speak in support who were not recognized, so if you will bear
with us, just to complete that part of the meeting, we will
call on Richard F. Weidman.

MR. WEIDMAN: Mr. Chairman, members of the Commis-
sion, thank you for the opportunity to address this Commission
today, and I will try to be brief.

I speak on behalf of Vietnam Veterans of America,
a national membership organization of men and women who served
in the U. S. military during the Vietnam War. Vietnam
Veterans of America as an organization, and I personally, urge
you to clear the way for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to be
dedicated in November of this year.

The impetus that has brought us this far began with
a resolution introduced by the Vietnam Veterans in Congress
Caucus, cosponsored by 235 members, and passed by the Con-
gress in October of 1978. That Congressional resolution
called upon the President to declare a national Vietnam
Veterans Week at the end of May 1979, for the Nation to finally
begin to pay due respect for service rendered to country in
difficult circumstances. As you undoubtedly know, Vietnam
Veterans Week took on a "life of its own" and became a water-
shed event for Vietnam Veterans. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial
Fund grew out of the energy and spirit of that week, as many
people, Veterans and nonveterans alike, agreed that it was
time for all Americans to honor those members of the Armed
Forces who gave their lives in service to their country in
Vietnam. The motivation was clear, decent and pure: to honor
our dead and missing fellow citizens who were lost in service
to country.

Much has happened since mid-1979. As has been the
case in the history of many of our national monuments (i.e., the
Washington Monument, among many others), there has been much
sound and fury over the plans and design. In all of the
tumult of arguments, debates and whatever over designs,
proper procedures, or personal and professional prerogatives,
only three things remain absolutely clear:

First, that it is right to honor those whom we lost;

Second, that the overwhelming majority of Vietnam
Veterans and all Americans support the Vietnam Veterans
Memorial; and

Third, the means is at hand to consummate the memorial
that is so fitting and so long overdue. I urge you to bear
in mind that simple, pure and right goal; honoring our dead
and to ignore and/or see through the nonsense to let us
get on with our primary purpose. Now is the time.

Thank you.