

SUBMISSION

M.W. (Theo) LINDEN.

National Service ... 2 Years 1969 to 1971

War Service: Vietnam 1970 – 71 (9 months)

There are a few factors which form the basis of my submission, and I am aware that not everyone accepts some of these factors as TRUTHS. So I will make a few statements that I think should be accepted as universal truths in this day and age where we have learned so much from the history of so many wars.

In my experience of dealing with Vietnam Veterans, I have found that the hardest task is to convince the veteran that there is something wrong with him or her. While their behavior might be suitable for survival mode in a war zone, it is not appropriate in normal everyday work mode. Working through this process of convincing the veteran, of their disability to function, in a reasonable manner outside of the “war zone”, causes a stress-factor, level of anxiety of nine out of ten! The process also takes a few years to come to fruition, and at a heightened state of anxiety leaves the veteran in a very vulnerable state.

Then comes the confronting difficulty of trying to get the DVA to accept their disability, so that a pension might provide some income relief for the veteran’s family to survive. The lack of income and stressful, protracted procedure of dealing with the DVA, has a stress-factor level of anxiety of eight out of ten.

In more recent times the Government’s and general public’s awareness has become more tolerant of the traumas caused by wars. The overwhelming evidence from service personnel returning from Wars should be enough for any Government to grant the pension to Veterans on discharge, without having to prove that they satisfy certain criteria. This list is just a small example of war traumas by differing names.

WW I veterans suffering from “War Neurosis”

WW II veterans suffering from “Shell Shock”

Vietnam Veterans suffering from “PTSD”

In each War, the Trauma is REAL and SEVERE, to the Veteran, no matter what name you ascribe to the condition.

In general, service personnel, enlist into the forces during peace-time. Then for “POLITICAL REASONS” the Prime Minister and politicians send service personnel off to life threatening engagements, which changes their lives forever. Due to this “Politically” motivated essential service, the Prime Minister and Politicians, should legislate that:

A TPI PENSION AND GOLD CARD SHOULD BE PAID TO A VETERAN ON DISCHARGE.

Due to the “Political Decision” with a detrimental outcome to the “Veteran” a “Political Renumeration” should be the Veterans entitlement on discharge.

This entitlement has already been earned by the veteran and does not require to be reviewed by the DVA because the Prime Minister and Politicians have “deemed” the veterans’ service to be sufficient cause for the payment of a pension.

Within the above framework approximately five years of extreme stress and anxiety can be removed from the Veteran who does not need to suffer, a severe breakdown, followed by years of dealing with an antagonistic DVA.

Also, within the above framework the DVA will benefit greatly, as it concentrates on helping the Veteran to re-adjust to civilian life by offering counselling and courses. The numerous DVA Staff that are involved with vetting and cross-checking claims could be redeployed to helping the veteran. There would be no need for reviews of seemingly harsh decisions, once the Political decision has been made to:

GRANT THE PENSION ON DISCHARGE.

M.W.(Theo)Linden

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