

**ETNAM
TERANS
MORIAL
FUND**

December 18, 1984

Mr. James Webb
2309 North Glebe Road
Arlington, Virginia 22207

Dear Jim:

Your reputation as a good fiction writer is certainly well deserved. Let me respond to the latest round of self serving bull and insults in your most recent, arrogant and hostile letter.

1. You claim that you provided no encouragement for my receiving a "V-device". Not so. Due to utterances by you and some of those involved with you in the campaign against the Memorial to the effect that I falsely claimed having been decorated, I decided to collect the award.

And isn't it nice of you to refer to the award as the lowest doled out for heroism. I actually could have had another award for gallantry in the war, but I really didn't care about it. The only folks who seemed to care about medals for themselves were cocky platoon leaders.

2. You want to know how much money we made through the use of your name. To the best of my knowledge, not one red cent. It was helpful to have well known people on our Sponsoring Committee such as Bob Hope, Carol Burnett, and others. The name "James Webb" had little name recognition. I hate to burst your bubble, Jim, but I thought we were doing you a favor. This was a costly mistake.

And I am sorry that you are so angry about the way you were treated as you "sought a compromise." Your demands were considered, but were too unreasonable. You wrote in October, 1981 to J. Carter Brown demanding a white memorial, above ground and with a flag through the apex. When tens of thousands of Americans and vet groups such as the American Legion and VFW were contributing millions of dollars to build a design you detested, why should we have started over? If you had

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succeeded in persuading groups like these and the public that you were right, you could have stopped the Memorial. And don't give me any baloney about the "polls" that were done. A poll done by American Legion members back then showed they wanted groundbreaking to begin.

Turning the issue into a civil war among veterans was unnecessary and devisive. Why didn't you think of a creative way to resolve the issue, such as adding a flag and statue? That idea turned out to be quite a good one, but we sure didn't get it from you.

3. To correct the record, VVMF did not try to block your appointment and neither did any of our attorneys. Had we tried, I feel confident that we could have succeeded.

An effort was made however, to get a public statement during your confirmation hearing that you would not use your high government office to continue your attacks on the VVMF or upon those of us involved with the Memorial. Given your recent ugly personal attack in the Post (11/9/84), perhaps we should have pursued this more vigorously.

On the subject of lawyers, it is too bad we needed them. But we have been up against a vicious campaign. You and others have hired lawyers to intimidate us. Others started or endeavored to start investigations of the VVMF by the Internal Revenue Service, the FBI, the General Accounting Office and God knows who else. We've been falsely accused of having a communist select the design; funneling money to the reds in Central America; etc.; etc. Apparent illegal access was made into our military records. Don't blame us for needing good legal counsel.

And, thanks to our lawyers, we did receive fifty thousand dollars from the W.D.V.M. fiasco in which you were so intimately involved. Your participation in that affair, in my opinion, was consistent with your pattern of assaults on the project which have not stopped since you assumed your present position.

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4. Thank you for admitting that the additions "may have been costly." The statue, flag pole and base, the entrance plaza area, architectural fees and the like cost many hundreds of thousands of dollars. Given the fact that your name brought us virtually nothing, I hope that your partial responsibility for these costs and the costs of defending ourselves against the outrageous and malicious aforementioned attacks provides you with some satisfaction.

Let me level with you, Jim. This project has not been enjoyable for me. The many unpleasant months I spent defending the Memorial design and then fighting the W.D.V.M. series were difficult periods and you played a key role in both -- perhaps the key role in both.

For me the project is nearly finished, but not because the Memorial is built. That was comparatively easy. It is done because I am assuming that you and those with whom you have been involved in the campaign to injure the reputations of those who made the Memorial possible have now come to an end.

I am also assuming that you will not use your present position or endeavor in your individual capacity to interfere with my career; to harass others with the VVMF; to attempt to relocate the statue and/or other elements at the site and that you will not take part in any other activities to bring harm to the Memorial or those who built it.

Let me also register with you my revulsion and disgust at the verbage used by you to refer to the walls displaying the names of the Vietnam War's casualties. Seeing you refer to the walls as the "Vietnam Dead Memorial" or compare it to the Ovens at Dachau turns my stomach. Spend an hour at the Park Service facility housing the items left with those honored names by their relatives and those who served with them. And spend some time talking with those who, as Volunteer Guides, have been at the Memorial for over two years. Some of them have even polled Vietnam veterans to find the Wall overwhelmingly accepted and very much loved. You were simply wrong in your earlier predictions about the Memorial and your continued assault is unseemly and inappropriate, particularly coming from an administration official. We all err on occasion.

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The addition of the statue has made the Memorial even better and more effective. To the extent that you contributed to bring the statue about, I extend sincere appreciation. And it is a tragedy that such hard feelings exist as the result of the project. We have helped both Vietnam veterans and our nation to recover from the war as President Reagan eloquently noted on Veterans Day. Few people even care about the battles that once raged surrounding the Memorial.

Neither of us needs a pen pal, Jim. And I certainly didn't ask to receive the insulting and degrading letters you have authored to me. Neither did I ask for the personal attack delivered by you in the Washington Post.

Again, I hope that you will get in step with the Commander-In-Chief and that your attacks on Jack Wheeler, me and the Memorial have come to an end. It is time to let this project rest in peace.

Sincerely,

Jan C. Scruggs