participated in DCIII, and when we returned to Austin we changed our organization from "Vets for Peace" to "Texas VVAW".

During the Dewey Canyon III VVAW bivouac on the Mall, with lobbying, and other activities in Washington, D.C., April, 1971, Nixon and associates claimed that we were not veterans. The Texas contingent volunteered to collect and alphabetize all identifications. Texas Representative Bob Eckhardt and his staff made room for us in their offices and provided us with telephones and administrative support. We collected over 1,200 DD214's, and military orders from Vietnam. VVAW always advised members to carry their DD214's when representing VVAW because we were frequently challenged. All of these events have been published elsewhere.⁸, ⁹

I am candidly telling what I remember in the hope that this makes clear that the not so "Swift Vets" cherry-picked information and half-truths, and knowingly molded them to fit their own prejudices. They have played fast and loose with the truth; acting as an Orwellian "Ministry of Misinformation", taking half-truths and statements out of context, spreading libelous lies. They [You, Swett, Corsi, O'Neill and the other swift liars] have slandered me and the members of VVAW; and worse, much worse, you have negatively subverted the democratic processes of our great nation. It is treasonous.

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References:

- ¹ Swift Boat Vets and POWs for Truth [sic]; "Know the players" Enemies list; <http://horse.he.net/~swiftpow/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?t=12535&postdays=0&postorder=asc&start=0&sid=b34b39573deced7b3b26d7b62583bad4>, last access February 27, 2005
- ² O'Neill JE and Corsi JR; Unfit for Command; Regnery Publishing, Inc. 2004, p. 141.
- ³ Thomas Lipscomb; "How Kerry Quit Veterans Group Amid Dark Plot" NY Sun; 3/12/04; <http://freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/1096162/posts>; last access February 6, 2005.
- ⁴ TWO WITNESSES COULD END KERRY PRESIDENTIAL RUN -- "The Phoenix Project" various sources | 3-12-04 | Posted on 03/12/2004 10:32:07 AM PST by doug from upland <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/1096416/posts>; last access February 6, 2005.
- ⁵ Jewish World Review March 16, 2004 / 23 Adar, 5764; Thomas H. Lipscomb "New Witness: Kerry Was Present at Dark Plot Meeting: Group Debated and Voted Down Plan To Assassinate Senators"; <http://www.jewishworldreview.com/cols/lipscomb031604.asp>; last access February 6, 2005.
- ⁶ Federal Bureau of Investigation; Vietnam Veterans Against The War (VVAW), Steering Committee Meeting Kansas City, Missouri, November 12, 13, 14, 1971, Internal Security – New Left; dated November 18, 1971 (100-448092-592; page 6, <http://www.kerrystreason.com/Nov12Meeting.htm#Camil>, last access 2005 Feb. 27.
- ⁷ Richard Stacewicz; WINTER SOLDIERS, An Oral History of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War; Twayne Publishers 1997, p. 294-295.
- ⁸ Daryl Janes; NO APOLOGIES: Texas Radicals Celebrate the "60s"; Eakin Press, Austin TX, p. 147-158.
- ⁹ Waterhouse LG & Wizard MG; Turning the GUNS around: Notes on the GI Movement; Praeger Publishers 1971, p. 190-202.