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MASSIVE V.A. CORRUPTION EXPOSE' BY THE CHICAGO SUN-TIMES
V.A. 's CHICAGO OFFICE DISHONORS VETERANS

Article by Arthur Bernklau of Veterans for Constitutional Law, Ltd.

Art Bernklau's Corner:
This article posted on:

www.Net4TruthUSA.com/VFCLL.htm
www.Net4TruthUSA.com/AB-VAChicago.htm

The stories are heartbreaking: A wounded Korean War veteran waits 26 years, but dies before he can receive any disability pay, a hero pulls a colleague from a burning Marine barracks, suffers severe injuries, but doesn't receive sufficient disability pay until two decades later, an 81 year—old World War II veteran is told he won't get paid the full amount of disability because he can't handle the money

These horror stories are very disturbing and depressing, but THEY VIVIDLY REFLECT THE BUREAUCRATIC BOONDOGLING, INSENSITIVITY, AND OUTRIGHT THIEVERY RESIDENT AT THE CHICAGO, ILLINOIS OFFICE, AS WELL AS MANY OTHER OFFICES OF THE DEPT. OF VETERAN'S AFFAIRS. THIS OFFICE, IN PARTICULAR CAN HANG THEIR HEADS IN SHAME FOR THE DISGRACEFUL PROBLEMS DETAILED IN A MASSIVE EXPOSE' IN THE CHICAGO SUN-TIMES SINCE DECEMBER 2, 2004 UP TO THE PRESENT. Each and every day since Dec. 2nd, there have been anywhere from two to four whole pages of details and fully substantiated horror stories about this situation at the Chicago V.A. office, WHICH HAS BEEN LONG DUE FOR THE PUBLICITY IT IS NOW RECEIVING. REPORTER CHERYL L. REED for the most part has been doing the by-line. REPORTER LORI RACKL has also contributed to this investigation.

This is the best expose' of it's kind ever done on the V.A. THE CHICAGO SUN-TIMES IS AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER, and perhaps that is the reason that the V.A.'s INFAMOUS "PRESS CORPS" hasn't been able to stop this story like they did at the end of 2002, when 12 rating board members of the V.A.'s Atlanta Regional Office were sentenced by Judge Richard Story at Atlanta, GA Federal Court to 2 to 6 years in Federal prison for scamming the families of dead veterans out of 11.2 million dollars by substituting their own claim numbers for that of the dead veterans. The ringleader Sarah Prater, a senior claims person with 25 years of V.A. service, and the V.A.'s Congressional Liaison was given a 13-year sentence.

The CORRUPTION IN THE V.A. IS WIDE SPREAD. Some offices are worse than others, however the V.A.'s "PRESS CORPS" has 2,220 "Spin Meisters", drawing top dollar (\$65,000 and upwards). THEIR SOLE JOB IS TO KEEP ANY NEGATIVE NEWS ABOUT THE V.A. OUT OF THE MEDIA. The V.A. "Press Corps" is well hidden by working under unrelated job titles. Each regional office has at least 30 of them, and the Central office has about 120. They did their job well to cover up what happened in Atlanta, GA. Only two (2) newspapers, the Atlanta Constitution, and the Chattanooga Times really covered the story, or

else all this would have hit the fan over two years ago. This time, they were caught by surprise, and could not hide the truth. ITS VERY INTERESTING HOW THE DEPT. OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CAN FIND PLACES LIKE THE "PRESS CORPS" TO PUT OUR TAX DOLLARS INTO. I AM VERY POSITIVE THAT IT WOULD COST MUCH LESS MONEY TO TAKE CARE OF OUR INJURED VETERANS, AND PROPERLY PAY THEM THE DISABILITY RATE THAT THEY ARE ENTITLED TO IF THEY DIDN'T PAY BONUSES TO RATING BOARD MEMBERS, VA LAWYERS AND EXECUTIVES, AND MILLIONS UPON MILLIONS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF "FREEBIES" TO THE NATIONAL VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS. THE V.A. IS A BLOATED BUREAUCRACY WITH OVER 261,000 EMPLOYEES. THE ADJUDICATION RATE IS A SHAMEFUL 4%. WE CALL THIS THE V.A.'s 4% SOLUTION. THE BIGGEST QUESTION IS: "DO WE NEED 261,000 EMPLOYEES AT THE V.A. TO DENY 96 PERCENT OF THE CLAIMS?"

THE FACT REMAINS, ALTHOUGH THE RULES FOR DECIDING HOW MUCH DISABILITY PAY A SOLDIER WILL GET ARE CLEAR... BUT FEDERAL AUTHORITIES ACKNOWLEDGE THAT STAFFERS IN CHICAGO HAS CONSISTENTLY INTERPRETED THOSE RULES MORE HARSHLY THAN THOSE ELSEWHERE. DISABLED SOLDIERS LIVING IN PUERTO RICO, MAINE, OR NEW MEXICO, ARE FAR BETTER OFF THAN CHICAGO VETS. IN FACT, FOR DECADE UPON DECADE, Chicago's VETS ARE RIGHT NEAR THE BOTTOM, IF NOT AT THE BOTTOM IN TERMS OF PROVIDING FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THOSE WOUNDED IN COMBAT. THE DISCREPANCY CAN BE IN EXCESS OF \$5,000 TO \$6,000 A YEAR. ONLY MICHIGAN IS AS BAD, AND BELIEVE IT OR NOT, OHIO IS EVEN WORSE.

These vets as young men and women, served their country in the noblest way, and they come from every walk of life. They deserve better than the treatment that they are receiving from this predatory agency. Local members of Congress are drafting letters calling for answers on why the V.A. is being so unyielding and so lacking in compassion. The V.A. is calling for a VA. Inspector General investigation of the matter, however anyone who has dealt with them know that the V.A. office of the Inspector General is but a rubber stamp for the V.A. THAT, WE ALL KNOW IS NOT GOING TO BE THE ANSWER. NOR IS THE ANSWER GOING TO BE WITH THE HOUSE VETERAN'S AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OR CONGRESS, WHO IS GETTING SET TO WHITEWASH THIS WHOLE AFFAIR. This has been turned over to Mary Ellen McCarthy, the Minority Legal Counsel of the HVAC.(We call this the "kiss of death" for any investigation). Several years ago, I spoke to Mary Ellen McCarthy, who is Rep. Lane Evans Legal Counsel about passing a law to get all these veteran disability cases out of the corrupt U.S. Court of Appeals For Veterans Claims, which has an abominable anti-veteran record of adjudication. THIS COURT IS A FARCE. It is the narrowest interpretation of judicial review possible. Ms. McCarthy said to me that the veteran's court was the only court that you veterans will ever see. To which I replied: "You are wrong Mary Ellen, veterans will get their cases into Federal District Courts, closest to their homes, but first we have to get rid of people like you, and your bosses, who have been boondoggling and stonewalling veterans for years".

A note of interest ... Since the disabled veterans of Puerto Rico filed and won a huge class action against the V.A. in federal court, the veterans at the San Juan, P.R. Regional office have been at, or close to the top of the V.A.'s list for financial disability relief, proving that we can win when the chips are down, either with the help of the courts or the media. Remember fighting the V.A. is sort of like roach spraying. As soon as the bright lights of publicity come on, these criminals, arid people who have something to hide, scurry, and look for dark corners to hide in.

The V.A. is on the run. SECRETARY ANTHONY PRINCIPI HAS TENDERED HIS RESIGNATION UNDER GREAT PRESSURE. Since becoming V.A. Secretary, he has QUADRUPLED the disability evaluation contract with his former company, the Q.T.C. Corp. of Diamond Bar. California. Does this sound like a conflict of interest to you? I have no doubt that he will be returning to his former company. I hope that he doesn't let the door hit him on the rump on the way out. Mr. Principi was not any better, nor not worse than any of his long line of dirt bag predecessors. Only a short time ago Chicago's own Jesse Brown of the Disabled American War Veterans was selected as Secretary of the V.A. by president Clinton.

When G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery (D-Mississippi), the corrupt chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee stated of Jesse Brown "He's one of us", we should have known that his background was not looked into carefully enough.... Several of his quotations as D.A.V. Executive Director in the D.A.V. magazine are as follows: "This is not to suggest that the V.A. disability compensation system isn't fiscally prudent. We've already shown that it holds up to the civilian model. Indeed, it holds it's own against the federal government's employee disability program as a model of fiscal restraint and fairness. In addition, we have to be mindful of our responsibility to the preservation of the V.A. disability compensation system and it's integrity, and support the CDC findings. We also commend the V.A. for it's quick action granting veterans with non—Hodgkin's Lymphoma disability compensation". To which I say "INTEGRITY? HOW CAN YOU USE THE WORD INTEGRITY IN THE SAME SENTENCE WITH THE VA.? QUICK ACTION. GIVE ME A BREAK!!! IT TOOK TWENTY FIVE YEARS AND TWO COURT DECISIONS TO GET THE V.A. TO MOVE ON NON-HODGKIN'S LYMPHOMA AND SOFT TISSUE SARCOMAS". SO MUCH FOR HEROES WITH CLAY FEET.

In reference to the suggestion of the V.A. Inspector General's forthcoming investigation and whitewash ...Daniel Howell from the Paralyzed Veterans of America said the review is not needed; "I think it's spending a lot of taxpayer money to bring in investigators when measures are already in place to correct the system". You can always depend on our friends, the National Veterans Service Organizations to support the status-quo, especially their V.A. "Freebies". THE NVSOs¹ KNOW WHICH SIDE THE V.A. BUTTERS THEIR BREAD ON, AND CERTAINLY CANNOT BE TRUSTED TO PROTECT VETERANS.

MORE HORROR STORIES: Donald Satkas was shot twice, suffering severe frostbite while serving in the mountains of South Korea in 1951. Half a century later, the Burr Ridge veteran is still fighting — This time the enemy is his own government. He's battling the V.A. for disability pay. Throughout his life, he had a host of medical problems, including a limp, skin cancer, diabetes, and colon cancer. Conditions he believes were related to his service. However, Satkas didn't know he could get disability pay, until he noticed a poster detailing V.A. benefits at a V.A. hospital in 1990. By then, he was 59. Satkas first filed a claim in 1990 and was awarded zero percent for the bullet wound in his elbow. He appealed, and the V.A. gave him 10 percent. For 13 years, the low rating gnawed at Satkas. Then, in Sept., 2001, a stroke paralyzed him. During an MRI scan, the family learned there was still a bullet lodged in Satkas hip. In 2003, Satkas family filed a new claim. This fall, he received his new rating: 80 percent, mostly for the effects of frostbite, without any retroactive pay back to 1951. The V.A. denied any benefit for the bullet in his hip. It shouldn't have taken this long. He's now 73 years old, and should have been getting benefits since the day he got discharged. **WHY DON'T THEY TELL THEM WHAT THEY'RE ENTITLED TO?? THEY JUST DENY AND DENY AND HOPE THAT YOU GIVE UP.**

¹ NVSO – National Veterans Service Organization

SOME OF THE MOST DISTURBING TESTIMONY CAME FROM KOREAN WAR VET GEORGE BAXTER, 74, WHO WAS A PRISONER OF WAR. BAXTER WAS SHOT TWICE, HIS RIGHT LEG WAS AMPUTATED, AND HIS LEFT LEG WAS DEFORMED BY REPEATED MILITARY SURGERIES TO REPAIR SEVERE FROSTBITE HE SUFFERED IN THE MOUNTAINS OF KOREA. In 1958, Baxter received a 60 percent disability rating. However, it wasn't until 2002 that Baxter was rated 100 percent granting him full benefits. WHY DID THEY KEEP HIM WAITING FOR 44 YEARS? Part of Baxter's challenge was that V.A. raters kept insisting that Baxter's mangled left foot was a genetic deformity; ONE OF THE OLDEST V.A. TRICKS OF DENIAL. "I NEVER GOT TO MEET WITH A RATING BOARD MEMBER" BAXTER TOLD THE COMMITTEE. "YOU DON'T GET A CHANCE TO SAY, 'THAT'S A LIE, SIR'". MOREOVER, WHAT OF ARCO CIANCANELLI, 80 YEARS OLD? HE IS HOLDER OF THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS, THE SILVER STAR, THE BRONZE STAR, AND THE PURPLE HEART, WOUNDED AND DISCHARGED IN 1945, AND YET IT WASN'T UNTIL 1997 THAT HE WAS GIVEN A 50 PERCENT DISABILITY, MOREOVER, RETROACTIVE BACK PAY FOR ONLY TWO MONTHS. HE HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO WALK MORE THAN A BLOCK FOR MANY YEARS. HE IS SEEKING THE 100 PERCENT TOTAL DISABILITY RATING THAT HE SHOULD HAVE RECEIVED BACK IN 1945. HE HOPES THAT HE CAN LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO ACHIEVE SOME JUSTICE. THE V.A. OWES SOME HEAVY DUES TO THESE PEOPLE, AND SOMETHING SHOULD BE DONE TO RECTIFY THE "MEAN SPIRITEDNESS" OF THIS RENEGADE AGENCY, THE V.A.

CONTINUATION OF CHICAGO'S V.A. CORRUPTION EXPOSE': THE MEETING BETWEEN V.A. SECRETARY NICHOLSON AND VETERANS TURNED INTO ANOTHER V.A. FARCE. THE V.A. AND NVSOs STOPPED AGGRIEVED CHICAGO VETS FROM ATTENDING CONFERENCE AND SPEAKING.

Thanks to fine journalism and the hard-hitting crusading work of the Chicago Sun-Times reporters, led by Cheryl L. Reed, it looks like the V.A. is "on the run". THE V.A. NEVER REALLY DID LEARN HOW TO PLAY DEFENSE. HOWEVER THEY ARE WELL KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE VETERAN'S COMMUNITIES ACROSS AMERICA FOR THEIR SLASH AND BURN TACTICS PERTAINING TO THE CAVALIER ATTITUDE THEY HAVE ABOUT VETERAN'S DISABILITY COMPENSATION, AND VETERANS BENEFITS IN GENERAL.

The original story of this V.A. thievery broke on December 2, 2004 and has carried consistently through to the present day. It hit with such impact, that the V.A.'s infamous "PRESS CORPS" did not have time to practice their "damage control" and thereby, their "spin control" like they did at the Atlanta, GA Regional V.A. office, when Judge Richard Storey sentenced 12 V.A. rating board members (the dirty dozen) to federal prison for 3 to 6 years. The leader of this "dirty dozen" group that robbed families of dead veterans of 11.2 million dollars. Sarah Prater was also the congressional liaison from the Atlanta V.A., and yet only two newspapers printed the entire story, due to the diligence of the V.A.'s "PRESS CORPS". And so, two years later, in Chicago, the truth has become public knowledge about how the V.A. "snookers" America's war injured disabled veterans out of their legitimate disability compensation due to them by the laws of this land, and yet stolen from them by a set of more devious laws ... USC TITLE 38, WHICH LEADS US INTO THE HORROR STORY OF HOW VETERANS THROUGHOUT OUR NATION HAVE BEEN "WALKING THE CORRIDORS OF TIME" FOR 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, AND YES, EVEN 60 YEARS, NOT KNOWING WHY THEIR OWN GOVERNMENT, DULY ELECTED BY THE AMERICAN PEOPLE DENY THEIR VERY VIABLE DISABILITY CLAIMS DESPITE INCONTROVERTIBLE EVIDENCE IN THE VETERAN'S FAVOR.

A very short time after the story of World War II veteran, Arco Ciancanelli, 80 years old, was told in the Chicago Sun-Times issue of Dec. 26, 2004 with the veteran's picture on the front page, and the dismay that Senator Barack Obama and Senator Dick Durbin showed at the V.A.'s chicanery involving Chicago veterans, a V.A. check of \$18,144 was sent to Mr. Ciancanelli. THE NEWS HEADLINES READ "VA WAKES UP, SENDS VET \$18,144". The relentless pursuit of the publicity given to this matter and the entire veteran's issue has wakened an angry public. The V.A. fears publicity. They love to hide in dark and dirty little corners like roaches. The fear that this bloated bureaucracy has shown, in the respect that Senators Obama and Durbin cannot be "bought off" has got the powers that be in Washington, D.C. "frightened to death". It shakes them right up to the Central Office. Knight-Ridder, one of the largest newspaper chains in America has sued the V.A. under the Freedom Of Information Act, and won. Now when a veteran needs information under the F.O.I.A., the V.A. can no longer ignore the law, under penalty of prison terms. KNIGHT-RIDDER NEWSPAPERS HAVE NOW JOINED IN WITH THE CHICAGO SUN TIMES AND THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE IN ONE ARTICLE AFTER ANOTHER OF V.A. CHICANERY IN THE DISPENSING OF DISABILITY COMPENSATION TO OUR NATION'S INJURED VETS. VETERANS FROM ALL OVER THE USA HAVE BEEN SENDING ME NEWSPAPER ARTICLES FROM ALL THE KNIGHT-RIDDER PAPERS.

This honorable World War II veteran, Mr. Arco Ciancanelli is very highly decorated by his nation. He holds the Distinguished Service Cross ... the second highest award, second only to the Congressional Medal of Honor. He also was awarded a Silver Star, a Bronze Star, and a Purple Heart. However, even that required congressional intervention. Last year, after U.S. Rep. Rahm Emanuel's office interceded, he finally received his medals. Ciancanelli said he was always recuperating in hospitals when the medal ceremonies were conducted. Ciancanelli, now 80 years old, wants his disability pay back to 1945, when he first applied to the V.A., and got nothing. For the past seven years, the V.A. has been sending Ciancanelli a monthly check, now about \$700, for a gunshot wound and the effects of severe frostbite he suffered in WWII. Only two of the many injuries suffered in combat. He is not able to walk more than one block, but the V.A. would only give him back pay for only two months. They said, "That's the law. It will not do you any good to complain, even if you get a lawyer". This situation is common among older veterans in dealing with a very "mean spirited" V.A.

This author's observations of this are: "EVEN CLARENCE DARROW COULDN'T WIN WITH THE ANTIQUATED AND UNFAIR RULES OF THE V.A. AND THEIR U.S. CODE TITLE 38, A POOR SUBSTITUTE GIVEN VETERANS IN LIEU OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES, WHICH THEY ARE DEPRIVED OF IN THEIR DEALINGS WITH THE VA". "GET AN ATTORNEY"!!! THAT'S A BIG JOKE AT THE V.A.

YOU CAN'T GET AN ATTORNEY AT THE V.A. SECTION 5904 OF USC TITLE 38 says, "You ARE NOT ENTITLED TO AN ATTORNEY EVEN IF YOU WANT TO PAY FOR ONE UNTIL YOU RECEIVE A FINAL DENIAL BY THE V.A.'s INFAMOUS BOARD OF VETERANS APPEALS. THIS PROCESS, WITH ALL THE V.A.'s DENIALS, DELAYS, AND REMANDS, ENDS UP TAXING A VETERAN ON THE AVERAGE OF SEVEN YEARS".

"REAL LEGAL REPRESENTATION (ATTORNEYS) ARE MOST NEEDED AT THE LOCAL REGIONAL OFFICES, WHERE MOST OF THE ABUSE TAKES PLACE, AND A VETERAN IS NOT ALLOWED TO BRING HIS OWN ATTORNEY TO THE V.A. REGIONAL OFFICE. HE IS TOLD THAT HE SHOULD CONTACT THE DAV, AMERICAN LEGION, OR ANOTHER SERVICE REP. IN MOST CASES, THAT'S A STACKED DECK

AGAINST THE VETERAN, AND A VIOLATION AGAINST HIS CONSTITUTIONAL, AND SOMETIMES HIS CIVIL RIGHTS. THE DAV AND THE AMERICAN LEGION SURE KNOWS WHICH SIDE THE V.A. BUTTERS THEIR BREAD ON. BETWEEN SECTION 5904, SECTION 511(a), THE V.A.'s FINALITY CLAUSE, AND SECTION 5902 (a) KNOWN AS THE "GRAVY TRAIN STATUTE", VETERANS STAND TWO CHANCES AT A V.A. HEARING SLIM AND NONE. THIS RAT SYSTEM CRIES OUT FOR REFORM, WHICH IS NOT THE ANSWER. THE CORRUPTION WITHIN THE SYSTEM IS TOO DEEPLY INGRAINED. THE ONLY ANSWER CAN BE ... "TAKE EM DOWN". "THESE CASES BELONG IN A REAL COURT, AND NOT A KANGAROO COURT, PLAIN AND SIMPLE. THE ONLY PLACE TO DECIDE THESE CASES IS IN A FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT CLOSEST TO THE VETERAN'S HOME. ITS PAST DUE TIME THAT VETERANS WERE GIVEN LEGAL PARITY EQUAL TO THAT OF ALL OTHER AMERICANS".

It is shocking, and yet at the same time pathetic that a veteran, the caliber of an Arco Ciancanelli can be abused in this manner for over half a century by this degrading bureaucracy.

YES, ARCO CIANCANELLI DESERVES HIS FULL 100 PERCENT DISABILITY COMPENSATION RETROACTIVE TO HIS DISCHARGE FROM THE ARMED FORCES IN 1945. THERE ARE NO TWO WAYS ABOUT THAT FACT. AND YET, WE WONDER HOW MANY HEARINGS WILL THIS "MEAN SPIRITED" V.A. FORCE THIS MAN TO GO THROUGH JUST TO RECEIVE WHAT HE HAS BEEN ILLEGALLY DENIED SINCE 1945?? THE ANSWER IS WHILE THE MEDIA IS KEEPING THE NEWS OF VETERANS BEING ROBBED OF THEIR BENEFITS, ALIVE, AND IN THE FOREFRONT.... NONE. THEY WOULDN'T DARE.

For decades, the veterans of this country have been aware of bonuses being paid to V.A. rating board members, adjudicators, V.A. lawyers, and V.A. executives as incentive to deny veteran's claims. For just as long, the members of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, and the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee have been privy to this same information, as well as the symbiotic relationships between the V.A. and the Chartered National Veterans Service Organizations such as the American Legion and the DAV (Disabled American Veterans), and have done absolutely nothing about this outrage. LETS SEE WHAT HAPPENS AS AMERICA'S MEDIA NOW TURNS UP THE HEAT OF PUBLIC EXPOSURE, AND THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA BECOME ANGRY AT OUR GOVERNMENT FOR PERMITTING THIS TO HAPPEN!!

One of the veterans mentioned on my previous article on 1/10/05 "Massive V.A. Corruption Exposed", Korean War Vet George Baxter, 74, who was a P.O.W. Baxter was shot twice. His right leg was amputated, and his left leg was deformed by repeated military surgeries to repair severe frostbite he suffered in the mountains of Korea. In 1958, Baxter received a 60 percent disability rating. However, it wasn't until 2002 that Baxter was rated 100% full benefits. WHY DID THEY KEEP HIM WAITING FOR 44 YEARS ?? Part of Baxter's challenge was that V.A. raters kept insisting that Baxter's mangled left foot was a genetic deformity, ONE OF THE OLDEST V.A. TRICKS OF DENIAL. I NEVER GOT TO MEET WITH A RATING BOARD MEMBER" BAXTER TOLD THE COMMITTEE. 'YOU DON'T GET A CHANCE TO SAY, "THAT'S A LIE, SIR".

Donald Satkas shot twice, suffering severe frostbite in the mountains of Korea in 1951. Half a century later, he is still fighting the V.A. for his overdue disability pay. In September 2001, a stroke paralyzed him during an MRI scan, learning there was still a bullet lodged in his hip. In 2003, Satkas received an 80 percent disability, mostly for the effects of frostbite without any retroactive pay back to 1951, while denying any benefit for the bullet in his hip. HE

SHOULD HAVE BEEN GETTING BENEFITS SINCE THE DAY HE WAS DISCHARGED. WHY DON'T THEY EVER TELL THEM WHAT THEY ARE ENTITLED TO? THEY JUST DENY AND DENY AND HOPE THAT YOU GIVE UP OR EXPIRE. MOREOVER, WHAT OF JAMES GATES? HE FOUGHT THE V.A. SINCE 1978. HE EXPIRED BEFORE HE COULD COLLECT ANYTHING ON HIS CLAIM. WE WILL NEVER KNOW, UNLESS THE NEWSPAPERS CRUSADE FOR THE CASE TO BE REOPENED, AND HIS SURVIVORS PAID THE BENEFITS DUE THEM. SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT SERIOUSLY. IF THIS COULD BE EFFECTED, MAYBE WE COULD PROVE THAT JUSTICE IS NOT BLIND.

For those who are not familiar with the V.A.'s treachery, and lack of "fair play" with our nation's war injured ... the meeting that was supposed to take place in the Chicago area with new V.A. Secretary, Mr. Jim Nicholson and the Chicago area vets will very likely never take place.² Instead, the V.A. and the NVSOs (veteran's service organizations) saw fit under the auspices of Dennis Hastert (R-IL), the *Sleazer* of the House, to move the hearing to a more remote area of Illinois, so as the aggrieved Chicago veterans could not attend, and the V.A. could keep ducking their questions, and keep veterans like Richard Lesniewicz, one of the spokesmen for the vets far away from the hearing. All these veterans were told unless you were a service officer for the D.A.V, or American Legion, or were on their list of preferred veterans to speak, don't bother to come to the meeting; you will, not be allowed to speak. They had even waited until the last minute to inform Senators Obama and Durbin of the change in location, so as they would not have the time to attend and witness the chicanery between the V.A. and their NVSOs. WHY AM I NOT SURPRISED AT WHAT THE V.A. IS CALLING A MEETING, AND THEIR TACTICS ??? THEY DO IT IN WASHINGTON, D.C. ALL THE TIME. DON'T EXPECT THE V.A.'s INSPECTOR GENERAL'S INVESTIGATION TO BE ANY BETTER. THOSE VETERANS "IN THE KNOW" WILL TELL YOU THAT THE V.A. INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE IS A RUBBER STAMP FOR THE V.A.

THE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM: "TAKE EM DOWN". WITH THE HELP OF THE MEDIA AND AN ANGRY PUBLIC, I PROMISE THAT WE EVENTUALLY WILL PUT AN END TO ALL THIS V.A.'s SMOKE AND MIRRORS".

WHAT CAN VETERANS EXPECT FROM THE NEW V.A. SECRETARY JIM NICHOLSON? THE LATEST CHICANERY IN THE CHICAGO V.A. EXPOSE' GIVES US OUR ANSWER. AS THE KNIGHT-RIDDER NEWSPAPERS JOIN THE MEDIA'S BARRAGE AGAINST THE V.A.

For those who are not familiar with the V.A.'s agenda of DELAY, DECEIVE, AND DENY, and their outrageous lack of "fair play" with our nation's war injured, and due to the massive corruption expose' unleashed by the Chicago Sun-Times pertaining to cheating disabled veterans of their disability compensation benefits, and their cavalier attitude towards veterans in general, JUSTICE HAS BEEN LONG OVERDUE FOR MORE THAN SEVEN DECADES. That is the amount of time that Illinois veterans have been either dead last, or 2nd or 3rd from the bottom in the rate of disability dispensed by this "BLOATED BUREAUCRACY" to our war wounded service connected veterans. THE CHICAGO SUN-TIMES EXPOSE' SERIES TITLED "WOUNDED WARRIORS" HAS BEEN A MAGNIFICENT JOURNALISTIC ENDEAVOR, AND STILL IS CURRENTLY ONGOING TODAY.

² This meeting did take place after this article was written.

FOR FAR TOO LONG THE ABUSES OF THE V.A., AND THE HORROR STORIES OF DENIALS OF COMPENSATION CLAIMS DUE TO INCENTIVE BONUSES GIVEN TO RATING BOARD MEMBERS, V.A. EXECUTIVES, AND V.A. LAWYERS HAVE BEEN HEARD COMING OUT OF EVERY V.A. REGIONAL OFFICE IN AMERICA, INCLUDING THE BOARD OF VETERAN'S APPEALS IN WASHINGTON, D.C.. SEVERAL YEARS AGO, TWO V.A. ATTORNEYS WORKING AT THE B.V.A.³ WERE SENT TO FEDERAL PRISON FOR FALSIFYING AND DESTROYING VETERANS CLAIMS FILES. ONE OF THEM WAS DISCOVERED BY THE F.B.I. TO HAVE 90 DISABLED VETERANS CLAIMS FILES IN HIS KITCHEN GARBAGE CAN. THERE HAVE BEEN REPORTS OF CLAIMS FILES THAT WERE "DUMPED" IN EMPTY ELEVATOR SHAFTS, FOUND WHILE RENOVATING BUILDINGS PREVIOUSLY OCCUPIED BY V.A. REGIONAL OFFICES.⁴ NOT TOO LONG AGO, 12 RATING BOARD MEMBERS (WE CALL THEM THE "DIRTY DOZEN") WERE SENT TO FEDERAL PRISON FOR SCAMMING THE FAMILIES OF DEAD VETERANS OUT OF 11.2 MILLION DOLLARS. THE RINGLEADER OF THIS GROUP WAS GIVEN A 13-YEAR SENTENCE. COINCIDENTLY, SHE WAS NOT ONLY A SENIOR RATING BOARD MEMBER, BUT ALSO THE CONGRESSIONAL LIAISON FOR THE ATLANTA V.A. REGIONAL OFFICE.

TERRIBLE QUALITY HEALTH CARE HAS LONG BEEN A COMMON PLACE OCCURRENCE AT THE TEMPLE, TEXAS, AND CLEVELAND V.A. MEDICAL CENTERS AMONG OTHERS. ABC NEWS/PRIME TIME TV SHOW, HOSTED BY DIANE SAWYER HAS HAD SEVERAL PROGRAMS ON THESE OUTRAGES. V.A. DOCTORS HAVE OFTEN BEEN INTIMIDATED, AND THREATENED WITH A LOSS OF THEIR JOBS BY EXECUTIVES AND RATING BOARDS, WHEN SHOWING A PROPENSITY TO BE FAIR WITH VETERANS.

A VETERAN, WITH AN INJURY CLAIM AGAINST THE V.A. DOES NOT HAVE THE PROTECTION OF EQUAL JUSTICE UNDER THE LAW. INSTEAD HE IS GIVEN USC TITLE 38 IN LIEU OF THE U.S. CONSTITUTION. HE IS NOT ALLOWED TO HAVE HIS OWN ATTORNEY REPRESENT HIM, UNTIL HE GETS A FINAL DENIAL FROM THE V.A.'s INFAMOUS BOARD OF VETERANS APPEALS, WHICH TAKES ON THE AVERAGE OF 7 YEARS. IN THE INTERIM, THE V.A. HAS OVER 1,200 ATTORNEYS, FINDING NEWER, BETTER, AND MORE CREATIVE WAYS TO DENY CLAIMS.

The disabled veteran is also prevented from taking his claim to a real court by the warped and perverted laws of this same USC Title 38, and must be heard only by the V.A.'s "KANGAROO COURT". The U.S. Court of Appeals For Veteran's Claims, is a total farce, but he can't be heard until his case is delayed by many years of endless denials, bureaucratic red tape, losing and destruction of records, and remands. In other words, the veteran is forced to go through this ordeal, without an attorney, while being denied access to a fair and equitable forum. All this, and unlimited protection being given to this renegade agency, the V.A. by their friends at both the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees, and the chartered National Veterans Service Organizations, who have betrayed their fellow veterans for "agency freebies" given to them under this same USC Title 38, Section 5902(a). "The Gravy Train Statute". What is mistakenly called "laws" (USC Title 38) are nothing but V.A. regulations.

³ BVA – Board of Vetern's Appeals

⁴ It is alleged that 600 VA Claims were found in an elevator shaft, while renovating buildings previously occupiedby VA regional offices.

THE BEST KEPT SECRETS IN THIS COUNTRY FOR GENERATIONS HAVE BEEN V.A. AND GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE AND EXECUTIVE “INCENTIVE PROGRAMS” THAT HAVE BEEN DENYING DISABLED VETERANS THEIR BENEFITS IN ORDER TO PAY THEMSELVES CASH BONUSES FOR THE DIRTY WORK DONE BY THEM. One such program is the “Senior Executive Service Act” under USC Title 5, Section 3131, which provides substantial cash awards, as much as \$30,000 per year to federal and V.A. managers to deny claims, and save the government money. This has been in effect for decade after decade.

In case you are not familiar with the V.A.’s treachery, and lack of “fair play” with our nation’s war injured ... A meeting was supposed to take place in the Chicago area with new V.A. Secretary Jim Nicholson and the Chicago vets. That meeting never happened, and it’s not likely that it ever will, because the V.A. and the NVSOs (veteran’s service organizations) saw fit under the auspices of Dennis Hastert (R-IL), the Sleazer of the House, to move the hearing to a more remote area of Illinois, so as the aggrieved Chicago veterans could not attend, and the V.A. could keep ducking their questions, and keep veterans like Richard Lesniewicz, one of the spokesmen for the vets, as far away from the hearing as possible. All these veterans were told unless you are a service officer for the D.A.V. or American Legion, or were on their list of “preferred veterans to speak ... don’t bother to come to the meeting. You will not be allowed to speak. They had even waited until the last minute to inform Senators Obama and Durbin of the change in location, so as they would not have the time to attend, and witness the chicanery between the V.A. and their friends, the NVSOs. WHY AM I NOT SURPRISED AT WHAT THE V.A. IS CALLING A MEETING, AND THEIR TACTICS??? THEY DO IT IN WASHINGTON, D.C. ALL THE TIME. IT’S CALLED THE OLD WASHINGTON, D.C. TWO-STEP. A BIG PART OF THE V.A.’s “SMOKE AND MIRRORS” AGENDA. A V.A. Inspector General’s investigation is promised, but don’t expect it to be any better. THOSE VETERANS “IN THE KNOW” WILL TELL YOU THAT THE V.A. INSPECTOR GENERAL’S OFFICE IS A JOKE AND A RUBBER STAMP FOR THE V.A.

SENATOR BARACK OBAMA HAS VOWED TO LEVEL OUT THE DISCREPANCY OF THE DISABILITY BENEFITS FOR ILLINOIS VETERANS. THE CHICAGO SUN-TIMES HAS JUST PUBLISHED AN ARTICLE “SENATORS TO V.A. BOSS: TIMES UP”. Senators Dick Durbin and Barack Obama are tired of waiting after almost 5 months since the news media published the expose’ of the transgressions of the VA Chicago Regional Office and all the ensuing horror stories associated with this “national disgrace”. THE ILLINOIS VETERANS ARE STILL RECEIVING SOME OF THE LOWEST PAYMENTS IN THE COUNTRY, AND SO FAR NOTHING IS BEING DONE ABOUT IT. V.A. SECRETARY JIM NICHOLSON HAS SCHEDULED A VISIT TO CHICAGO FOR A CEREMONIAL GROUND BREAKING AT A HOMELESS SHELTER FOR VETERANS. HE APPARENTLY WILL NOT MEET WITH THE SENATORS OR WITH CHICAGO VETERANS. IT WILL BE NICHOLSON’S SECOND VISIT TO ILLINOIS SINCE HE TOOK OFFICE IN EARLY FEBRUARY, AND THE SECOND TIME HE HAS DODGED A MEETING WITH CHICAGO VETERANS AND SENATORS DURBIN AND OBAMA. “PERHAPS THE SECRETARY THINKS THAT SEN. DURBIN AND MYSELF ARE GOING TO BE GOING AWAY SOME TIME SOON”, OBAMA SAID. I WAS JUST ELECTED. I’VE GOT SIX YEARS TO BEAT UP ON HIM, AND SEN. DURBIN HAS GOT AT LEAST FOUR MORE”.

Both senators said they voted to confirm Nicholson, based on his promise to come to Chicago and meet with veterans here who have been shortchanged in disability pay for seven decades. “I expect Secretary Nicholson to follow through on his promise”. Obama said he might not think this is a high priority. One would think the alarms would have gone off at this point in

Washington, that Secretary Nicholson would say; we've got a real problem in Illinois. Lets go in there and fix it. That has not happened". In the interim, Richard Ehrlichman, Asst. V.A. Inspector General for management issued another "twaddle report" stating "There's no draft report yet. I don't know when it will be finished. It's still in progress". He was not wearing a clown suit when he made that statement.

I have been in touch with Senator Obama's offices in Chicago and in Washington, D.C. and also the reporters from the Chicago Sun-Times and the Washington Bureau of Knight-Ridder Newspapers to supply them with information on this and other V.A. situations and audiotapes of our radio programs. The media outlets have all sent me confirmations upon receiving my information, but not the Senator's office staff except for one gentleman in the Chicago Office, who "hunted down" my material, and confirmed delivery.

The Washington, D.C. office has never found the vital material that I have sent several months ago, nor do I think they ever will. Many veterans believe that the V.A. strategically has planted people in certain political offices (members of the HVAC and the SVAC) to intercept, and read mail from veterans. I will not argue with that theory.

THE V.A. SPENDS A LOT OF THE TAXPAYERS MONEY IN ORDER TO SEPARATE THE VETERAN FROM ENTITLED BENEFITS. 1) MILLIONS UPON MILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF "FREEBIES" TO THE CHARTERED NVSOs, THEIR OWN PRIVATE SUPPORT GROUPS. 2) A "PRESS CORPS", WHOSE SOLE JOB IS TO KEEP ANY NEGATIVE NEWS ABOUT THE V.A. OUT OF THE MEDIA. THEY KEEP THESE MANY HIGHLY PAID PEOPLE HIDDEN UNDER UNRELATED JOB TITLES. 3) BONUSES TO RATING BOARD MEMBERS, EXECUTIVES, AND V.A. LAWYERS TO DENY DISABLED VETERAN'S CLAIMS. 4) PAYOFFS AND FAVORS FOR A CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH CONGRESSIONAL VETERAN'S COMMITTEE PEOPLE AND SELECTED PEOPLE IN SOME CONGRESSIONAL OFFICES. 5) MORE THAN 1,200 ATTORNEYS TO FIND BETTER, MORE DEVIUS, AND CREATIVE NEW WAYS TO DENY CLAIMS ... WOULDN'T IT BE A LOT LESS EXPENSIVE TO PAY THE INJURED DISABLED VETERAN HIS ENTITLED BENEFITS RATHER THAN ALL THIS GRAFT ??? I SINCERELY BELIEVE THAT THE CORRUPTION OF THIS AGENCY IS TOO DEEPLY INGRAINED. THE SOLUTION: "SHUT THEM DOWN".

FRIDAY, MAY 20th 2005: V.A. SECRETARY JIM NICHOLSON FINALLY MEETS WITH CHICAGO VETERANS AND SENATORS BARACK OBAMA AND DICK DURBIN. THE OFFER: "ICE IN THE WINTER". NO SURPRISE, CONSIDERING THE MENTALITY OF WHAT WE ARE DEALING WITH.

Vietnam Veteran Larry Bychowski of Crystal Lake, Illinois stated a point during Friday's town hall style meeting with V.A. Secretary Jim Nicholson and Senators Barack Obama and Dick Durbin. "I HAVE NOT HEARD THIS BIG A SNOW JOB IN MY ENTIRE LIFE". V.A. SECRETARY NICHOLSON FINALLY RELENTED TO PRESSURE FROM ILLINOIS VETERANS AND SENATORS THIS LAST FRIDAY, AND PROMISED TO SET UP A SPECIAL UNIT TO RE-EXAMINE OLD DISABILITY CLAIMS OF VETERANS HERE WHO FEEL THEIR CASES WERE TREATED UNFAIRLY. SPEAKING BEFORE SEVERAL HUNDRED VETERANS AT A TOWN HALL MEETING FRIDAY, NICHOLSON, AFTER PRODDING FROM BOISTEROUS VETERANS, ALSO AGREED TO HIRE MORE STAFF TO PROCESS DISABILITY CLAIMS IN THE CHICAGO V.A. OFFICE. (NOTE WITH THE RETURNING NUMBER OF VETERANS FROM IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN . . . MORE STAFF WILL HAVE TO BE ADDED IN EVERY REGIONAL OFFICE IN AMERICA). His comments were, "We are committed to doing what is right for all

veterans. If that entails setting up a special operation here in Illinois to review your claims ... we will do that. We want each of you to feel you have been treated fairly and equitably”.

NICHOLSON’S COMMENTS CAME JUST MINUTES AFTER HIS UNDER SECRETARY FOR BENEFITS, VICE ADMIRAL DANIEL COOPER, USN (RET.), TOLD A CROWD OF REPORTERS THAT THE V.A. LEGALLY COULDN’T SET UP ANY SPECIAL UNIT TO LOOK AT OLD CLAIMS, DESPITE DECADES OF LOW PAYMENTS AWARDED TO ILLINOIS WOUNDED VETERANS. IT HAS BEEN MY OPINION, AND THAT OF EVERY SINGLE VETERANS ADVOCATE THAT I KNOW OF, ADMIRAL COOPER’S MEAN SPIRITEDNESS ACCURATELY REFLECTS THE V.A.’s ATTITUDE OF THIS ADMINISTRATION, AND ALL OTHERS PRECEDING IT. DURING ALMOST ALL OF THE RADIO PROGRAMS THAT I DO NATION WIDE, I HAVE IMPORED ADMIRAL COOPER TO RESIGN FROM HIS JOB WITH THE V.A. I QUOTE “IT IS NOT A JOB FOR A MAN, BUT FOR A SNEAKY LITTLE OPPORTUNIST, THAT DOES NOT BEFIT A FORMER U.S. NAVY ADMIRAL. I HAVE MANY TIMES ASKED HIM TO RESIGN BEFORE HE FURTHER DISGRACES THE UNIFORM THAT HE HAS WORN FOR HALF OF HIS LIFE”.

Cooper, unfortunately, has been with us since the Anthony Principi regime. Former Secretary Principi used to refer to him as the head of his “task force”. An Inspector General’s investigation released Thursday, May 19th shows that Illinois has ranked dead last in disability payments to veterans for the last 20 years. In 2004, the Chicago Regional Office, which handles veteran’s claims statewide, paid an average of \$6,961 per disabled veteran. In contrast, New Mexico, which ranked No.1 in the nation, paid out an average of \$12,004. The Inspector General’s Report followed a Chicago Sun-Times massive V.A. corruption series about the nightmare of veteran’s crass treatment at the hands of the Chicago V.A. Regional Office. ALL V.A. REGIONAL OFFICE’S MODUS OPERANDI ARE OUTRAGEOUS. CHICAGO’S IS JUST A LOT WORSE. COOPER SAID HE DIDN’T KNOW WHAT EXACTLY HAD CAUSED THE LOW AWARDS, BUT THE ONLY REMEDY HE COULD OFFER ILLINOIS VETERANS WAS TO RESUBMIT THEIR CLAIMS AGAIN OR FILE AN APPEAL — A PROCESS THAT VETERAN’S ADVOCATES SAY TAKES A MINIMUM OF 2 YEARS. “I DON’T THINK WE CAN SET UP UNDER LAW A DIFFERENT SYSTEM IN ILLINOIS”, COOPER SAID, “WE HAVE TO OPERATE WITHIN THE LAW AND THE REGULATIONS AS LAID DOWN”. IT’S PAST DUE TIME THAT COOPER, AND INDIVIDUALS AS MEAN SPIRITED AS HE, WERE FIRED FOR THE GOOD OF OUR ENTIRE NATION, ALTHOUGH I FEEL HIS ATTITUDE REFLECTS THE WARPED THINKING COMING OUT OF THE WHITE HOUSE. THIS MAN CANNOT BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE ABUSING THE VETERANS OF THIS NATION.

THE LONG ANTICIPATED V.A. INSPECTOR GENERAL’S REPORT (ALMOST SIX MONTHS), THE V.A.’s EVASIVENESS, AND ADMIRAL DANIEL COOPER’S ASSESSMENT AND COMMENTS WERE STRONGLY BLASTED BY SENATORS OBAMA AND DURBIN. AND FOUND TO BE TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE. “IT CONFIRMS OUR WORST FEARS ABOUT THE TREATMENT OF ILLINOIS VETERANS BY THE V.A”., DURBIN SAID OF THE REPORT. SENATOR OBAMA. WHO SITS ON THE SENATE VETERAN’S AFFAIRS COMMITTEE SAID “WE ARE LESS THAN PACIFIED BY THE RESPONSE FROM THE V.A., AND WOULD CONTINUE PURSUING THE ISSUE IN WASHINGTON”. IN PARTICULAR, OBAMA SAID HE WOULD DILIGENTLY MONITOR WHETHER OR NOT NICHOLSON FOLLOWS THROUGH WITH WHAT OBAMA INTERPRETED AS A PROMISE TO ADD STAFF TO THE CHICAGO REGIONAL V.A. OFFICE, AS WELL AS TO ATTACK THE VAST BACKLOG OF PENDING CLAIMS IN ILLINOIS AND A DILIGENT FOLLOW UP ON REVIEWING

MANY OLDER CLAIMS. WHICH VETERANS SAY WERE NEVER ADJUDICATED CORRECTLY IN THE FIRST PLACE, AND HAVE BEEN WAITING MANY YEARS FOR JUSTICE DELAYED AND DENIED. THIS IS SOMETHING THAT ALL OF AMERICA SHOULD WATCH AND MONITOR VERY CLOSELY, CONSIDERING THE V.A.'s LESS THAN HONEST PAST TRACK RECORD OF NEVER KEEPING THEIR PROMISES MADE TO VETERANS.

If it were not for the Chicago Sun-Times, and the relentless follow up of this newspaper's massive V.A. corruption expose', primarily the writing of Pulitzer Prize deserving reporting of staff reporter Cheryl L. Reed on their Wounded Warrior series started on Dec. 2, 2004and continuing right up to the present, the V.A. and their "press corps" would have "shut down this important news, as they have in the past many times. They have been joined by the Chicago Tribune, and all of the Knight-Ridder Newspapers. This is the bright light of publicity that the V.A. cannot afford. It is the vehicle which will eventually do them in. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MEDIA WAS DEMONSTRATED IN EARLY DECEMBER OF LAST YEAR WHEN THE STORY OF MR. ARCO CIANCANELLI WAS PUBLISHED IN THE CHICAGO SUN-TIMES WITH HIS PICTURE ON THE FRONT PAGE. CIANCANELLI, A WORLD WAR II VETERAN, WHO SHOULD HAVE BEEN RECEIVING 100% TOTAL DISABILITY COMPENSATION FROM THE V.A. SINCE 1945, WHEN HE WAS DISCHARGED FROM THE MILITARY, AFTER MULTIPLE COMBAT GUNSHOT WOUNDS AND SEVERE FROSTBITE. HE HAD BEEN RECEIVING ONLY SEVERAL HUNDRED DOLLARS A MONTH FOR JUST A FEW YEARS. A SHORT FEW DAYS AFTERWARDS, HE RECEIVED A CHECK IN THE MAIL TO COVER ONE OF HIS INJURIES FOR \$18,144.00. HE IS OWED MUCH MORE RETROACTIVE PAY TO COVER HIM FOR ALL THE REST OF HIS INJURIES, AND INTENDS TO PRESS FOR THIS BENEFIT FROM WHAT IS KNOWN AS THE STINGIEST OFFICE IN THE V.A. SYSTEM. THERE HAVE BEEN QUITE A FEW OTHER VETERAN CASES MENTIONED PROMINENTLY IN THE CHICAGO SUN TIMES ARTICLES, WHO ARE STILL WAITING TO BE PAID FOR THEIR SERVICE CONNECTED INJURIES. WITHOUT THE POWER OF THE PRESS, THE V.A. WOULD HAVE BURIED ALL OF THESE CLAIMS PERMANENTLY. The V.A. has enough money to pay over 2,000 people that are hidden under unrelated job titles, the "V.A.'s press corps", whose sole function is to keep any negative news of the V.A. out of the media. They have enough money to pay rating board members, lawyers, and executives bonuses (bounties) to deny disability compensation claims. They have enough money to pay millions of dollars to each of the chartered National Veteran's Service Organizations under U.S.C. Title 38, Section 5902(a) known as "THE GRAVY TRAIN STATUTE" as "FREEBIES" generally for the poor quality of "so called representation" for veterans, who are denied real attorneys by this same outrageous U.S.C. Title 38, Section 5904. It is also believed, although not yet proven, that they do plant people strategically in the offices of many congressmen and senators to intercept, and sometimes lose or destroy mail, from veterans. THE PENALTY FOR THIS CRIME IS TEN YEARS IN PRISON. I have consulted with U.S. Post Office inspectors about the possibility of setting a trap for some of these people, with the cooperation of some congressmen and senators. Then, we might be able to serve some writs to some rats.

The V.A. is not the only antagonist that America's veterans have to contend with. DAVID CHU, ASST. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE IS UNDER THE OPINION THAT IF IT WERE NOT FOR THE MONEY SPENT FOR VETERAN'S AND MILITARY RETIREES BENEFITS, WE WOULD HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO FIGHT THE WAR. HE HAS BEEN EXTREMELY OUTSPOKEN ABOUT HIS DISLIKE OF AMERICA'S VETERANS AND MILITARY RETIREES. THIS IS NOT JUST A DEMENTED "LOOSE CANNON" TALKING. HE IS ANSWERABLE TO HIS BOSS, SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, DONALD RUMSFELD, WHO HAD THE AUDACITY RECENTLY TO HAVE A RUBBER STAMP OF

HIS SIGNATURE MADE UP SO AS IT COULD BE USED IN CONDOLENCE LETTERS TO FAMILIES OF OUR MILITARY KILLED IN ACTION. WHAT WONT THEY THINK OF NEXT ??? A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF HOW LITTLE REGARD THAT THE PEOPLE OF THIS ADMINISTRATION HAVE FOR OUR FIGHTING MEN, OUR MILITARY RETIREES, AND OUR DISABLED VETERANS. THOSE VETERANS, PARTICULARLY THE ONES WHO RETIRED FROM MILITARY SERVICE, SEEM TO HAVE MORE ENEMIES THESE DAYS THAN THEY HAVE FRIENDS, ESPECIALLY IN WASHINGTON, D.C. WHILE THE WASHINGTON CROWD PRETENDS TO SUPPORT VETERAN ISSUES, THE TRUTH BEHIND THOSE FALSE GESTURES IS THAT ALL THESE POLITICIANS VIEW FORMER WARRIORS AS EXPENSIVE WASTE MATTER THAT SHOULD BE QUICKLY TOSSED INTO THE NEAREST TRASH HEAP. HOWEVER. IF VETERANS RANK ANY INDIVIDUAL OR AGENCY AS THE PRIMARY ENEMY, THE DEP'T OF DEFENSE, TOGETHER WITH THE V.A. HOLD THAT QUESTIONABLE HONOR. ONE NEEDS ONLY TO PICK A TOPIC. IF IT SUPPORTS A MILITARY RETIREE OR ANY VETERAN, DOD HAS A SPOKESPERSON TO DENY ANY GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY OR ANY OBLIGATION. IN MOST CASES THE DOD VOICE IS IN DIRECT OPPOSITION TO ISSUES RAISED BY AMERICAN VETERANS. THE DOD REMAINS A MAJOR OBSTACLE IN THE HIRING OF MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS TO WORK WITH VETERANS FACING SERIOUS EMOTIONAL ISSUES. IN ADDITION, MOST OF AMERICA IS FAMILIAR WITH THE CASE OF WORLD WAR II AND KOREAN WAR MILITARY RETIREES SEEKING DENIED, BUT PROMISED LIFETIME HEALTH CARE. IT BATTLED AGAINST THEM ALL THE WAY TO THE SUPREME COURT.

In the interim, the V.A. has plans to close the New York City V.A. Hospital, one of the busiest in our nation. At the bottom of this plot is the fact that the building and property where the hospital stands is a virtual real estate bonanza. It's worth at least 500 million dollars. They are planning to merge the New York City V.A. Hospital with the one in Brooklyn. One patient in a wheelchair, who regularly goes to this hospital for treatment was interviewed, and said "In order for me to travel to the Brooklyn facility, I would have to take a train, and then two buses in a wheelchair". THE SITUATION, AND THE PROMISES MADE BY THE V.A. IN CHICAGO REQUIRE VERY CAREFUL MONITORING BY BOTH THE MEDIA, AND THE POLITICIANS IN WASHINGTON, D.C. IN FACT, THE ENTIRE V.A. SYSTEM SHOULD BE MONITORED CLOSELY, WITH THE EVENTUAL SOLUTION OF "TAKING THEM DOWN", AND REPLACING THEM WITH A SYSTEM THAT WORKS TO BENEFIT OUR VETERANS. IN REALITY, THE CORRUPTION OF THE V.A. SYSTEM IS TOO DEEPLY INGRAINED TO BE REFORMED, AND MUST BE REPLACED COMPLETELY.

CHICAGO VETERAN WITH MULTIPLE GUNSHOT WOUNDS AND SEVERE FROSTBITE CHEATED OUT OF HIS 100% DISABILITY COMPENSATION FOR 60 YEARS (SINCE 1945), DIES. V.A. REFUSES TO PAY THE FAMILIES ANY BENEFITS. IT WOULD SEEM THAT BOTH ILLINOIS SENATORS HAVE "BILGED OUT", REFUSING TO LIFT A FINGER" TO HELP.

ERCOLINO "ARCO" CIANCANELLI, 80 Of Glenwood, Ill, died Saturday, May 28, 2005 of heart failure. He was a highly decorated U.S. Army veteran, who suffered permanent injuries after he was stabbed, shot, and frozen in World War II. Months before he died, Mr. Ciancanelli's fight against the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs (the. V.A.) was highlighted in the Chicago Sun-Times by having his story and picture published on the front page of the newspaper. A very short time later in February, he received an \$18,144 check from the V.A. after many, many years of filing disability claims since 1945, when he was discharged from the

military. (THIS MAN HAD BEEN ROBBED BY THE V.A. FOR 60 YEARS).

In 1944, Mr. Ciancanelli single-handedly killed two German soldiers and took 20 more as prisoners on the outskirts of Vesoul, France. His war medals include the Distinguished Service Cross, Bronze Star, Silver Star, and Purple Heart. He said he would have received the Congressional Medal of Honor, but he refused an order he thought would result in the deaths of many of his men. Mr. Ciancanelli only received his medals in 2003 with the help of U.S. Representative Rahm Emanuel (D-Ill.). He said he was always recuperating in hospitals when the medal ceremonies were conducted. Mr. Ciancanelli was born in Chicago Heights in 1924 and enlisted in the Army in January, 1943. He was wounded several times in the war as he served throughout Europe. And yet, it wasn't until 1997 that he was given a 50 percent disability, and retroactive back pay for only two months. A TYPICAL EXAMPLE OF V.A. "JUSTICE" TOLERATED BY AMERICA'S VETERANS. HE HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO WALK MORE THAN A BLOCK FOR MANY YEARS, AND WAS SEEKING THE 100 PERCENT DISABILITY RATING THAT HE SHOULD HAVE RECEIVED BACK IN 1945. HE HAD HOPED THAT HE COULD LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO ACHIEVE SOME JUSTICE.

THE V.A. OWES SOME "HEAVY DUES" TO THESE PEOPLE, AND SOMETHING SHOULD BE DONE TO RECTIFY THE "MEAN SPIRITEDNESS" OF THIS RENEGADE AGENCY, THE V.A. THE CHICAGO SUN-TIMES HEADLINES READ "V.A. WAKES UP, SENDS VET \$18,144". THE RELENTLESS PURSUIT OF THE PUBLICITY GIVEN TO THIS MATTER, AND THE ENTIRE VETERAN'S ISSUE HAS AWAKENED AN ANGRY PUBLIC. THE V.A. FEARS PUBLICITY, AND THEY ARE FRIGHTENED TO DEATH OF THE MEDIA AND REAL COURTS, ESPECIALLY THE R.I.C.O.⁵ LAWS. ONCE A VETERAN GETS HIS CASE OUT OF THE V.A.'s "DIRTBAG COURT", THE U.S. COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS, A VETERAN STANDS A GOOD CHANCE OF WINNING, AND LEVELING CRIMINAL CHARGES AGAINST THE "EVIL EMPIRE".

Many months ago, both the Washington, D.C. and the Chicago offices of Senator Durbin and Senator Obama have been sent large packets of information pertaining to V.A. transgressions and crimes against veterans and their families including four or five audiotapes of our radio programs. To this day, Senator Obama's office in Washington and both of Senator Durbin's offices have been unable to find what I have sent them. VERY SUSPICIOUS INDEED, AND BACKS UP MY BELIEF THAT THE V.A. STRATEGICALLY PLACES PEOPLE IN THE OFFICES OF MEMBERS OF THE S.V.A.C.⁶ AND THE H.V.A.C.⁷ TO INTERCEPT, READ, AND MANY TIMES DESTROY MAIL FROM VETERANS TO THEIR REPRESENTATIVES. In the Chicago office of Senator Obama, one very diligent aide located and found my package. Not so, with the other three offices. After consulting with the U.S. Postal Inspectors, and finding out that this bit or thievery calls for a ten year prison term, I made the suggestion to the Senator's office of sending another package, and setting a trap.

They "blew off" my suggestion, which makes me wonder ... MAYBE NOBODY REALLY WANTS TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT THIS PROBLEM, AND "TAKE ON" THE V.A.

AFTER HAVING A CONVERSATION WITH V.A. SECRETARY NICHOLSON'S OFFICE, IN REFERENCE TO THEM TO SEE THAT THE FAMILY OF ARCO CIANCANELLI WAS GIVEN SOME, IF NOT ALL OF THE MONEY THAT HE WAS CHEATED OUT OF BY THE AGENCY, AND BEING TOLD THAT "WE DON'T HAVE TO

⁵ RICO – Racketeer Influenced Corrupt Organization

⁶ SVAC – Senate Veteran's Affairs Committee

⁷ HVAC – House Veteran's Affairs Committee

PAY HIM. HE'S DEAD, AND THAT'S THE LAW". MY RESPONSE TO THIS PERSON WAS "YOU PEOPLE IN THE V.A. ALWAYS SEEM TO CONFUSE V.A. REGULATIONS WITH THE LAW. THEY USUALLY ARE TWO SEPARATE THINGS". SECRETARY NICHOLSON'S UNDERLING SEEMED TO BE OF THE OPINION THAT I WAS A "WISE GUY", AND HE TOOK A BELLIGERENT ATTITUDE, UNTIL I REMINDED HIM THAT AS AN EMPLOYEE OF THE V.A., HE IS NOT PROTECTED IN ANY WAY BY SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY, AND THAT I WOULD LEVEL R.I.C.O. CHARGES PERSONALLY AGAINST HIM, AND ALSO AGAINST THE V.A. AT THAT POINT, HE BACKED OFF, SOMEWHAT.

I HAD PREVIOUSLY TRIED TO CONVINCING THE SECRETARY'S OFFICE TO DO "THE RIGHT THING" AND PAY CIANCANELLI'S FAMILY. AND ALSO THE FAMILY OF JAMES GATES, A BLACK KOREAN WAR ERA VETERAN, WITH A LEGITIMATE CLAIM, WHO HAD DIED AFTER ALMOST 30 YEARS OF TRYING TO GET HIS COMPENSATION, AND HAD NEVER COLLECTED A CENT. THE FINAL WORDS OF THIS V.A. EMPLOYEE, WORKING FOR MR. NICHOLSON WAS "TELL THE FAMILY TO RESUBMIT ANOTHER CLAIM, AND GET ON LINE, AND WAIT YOUR TURN FOR AT LEAST TWO AND A HALF MORE YEARS". I EXPECTED NO BETTER OUT OF THE "EVIL EMPIRE".

AT THIS POINT I DECIDED TO CONTACT THE TWO SENATORS AND ASK THEM TO PERSUADE V.A. SECRETARY NICHOLSON TO DO THE RIGHT THING, AND PAY THE LONG OVERDUE CLAIMS, SO AS THE VETERANS COULD ACHIEVE THE JUSTICE IN DEATH THAT THEY HAD BEEN DENIED IN LIFE FOR ALL THESE MANY YEARS. After placing five telephone Calls to Senator Obama's Washington Office and five more calls to Senator Durbin's office, I placed a sixth call to Obama's office again, asking for the Senator only to return my call, and stating that I had left messages for the aide in charge of veteran's problems, without the courtesy of a returned call, and at this point would only speak to the Senator, and wouldn't you know it Lo, and behold MY CALL WAS FINALLY RETURNED BY THE PARTY THAT I WAS TRYING TO REACH FOR SO LONG, WHO TOLD ME THAT SHE HAD NEVER RECEIVED ANY OF THE FIVE MESSAGES. MY NEXT QUESTION WAS "DON'T YOU THINK THAT IT'S TIME THAT SOME PEOPLE WERE FIRED"??? The reason for my calls was to try to persuade both Senators to put pressure on Secretary Nicholson to twist his arm and pay the families of both dead veterans, Ciancanelli and Gates, the compensation that these veterans should have collected in life, but were denied because of the V.A.'s agenda. I made a total of 21 phone calls to the offices of these two senators, to no avail, which makes me believe that both senators have "bilged out" on their promises to help the Chicago veterans.

I STRONGLY SUSPECT THAT THESE PROMISES MADE ON MAY 20, 2005 AT THAT TOWN HALL MEETING IN CHICAGO BY THE V.A. WILL NEVER BE KEPT. I HAVE KEPT A LIST OF MOST OF THE VETERANS, WHO ATTENDED THE MEETING. INCLUDING ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS, AND SHOULD THE GOOD SENATORS NOT FOLLOW THROUGH AS PROMISED TO KEEP THE BRIGHT LIGHT OF TRUTH SHINING ON THE V.A., I WILL START A LETTER WRITING CAMPAIGN OF ASKING (WITH THE HELP OF THE AFORE-MENTIONED VETERANS) THE SENATE, TO RECALL BOTH SENATORS.

FOR GENERATIONS, VETERANS HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR THE MEDIA TO CALL ATTENTION TO THE V.A.'s OUTRAGEOUS AGENDA OF "SNOOKERING" INJURED VETS OUT OF THEIR BENEFITS AND NOW, IT HAS FINALLY HAPPENED

IN CHICAGO DUE TO THE COURAGEOUS JOURNALISM SHOWN BY THE CHICAGO SUN-TIMES, AND THEIR WOUNDED WARRIORS SERIES. KNIGHT-RIDDER NEWSPAPERS AND THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE HAVE ALSO FOLLOWED UP ON THIS MASS CORRUPTION EXPOSE'. HOWEVER, NOT A WORD HAS BEEN PRINTED IN ANY OF THE NEW YORK, LOS ANGELES, OR SAN FRANCISCO NEWSPAPERS ... AND WHY ??? COULD IT BE THAT THE V.A.s "PRESS CORPS" IS STILL DOING THE JOB OF SUPPRESSING THE NEWS AS IT ALWAYS HAS?

THIS EVIL, BLOATED BUREAUCRACY IS GOING TO DIE VERY HARD ... BUT DIE IT WILL. AND THE SOONER, THE BETTER FOR AMERICA.

Arthur N. Bernklau, Executive Director,
Veterans for Constitutional Law, Ltd.



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