

# 15 Veterans Leave the Statue of Liberty, Claiming a

By MICHAEL T. KAUFMAN

Proclaiming victory for their gesture with cheers and raised fists, 15 antiwar veterans ended their occupation of the Statue of Liberty yesterday.

"Wow, we were in there a day and a half and the Government wouldn't touch us," shouted one of the fatigued men at a jubilant feast in a midtown restaurant where they went to celebrate after agreeing, in the face of a restraining order, to leave the statue.

"I thought for sure we'd spend the next six months in jail," shouted another, who was drinking beer and exchanging hugs with his friends.

"Hey, guys, quiet down," said Al Hubbard, the director of Vietnam Veterans Against the War. He had not been one of those in the statue but coordinated Operation Peace on Earth, a countrywide series of demonstrations, one of which was the action on Liberty Island.

## TV Invitation Claimed

"Look," he shouted in a banquet room of Majors Restaurant at 35 West 33d Street, "the Liberty 15 has been asked to go on the 'Today' show. What do you say?"

"Right on," shouted back the veterans as they laughed and drank their beer.

"We've also got an invitation for a talk show on WRVR, an FM station, but we're hedging," Mr. Hubbard said. "I think we'll be hearing from the 'Cavett Show.'"

It was obvious from the conversation, both on the boat returning from the island and in the restaurant, that these invitations and the attention of the foreign and domestic press that had focused on the occupation were regarded by the men as true fruits of victory.

"Did we succeed?" Mr. Hubbard said. "Of course, we did. We got the war back on Page One, where it belongs."

"Our whole purpose," said Timothy Holmes, a 22-year-old former marine sergeant who served 19 months in Vietnam, "was to get the Government and the people to listen. It is the only way we are going to stop this war."

While the private lawyers went into the statue to consult with the veterans, Mr. Morrison explained that the Government's position, "created through consultation with appropriate officials in the Justice Department, has been to proceed on a course that would avoid violence and confrontation."

According to Jim Murphy, a 26-year-old former Air Force sergeant who was one of the 15, part of the meeting with the lawyers was spent in discussing whether to stay or leave. The first vote was split. The second one was unanimous—to leave.

"We realized our only alternative was jail, and if we're going to take this protest to the country we can't afford to spend time inside," said Tim McCormick, a 24-year-old former medical corpsman from Somerville, N.J.

## One Was a Ringer

Then, about half an hour after the lawyers went in, the center doors on the lower level were opened and the veterans poured out, holding their fists aloft.

It had been reported that there were 16 veterans who had locked themselves in the statue. On their departure, the veterans explained the confusion over figures by saying that one of those inside was not a veteran, but a news reporter for radio station WBAL.

On the boat to Manhattan, Mr. McCormick explained that the final hours of the occupation were spent in tidying up the interior. He said the veterans had survived mostly on sandwiches they had taken with them.

On Monday evening the 15 took turns on typewriters putting down in two and three paragraphs what the occupa-

## 87 Arrested in Protest At Lincoln Memorial

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Dec. 28—Eighty-seven members of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War were arrested for disorderly conduct today after blocking the entrance to the Lincoln Memorial.

The demonstration against the increased bombing raids that began Sunday over North Vietnam followed a march by more than 150 young people from the Capitol, where members of the group burned copies of the Military Procurement Act.

At the White House, seven protesters dropped plastic bags of blood to "bring the bloodbath home." One demonstrator was arrested for littering.

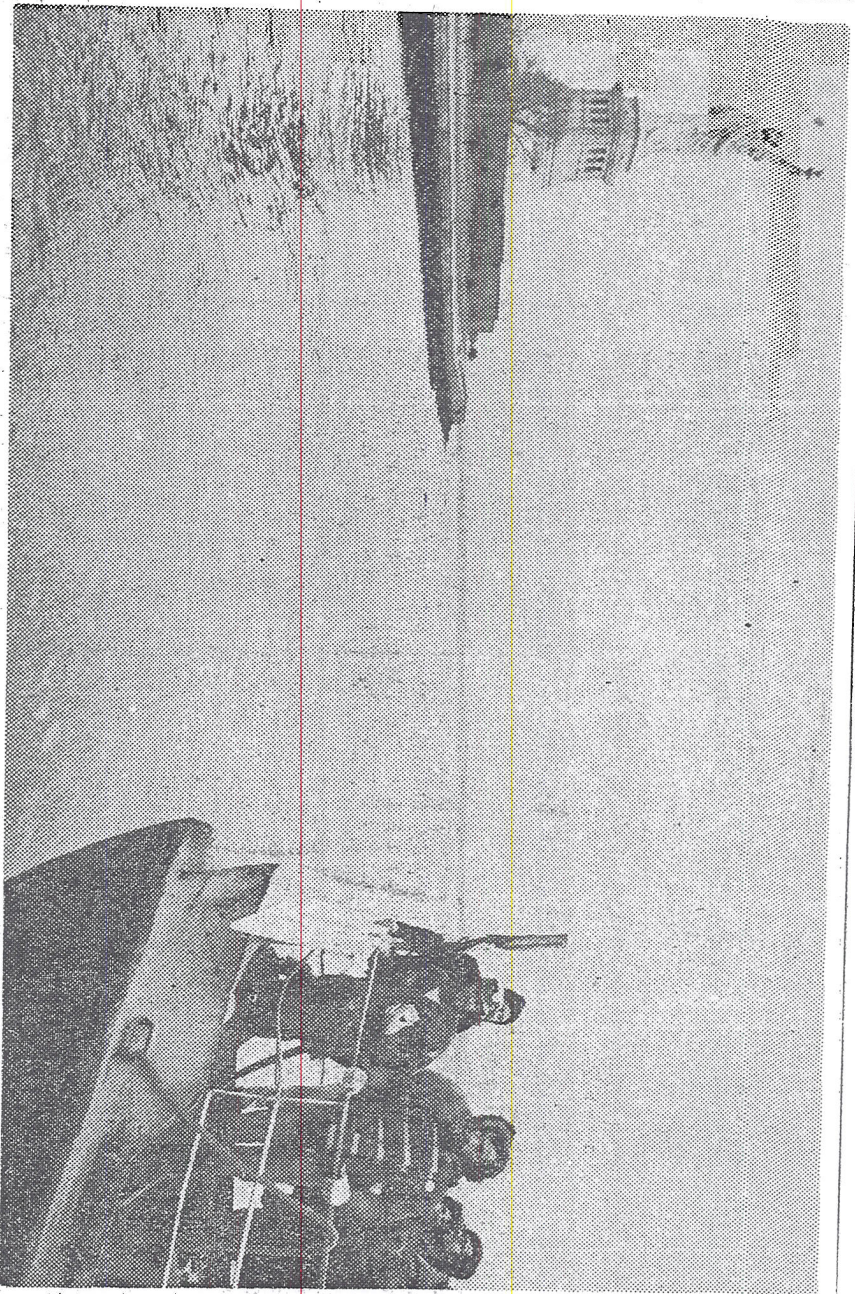
At the Lincoln Memorial, the group, which included men who were arrested yesterday for barricading themselves in the Betsy Ross House in Philadelphia, deposited a coffin in front of Lincoln's statue and later blocked the entrance to the memorial.

## Judge Signs Order

The end of the occupation of the statue came at 11:30 A.M., 42 hours after the veterans secreted themselves in the monument just before closing time Sunday.

At 9 A.M. United States District Judge Lawrence W. Pierce signed a temporary restraining order the Government had sought. The order called on the demonstrators to open the doors and remove themselves from the statue "except during normal visiting hours."

Within an hour, a National Park Service boat, the Liberty II, which had been ferrying newsmen, officials and policemen in a furious shuttle, ar-



The New York Times/Don Hogan Charles  
**Antiwar veterans on Liberty II as the boat began to pull away yesterday from Liberty Island for trip to Manhattan**

tive expression allowed only to those who are white and who maintain the status quo.

"Until this symbol again takes on the meaning it was intended to have, we must continue our demonstrations: all over the nation of our love of freedom and of America."

As the boat with the veterans was leaving the island, Mr. McCormick threw over the side three medals he had won in Vietnam.

After the veterans left, the force of 22 National Park Service policemen, who had previously been kept out of sight, entered the monument to search for possible damage or dangers.

Their chief, Franklin Arthur, reported later that the only damage to the statue was a bent grate leading to the arm holding the torch. "We classify that as minor," he said.

Reporters who toured the monument saw that the construction beams that had been used to blockade doors were stacked in piles and that food wrappings were all in wastebaskets. There was no disarray.

On a blackboard in an employees' lunchroom there was this message: "Brothers and sisters, thank you for the sugar and coffee and food." Near it was an envelope containing \$5.

At 2 P.M. the first tourist boat to Liberty Island since the start of the occupation left the start of the occupation left Battery Park with 100 eager visitors.

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