

very, with great detail, outlined them. But most of all, if the democracy is going to work also in the field of erecting great monuments, we need law and order, and I think the Veterans of the Vietnam War, and any other way, will agree that that is, first of all, if we want to oppose the flag, and if we want to oppose the motivation that all people of goodwill have, we cannot have law and order if the Federal Government of the United States is meddling in issues that concern art and the public. It is not a Federal issue. It is not for the Secretary of the Interior to conclude what kind of monument we have.

I think the Vietnam Memorial Fund and the Fine Arts Commission should not allow themselves to be intimidated by the threat of their withholding building permits. The Veterans of America come to the Mall without Secretary Watts' permission.

We don't -- if you don't oppose the rules, and if you don't keep hope with our art, we will have ugliness and not art. We cannot compromise on this.

Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you very much.

Next I have Michael Straight.

MR. STRAIGHT: Mr. Chairman, what I have to say is purely extemporaneous.

I am a former B-17 pilot, a former B-29 pilot, a former chairman of the American Veterans Committee and a former deputy chairman of the National Endowment of the Arts.

I listened this morning with respect, and at times, awe, to my fellow Veterans. The Post this morning carried an inflammatory article designed to rub raw an open wound, by saying that this, Ms. Lin's extraordinary design was there to honor Jane Fonda.

I thank my fellow Americans for not falling for this kind of cheap debate today, and for exercising restraint, and betterment of art, and everything that was said.

When the Congressman spoke of ^{mere} near aesthetics, in urging the additions to Ms. Lin's design, I would suggest on the contrary, that aesthetics alone matter here today. If we are talking about non-aesthetics, in relation to the deserving Veterans of Vietnam, then we are talking about hospitals, libraries, schools, not designs in this part of the Nation's Capital. It is solely an aesthetic statement which you are asked to consider as such. It is the final truth.

James Webb, in his impressive opening statements here, defended that concept by saying that there was agreement between all of us, that what was needed was integrated unity

of the whole memorial.

From then on, we have heard only of the word compromise. Mr. Webb himself pointed out that the new integrated unity which he sought, if these additions are made, was one in which the three figures here would look across the wall with its moving names to the flag itself. It would tell a story, as he said, that it is a concept, but it is not Ms. Lin's concept. She spoke of it melding one into another, and thought that even the process of melding would make it impure. But that is not even melding. The two cannot be melded.

I do not mean by this that there was no place for a flag at a Veterans Memorial, or even that there is no place for some precise imagery.

If additions are to be made, then I am begging you, only in the name of art itself, to consult the voice which was heard here only briefly today, the voice of the artist. It may be that in time these additions can be worked in. They cannot be worked in.

The only statement today which jogged between those who came here in a sense of respect to this amendment, and yet urged the additions, and those who like myself speak against those particular additions, the only voice here in assault on that spirit, I am sorry to say, was the voice of the

Undersecretary of the Interior, who in fact said, in a bald-faced threat, either you take what I give you today or else it will not be dedicated in November. Two days in November are a very short period.

But you remember the words of the Romans, life is short, the heart is long. These monuments will be here, good or bad, for centuries, and it is in the interest of centuries, and with love and veneration for those Veterans, we urge you to think only in terms of the very fineness which you can offer them.

CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you.

Next is Peter Masters.

A VOICE: He had to leave.

CHAIRMAN BROWN: He had to leave.

Former President of the Design Council, Jim Brodniak.

MR. BRODNIAK: Mr. Chairman, I am Jim Brodniak, Local Coordinator of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War. Not all Veterans groups approve of the additional elements.

I also find that the Undersecretary of the Interior, his statement, if you don't accept it, you don't get it dedicated, as absurd.

I am a playwright. I would not have someone take a play that I have written and make additions to it, add