



Military-Veterans Advocacy, Inc.
Post Office Box 5235
Slidell, Louisiana 70469-5235

John B. Wells
Commander USN (Ret)
Executive Director

Admitted to practice:
Louisiana
Pennsylvania
District of Columbia

June 21, 2019

Mr. John Rowan
President
Vietnam Veterans of America
8719 Coleville Rd.
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Re: Withdrawal of Speaking Invitation

Dear Mr. Rowan:

Thank you for your letter of this date. I have been expecting it for a couple of weeks. It helped me make up my mind, since I was considering declining the invitation. I also understand that there was some sort of award involved and I do decline this award as well.

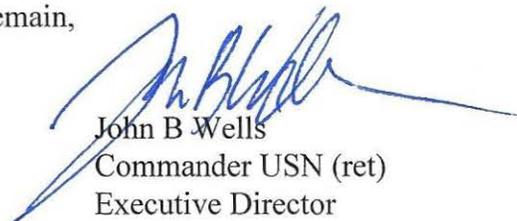
I do not remember any particular attacks on your staff unless you are referring to Rick Weidman's cursing me out and hanging up on me after he had called me a liar to third parties.

I have indicated that you along with the rest of the Big Six had forced through an unnecessary bill which actually narrowed the scope of the recent decision in *Procopio v. Wilkie*. That is not just my opinion. It reflects the decision of the *Procopio* litigation team. So, yes, I have mentioned, and will continue to mention, that you and the other Big Six have left up to 55,000 sailors behind. Ironically, I just came across one of your "Leave No Veteran Behind" pins this morning. It certainly seems to ring hypocritical now.

Attending your convention would have been distasteful, but I would not have betrayed your hospitality by attacking your failure to support veterans. Instead I would have diplomatically explained the *Procopio* decision, our concerns with the legislation and our recommendations for assisting sailors who served beyond the territorial sea. I am actually relieved that I do not have to spend the time to craft such a message. It would have been hard.

I guess what really upsets me is that while you take credit for what you did not accomplish, you do not even see fit to mention Susie Belanger. Frankly, I do not care about me, but Susie and others have been the driving force behind this endeavor. Ignoring her efforts is, in my opinion, despicable. You should be ashamed.

Wishing you the best in the future I remain,


John B. Wells
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