

10-13-81

REMARKS OF JAN C SCRUGGS

MR. CHAIRMAN, MR. COMMISSIONERS, THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK TODAY. I AM MR. JAN SCRUGGS, PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER OF THE VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL FUND.

IN 1969 I REPORTED TO THE 199th INFANTRY BRIGADE IN RVN AS A PRIVATE.

DURING MY YEAR THERE ONE HALF OF MY INFANTRY COMPANY WAS KILLED OR WOUNDED. I TOO, WAS SERIOUSLY WOUNDED AND DECORATED FOR VALOR.

I'M ALIVE TODAY BECAUSE A YOUNG DRAFTEE GAVE HIS LIFE FOR ME. IN

'76 I BECAME ONE OF THE YOUNGEST MEN TO PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTIMONY TO THE U.S. SENATE. THE SUBJECT WAS THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF THE VIET NAM WAR ON ITS VETERANS..

AND THEY ARE,  
IN THAT REGARD, I HAVE SOME KEY POINTS WORTHY OF MENTION ~~AND THAT IS,~~

# 1. ANY DESIGN CHOSEN WOULD BE THE OBJECT OF A FEW PEOPLES' MISPLACED ANGER. THAT MISPLACED ANGER, HOWEVER, IS ESSENTIALLY ABOUT THE VIET NAM WAR ITSELF AND THE TREATMENT OF ITS VETERANS.

# 2 IN 1979, I HAD A DREAM, THAT REGARDLESS OF THE CONTROVERSY AND DIVISION CENTERED AROUND VIET NAM, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE COULD COME TOGETHER TO BUILD A MEMORIAL TO HONOR THE SACRIFICES OF VIETNAM VETS. THAT DREAM IS <sup>A</sup> REALITY TODAY BECAUSE WE MEET HERE TO SELECT THE STONE FOR BUILDING THAT ~~THE~~ MEMORIAL.

MY FINAL KEY POINT IS THAT THERE IS A LOT OF UNFINISHED BUSINESS LEFT FOR OUR COUNTRY BECAUSE OF VIETNAM. THIS MEMORIAL IS A PART OF THAT UNFINISHED BUSINESS, BUT IT REMAINS FOR THE COUNTRY TO ABSORB AND RESOLVE THE MANY DIFFICULTIES THAT REMAIN FROM VIETNAM.

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I WISH THAT THIS MEMORIAL COULD MAGICALLY ERASE THESE LINGERING PROBLEMS,  
BUT IT CAN BE A BEGINNING. THIS YEAR, THE VVMF HELD THE LARGEST  
DESIGN COMPETITION IN U.S. HISTORY. THE WINNING DESIGN IS A BEAUTIFUL

AND EXTRAORDINARY WORK OF ART AND ONE THAT ALL OF US ARE VERY PROUD  
TO HAVE. I AGREE WITH THE PROMINENT ARCHITECTURE CRITIC WHO  
~~THE DESIGNER COMPARED THIS MONUMENT TO EIFFEL TOWER.~~

~~COMPARED THIS MONUMENT TO EIFFEL TOWER.~~ RECENTLY JAMES J.

KILPATRICK WROTE OF ITS ELEGANT QUALITIES AND FINISHED BY SAYING THAT IT TRULY  
HONORS THE VIETNAM VETS AND THIS MEMORIAL WILL "PACK A WALLOP."

I RECENTLY SPOKE TO A.L. AND VFW CONVENTIONS AND TALKED ABOUT THE MEMORIAL  
AS ONE THAT IS TEN FEET TALL AND WHICH WILL MAKE VEIT NAM VETS STAND 10  
FEET TALL AS WELL. PROBABLY 10,000 CAME TO SEE THE ARTISTS CONCEPTION  
OF THAT MEMORIAL AND IT WAS ~~OVERWHELMINGLY~~ OVERWHELMINGLY  
ACCEPTED AS A BEAUTIFUL TRIBUTE TO THE VIETNAM VETERANS. I REMEMBER ONLY  
TWO PEOPLE SAYING THEY DIDN'T LIKE IT, BUT BOTH SUPPORTED IT.

ON MAY 8, 9, and 10, (AFTER THE DESIGN WAS ANNOUNCED) A LOCAL RADIO STATION (WVXX)  
HELD A RADIOTHON FOR THE VVMF. THE RESULTS WERE THAT OVER ONE QUARTER OF  
A MILLION DOLLARS RAISED FROM WASHINGTON, AN AMOUNT FAR IN EXCESS OF WHAT THE  
ENTIRE  
~~THE ENTIRE~~ DEFENSE INDUSTRY HAS THUS FAR DONATED FOR THE MEMORIAL. NOW  
ACROSS THE COUNTRY INCLUDING

THE JURY WAS AMONG THE MOST PROMINENT EVER ASSEMBLED TO JUDGE A WORK OF  
ART. ALL WERE INTERVIEWED BY VIETNAM COMBAT VETS. THE SENIOR MEMBER OF  
THE JURY WAS A COMBAT VET OF A WAR EVERY BIT AS BRUTAL AS VIETNAM, WORLD WAR I.

THE FOREMAN OF THE JURY WON THE PURPLE HEART AT <sup>WWII</sup> ANZIO, MR. GRADY CLAY.

I RECENTLY LUNCHEDED WITH MR. CLAY WHO TOLD ME OF HIS AMAZEMENT AT THE REACTION OF THE 1420 COMPETITORS WHO LOST. HE SAID THAT EUROPEAN COMPETITIONS OFTEN HAVE AN UGLY AFTERMATH WITH WELL PUBLICIZED PROTESTS FROM THE COMPETITORS. YET BY AND LARGE, OUR COMPETITORS HAVE SAID THEIR REWARD WAS BEING ABLE TO COMPETE. ONE COMPETITOR <sup>CONTRIBUTED</sup> ~~EVEN SENT BACK~~ HIS PRIZE MONEY TO HELP ~~THEM~~ BUILD THE WINNING DESIGN. ONE JUROR DONATED HIS EXPENSES TO THE VVMF

ALTHOUGHXXX ALTHOUGHXXXRESPECTXXXARTSXXXINGXXX

ALL COMPETITORS HAD PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS ABOUT WHAT THIS MONUMENT SHOULD BE. ONLY ONE OR TWO OF THE COMPETITORS HAVE PUBLICALLY EXPRESSED SUCH AN OPINION, ONE OF WHOM WE JUST HEARD FROM.

I SOMEHOW KEEP THIS ALL IN PERSPECTIVE BY REMINDING MYSELF THAT WE ARE BUILDING A MEMORIAL THAT WILL ONEDAY BE INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED AS ONE OF THE VERY FINEST MEMORIALS IN THE WORLD.