



Jan Scruggs's copy
(original on file)
P.R. - D. 16

June 21, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

FROM: Robert A. Carter
Executive Vice President

SUBJECT: Apology Statement for WDM

1. At the Board of Directors Meeting on June 7, 1984, the attached was approved as an apology statement that VVMF would like for WDM to make on behalf of VVMF as part of the efforts to resolve the Channel 9 series.


Secretary

RAC/caj

CORPORATE ADVISORY BOARD

August A. Busch, III
Chairman and President
Anheuser-Busch Companies, Inc.
Wayne M. Hoffman
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Tiger International
John G. McElwee
President
John Hancock Mutual
Life Insurance Company
J. Richard Munro
President
Time, Inc.
Edmund T. Pratt, Jr.
Chairman of the Board
Pfizer, Inc.
Lloyd N. Unsell
Executive Vice President
Independent Petroleum
Association of America
T. A. Wilson
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Boeing Company

Reproduced from the Collections of the Manuscript Division, Library of Congress

DIRECTORS

John P. Wheeler III, Esq.*
Chairman
Robert H. Frank, CPA
Treasurer
Ronald F. Gibbs*
George W. Mayo, Jr., Esq.*
John C. Morrison, Esq.*
Richard E. Radez*
John O. Wood, Jr., P.E.*

STAFF

Jan Craig Scruggs*
President
Col. Robert A. Carter, USAF, Ret.*
Executive Vice President/Secretary
Kathie M. Kielich
Administrative Manager/
Director of Public Relations

NATIONAL SPONSORING COMMITTEE

Arnold "Red" Auerbach
Pearl Bailly
Marion S. Barr, Jr.
Mayor
District of Columbia
Rocky Bleier*
Ruben Bonilla
League of United Latin
American Citizens (LULAC)
The Hon. Ellsworth Bunker
Carroll
Jose Cano
American G.I. Forum of the U.S.
Rosalynn Carter
The Hon. Max Cleland*
The Hon. Baltasar Corrada
Howard Cosell
Gen. Michael S. Davison, USA, Ret.*
Former Commander-in-Chief,
U.S. Army, Europe
The Hon. Gerald R. Ford
and Mrs. Ford
Philip Geyelin
Barry Goldwater
United States Senator
from Arizona
Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C.
University of Notre Dame
Bob Hope
Gen. David C. Jones, USAF (Ret.)*
Vernon E. Jordan, Jr.
National Urban League
Michael J. Kogutek
American Legion
The Hon. George McGovern
The Hon. Robert P. Nimmo
Nancy Reagan
Carl T. Rowan
Willie Stargell
Roger Staubach*
Jimmy Stewart
The Hon. Paul Thayer
Deputy Secretary of Defense
The Hon. Cyrus R. Vance
Gen. John W. Vessey, Jr.*
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Hon. Harry N. Walters
Administrator of Veteran Affairs
Veterans Administration
John W. Warner
United States Senator
from Virginia
Gen. William C. Westmoreland, Ret.*
Former Chief of Staff, U.S. Army
The Hon. Joseph C. Zengerle*

*Served in Vietnam

Affiliations noted for purposes of identification only.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Inc.

1110 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Suite 308, Washington, D.C. 20005 (202) 659-2490

WDVM (Ch. 9) APOLOGY STATEMENT

Last November, Channel 9's News Department ran a series of reports on financial and other aspects of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, Inc., the organization responsible for building the Vietnam Veterans Memorial here in Washington, D.C., honoring the men and women of the armed forces who served in the Vietnam war.

This series reported on charges made to our news staff by sources who believed there were major improprieties involved in the operation of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, and the use of some \$9 million donated by the public to finance construction of the memorial and other related activities.

Several weeks after the Channel 9 series by Investigative Reporter Carlton Sherwood, who no longer is employed by this station, the General Accounting Office was asked by several members of Congress and VVMF to investigate the situation that had arisen due to the WDVM series.

After an extensive investigation of 5 1/2 months, GAO on May 23rd issued its report to Congress. The report, signed by the Comptroller General of the United States, found that "the Fund's financial operations had been conducted in a proper and legal manner. GAO also investigated a number of specific allegations regarding the Fund and found no evidence of any improper or illegal actions."

Channel 9 undertook the investigation of VVMF with the sincere interest of a responsible news organization. While it was underway, VVMF officials contacted Channel 9 to disavow the allegations. The more they talked, the more we were convinced it was an effort to cover up wrongdoing or bad judgment.

We were wrong, as the General Accounting Office report has now verified. Whatever our sincere intentions, and they were sincere, we were mistaken in not having substantiation of the charges by our sources, many of whom were long time adversaries of the Memorial design. We feel it is our responsibility to admit that we erred.

We apologize to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, to Jan Scruggs, its President, to John Wheeler, its Chairman; to its Board of Directors, and to the staff for any embarrassment caused them by the Channel 9 reports, and congratulate the organization for the complete clean bill of health given it by the Government Accounting Office.

We congratulate them as well for building the very moving and long overdue Vietnam Veterans Memorial that has done so much to help our country and its veterans.