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I began active duty as an Army officer the autumn after our graduation. At that point I was a true believer and volunteered for service in Vietnam. The Army was more than willing to honor my request.

It didn't take too long in country for me to realize what a huge mistake I, and more importantly the country, had made by being there. An ill-defined mission on the ground based on a rusty strategy emanating from the previous generations' worst fears. From Vietnam I watched others of my generation voice this opinion emphatically during the Chicago riots.

I served my year and returned from Vietnam during the summer of '69. My brother said "Welcome home." and headed out of the house to attend some big music festival in upstate New York.

I joined the Vietnam Veterans Against the War soon afterward. In January of 1971, the VVAW organized "war crimes" panels in Detroit where American vets recounted their participation in events that they had all come to regret. Working with the VVAW, I had a role in the production of a feature-length documentary titled "Winter Soldier" which focused on the Detroit sessions. It subsequently got a limited theatrical release which, I'm sad to say, was seen by few. (It pops up on some PBS stations every so often.)

Operation Dewey Canyon III took place in the Spring of 1971. Vietnam vets from all over the country, myself included, marched and protested in DC for three days. We were all camped out on the Mall, which drove Nixon nuts. He tried to evict us through legal proceedings that went all the way up to the Supreme Court! And the Court upheld the eviction order. We stayed anyway because the DC and Park Service police refused to evict vets. Our lawyer through all this was Ramsey Clark, LBJ's former Attorney General.

Afterwards, career, family, and life all started to happen and my anti-war involvement waned. I did, however, make a campaign film for Ramsey Clark in 1976 when he ran for US Senate in New York. He lost, but nobly.

Peace.



Scott Johnson '67 in center