



"It's really a kick in the teeth to lose the job." William Joyce attempts a walk near his Kellner blevel home with his wife, Diane, and their daughter, Michelle, 2, and son, James, six months.

# Vietnam perspective...

The Vietnam War was a politicians' war that could have been won if it had been fought militarily, according to four area veterans. Three of them were wounded in Southeast Asia and are bitter about the outcome of the war. The fourth served in Taiwan and Greece and is somewhat philosophical about the outcome. Here are their views on the war.

## William Joyce: 'It wasn't a war, it was a checker game.'

"Sixty of us walked into an ambush, but only 12 got out," said William Joyce, 8520 Cedar Lane, town of Grant. "Now I feel all those lives were a waste — lost for nothing."

Navy Hospitalman 3rd Class Joyce was raised in Friendship and was a good friend of Dennis Rank, one of four Adams County servicemen killed in the war.

Joyce, 27, is married, the father of two children, ages two years and six months. He is unemployed and drawing disability compensation.

Joyce enlisted in the Navy medical corps in 1965 and on graduating from corpsmen's school was assigned to the Marines. Of nearly four years in the service, all but six months were in the Marines.

After being in Europe for six months, Joyce was shipped to Vietnam to be part of a surgical team. Because of a shortage of corpsmen, he went directly into the field.

"In three and a half weeks (in Vietnam), it felt like I got two and a half hours sleep," Joyce said. "If they weren't bombing the hell out of us, we were out looking for them," he said.

"The day I got hit, we walked into a helluva ambush. It was like Custer's last stand," Joyce said. "They were regulars, not the 11 and 12-year-old kids they gave guns to and showed how to shoot."

Joyce was trying to carry a wounded lieutenant out of the fire fight when an enemy soldier stood up and shot at him. The shot tore his jaw away and killed the officer.

"When he stood up I knew exactly what he was going to do. I hollered for some cover fire, but when he shot my jaw away, there was no more hollering," Joyce said.

During the several hours Joyce lay there before help arrived, he was shot a second time. The bullet went through his right hip and "messed up the ball and socket."

Joyce's plastic jaw bone with artificial teeth is anchored to his two remaining lower teeth.

"If those two teeth go, I don't know what happens. The doctors don't know either — they haven't had the experience with a case like mine," Joyce said.

Joyce had to leave his job four months ago as a pathology assistant at Riverview Hospital because of the pain from being on his feet eight to 12 hours a day. He is presently "living on pain killers" and waiting for a bone infection to clear up that will permit surgery to fuse his right hip and upper leg.

He is scheduled for surgery June 2 and estimates it will be late fall or winter before he is through with rehabilitation.

"If the surgery gets rid of the pain, fine. If I get to go back to work, even better," Joyce said. "I sure can't depend on the Veterans Administration to keep me going. You can't depend on them for a damn thing."

Until recently, Joyce was four months behind on his monthly \$225 house payment. When he left his job, he applied for 100 per cent disability. The first check arrived, however, so the house payments were made.

"I feel kinda sorry the way things turned out. I feel like we failed," Joyce said. "You can't really say we accomplished anything, except losing a lot of lives and ending up with a lot of screwed up vets to take care of. You should see some of those fellows at Tomah (VA Hospital). Some will never be in their right mind," he said.

"If it would have been a military war, we would have bombed the hell out of it and be done with it," he continued. "It wasn't a war. It was a checker game. They would make a move one day and we would move the next. It was stupid to be bombed all night long and then go look for them in the morning knowing they wouldn't be there," he said.

"I got a chip on my shoulder," Joyce said. "If they could fix my leg up, I'd go back. I got a score to settle. I saw the guy who shot me in the face."

## A lost war

"I feel he lost his life for something we shouldn't have been involved in," said Mrs. Lauraine Wendt, 1311 28th St. N., mother of deceased Vietnam serviceman Pfc Phillip Clark.

Private Clark was the first of 17 Wood County servicemen to be killed in the Vietnam War, according to the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs.

Phillip was born Feb. 22, 1946, enlisted in the Army Oct. 14, 1964 and died of hostile action March 4, 1966. He was a member of the 101st Airborne Division and is buried here in Calvary Cemetery. His father is Robert J. Clark, Green Bay.

"I say it was a lost war and our boys should never have gone over there," Mrs. Wendt said. "I don't think we should fight another battle for somebody — particularly if that country doesn't want to do its own fighting."

Mrs. Wendt said mothers who have their sons back are lucky — even if those men had deserted.

"It makes me sick to think of all those who died and the communists got the country back," she said. "What else is there to say? It's done with."

"It's too bad to lose so much for such a futile effort," said Andrew Arnold, 840 11th Ave. N., father of Wood County's second Vietnam casualty, Lance Cpl. Robin Arnold.

Robin was born in Wood County Feb. 12, 1948, enlisted in the Marines at age 17 in Illinois and died July 24, 1966 in Vietnam. He is buried at Streamwood, Ill. His mother is Mrs. Corinne Arnold of Streamwood.

"I really haven't given it (the end of the war) much thought," said Arnold. "I've tried to bury it — at least tried to."

## Hawley K. Challoner:

"We didn't go in there and win because of political fears," said Hawley K. Challoner, 1311 Church Ave., town of Saratoga. "Russia was supporting one side and the U.S., the other side. It seems like we were afraid of what Russia would do if we went into North Vietnam. At least that's the feeling everyone got — there would be a third world war."

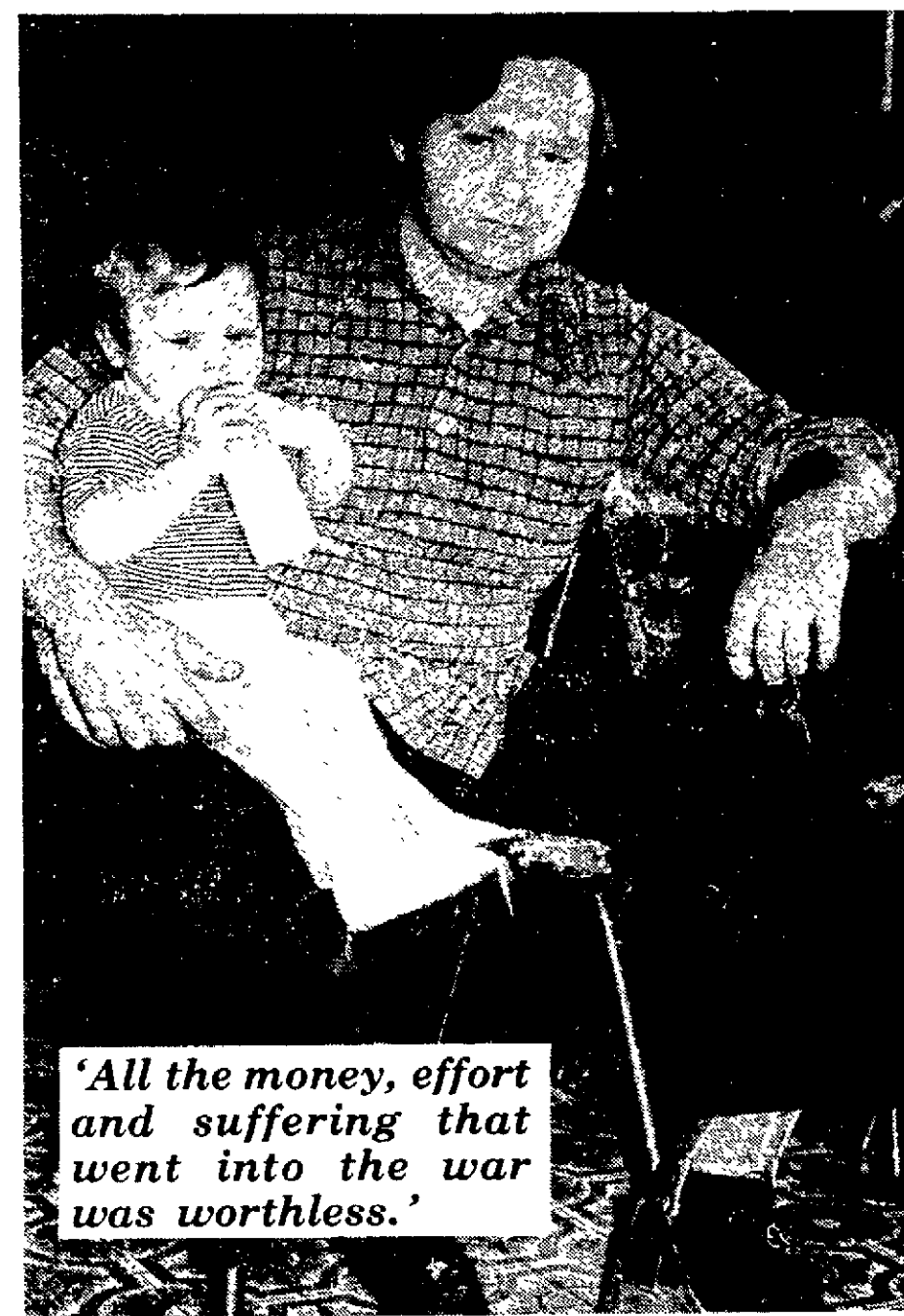
Sgt. Challoner was drafted into the Army July 16, 1969 and served in Vietnam from December, 1969 to May, 1970. He was an assistant gunner on a 105mm gun crew at a Cambodian fire base when shell fragments from counter-battery fire hit his left arm and tore away six inches of his left tibia.

His leg is about two and a half inches shorter. He walks with the aid of a brace, a cane and sometimes crutches. He is currently fighting osteomyelitis, a bone infection.

Challoner, 25, is married and the father of two children, ages one and two. His wife is a nurse's aid at Riverview Hospital. He draws disability compensation and has not worked since being discharged April 3, 1973. He spent two years in a hospital after returning from Vietnam.

"All the money, effort and suffering that went into the war was worthless," Challoner said. "I'm completely disgusted with the whole thing. We went over there, died and were wounded, and it had to end up like this."

"After as many guys as that were killed, we should have gone back there," he said. "We should have gone right up through North Vietnam in the beginning — right to Hanoi and gotten the North and South Vietnamese governments together and let the people elect the type of government they wanted," Challoner said. "This really surprised me — to let it go."



"All the money, effort and suffering that went into the war was worthless."

"I thought we would eventually be recalled back over there," Hawley K. Challoner holds his year-old son, Kenneth Dale, in his town of Saratoga mobile home.

## Douglas Maeder

'The outcome of the war was inevitable...'

"We could have won this war if it would have been fought militarily, instead of politically," said Spec. 4 Douglas Maeder, 4611 Juniper Lane.

Maeder volunteered for the draft and served in Vietnam from February to June, 1969, with the 173rd Airborne Division.

He was wounded by grenades on two occasions. The second wounds included possible small arms fire and were received June 20.

Maeder, married and the father of a two-year-old daughter, is assistant manager of Superamerica Discount Shopping Station, 2411 8th St. S.

"We lost a lot of guys because we couldn't be aggressive," Maeder said. Pacification meant efforts had to be made to capture, rather than kill, an armed enemy, he said. "It was touchy," Maeder said.

"Pacification wasn't doing any good," he continued. "We were getting picked off one by one and no one was being won over to our side. As soon as we left, the South Vietnamese swung around to Communism. The outcome of the war was inevitable — once we were out, Communism would take over."

"The ARVN didn't impress me," Maeder said. "They knew if they ran to us for help, we would have to go in and they would support us. The Americans did most of the fighting."

Tribune photos and stories by John Pelton



"I felt better when we fought military actions and suffered less losses than the enemy," Douglas Maeder pauses during his work as assistant manager of Superamerica Discount Shopping Station, 2411 8th St. S.



"This is not a case of where the best man wins," David Simonis writes a check for a delivery in the office of the Simonis family-owned Andy's Super Market, Inc.,

## David Simonis: 'There was nothing patriotic, nothing glorious...in this war.'

"I've seen people without freedoms that we take for granted," said David Simonis, Vesper. "It's not futile to stand and fight for these freedoms."

Simonis, 24, is single and employed in the Simonis family-owned Andy's Super Market, Inc.

Sgt. Simonis enlisted in the Air Force May 21, 1971 and was discharged Dec. 5, 1974. He worked in Air Force security service and spent 15 months in Taiwan and 18 months in Greece.

Simonis said the outcome of the Vietnam War isn't surprising. "The war was being fought politically. The end was inevitable," he said.

"There was nothing patriotic, nothing glorious, no 'bombs bursting in air' in this war," Simonis said. "It's hard for us to feel true moral commitment (to this war)."

Simonis believes the U.S. committed itself through involvement, discovered it got into something that was bad and took too long in getting out.

"Not that becoming involved was the right thing to do, but right or wrong, we defended our actions right down to the

Paris peace talks," Simonis said.

"Even the most determined people are defeated at times. But this must be accepted. A determined people must accept defeat, go on and make the best of it," he said. "We can't afford an apathetic, weak or disgraced attitude. We must stay strong."

Simonis said the nation seems to be taking the end of the Vietnam War "pretty personal."

"When you sit back and wonder (about this war), the wonder turns to disgust. For the Vietnamese, it must turn to frustration," he said.

"And I don't know if we should go back. Those people should have freedom, but I hate to think about going back to war for someone else," Simonis said.

"How far can you go for your fellow man?" he asked. "We walked a mile in his shoes — and further."

"This was a long and costly war for all people," Simonis said. "The time for the end of that war has come and we must accept it."