

May 16, 2015

Alfred L. Compton  
8444 Juxa Dr.  
Myrtle Beach, S.C. 29579

Chairman and CEO AARP  
The Mail  
AARP The Magazine  
601 E St.  
Washington, DC 20049

Dear Sir:

"I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore"! Yea, I'm sure you've heard that one before. But now you're gonna hear it from me!

I'm talking about your article in the May issue on page 56. "In 1965 the first combat troops arrived in Vietnam." Did Mike and Michael do any research on this statement or just interviews?

I am an 80 year old Army NCO career soldier. I enlisted a few days after my 17th birthday. Old enough to kill, but not drink beer! Volunteered for Korea. Infantry. So I guess I was considered a combat troop.

10 years later I would be a crew chief and door gunner on a Huey A model attack hel icopter. Was I considered a combat troop as we flew hundreds of assault missions, knocking out villages and attacking a sometimes invisible enemy, usually clad in "black pajamas?"

Was Johny Lee, our first casualty, who was wounded and died before his pilot could make it back to base? Was Bill Deal, my close friend, who was killed before he crashed at the battle of "Ap Bac" on January 2, 1963?

If not, just what do you consider a combat troop?

My unit, stationed on Okinawa, the UTT Helicopter Company, was the US Army's FIRST armed helicopter company in combat, ever! We have never been acknowledged as such. Everyone thinks the combat action in "Nam" started in 1965. It started long before that. Where is the history? Where were the acknowledgements, the parades, the thank yous? Not even a damn handshake!

When people walk up to me now, when I'm wearing my "Korea - Vietnam" cap, to thank me for my service, I think they're just speaking in general. They don't know anything of Korea, and if asked about Vietnam they'd say "yea, that thing back in 65".

The first mention of my unit was in a book written by Richard Tregaskis. "Vietnam Diary". Never heard of him? Research! He wrote several war diaries, some turned into movies. He flew with me in Nam. A tall fellow, always writing in his journal. He wrote a lengthy piece on our unit.

Or how about Colonel (ret) James Booth? In his book, "Returning Fire", he wrote of first hand knowledge of our unit, because at one time he was the CO.

To my knowledge neither of these books became best sellers. Probably because no one knows or remembers anything about these times. Too bad. They could have been enlightened.

In Korea we were a police action. Well, police don't win wars, and neither did we! In Nam I don't know what that was called. Never declared a war that I know of. We lost that one too. Ran out with our tails between our legs.

And haven't we either lost or quit every skirmish we've been in since WW2? Now you know why they are referred to as the "Greatest Generation".

What will my legacy be? "The Forgotten Generation"? Yes, I'm mad! We, the "Combat Troops" didn't lose those wars, conflicts or whatever you'd like to call them. The policies of Washington lost them! We simply carried them out as we were paid and sworn to do.

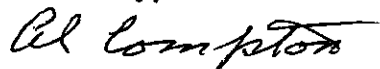
Anyone should know that you never enter or start a fight or a war without a sure plan, and a determination to win it. Unconditionally!

We've had the means. The might. But not the guts, to simply say we're here to win and we're not leaving till we do!

Please check your facts, your history, before you speak to us as non combat troops. We were, and still are, the force to be reckoned with!

And by the way. Some of the first combat troops in Nam were called "advisors"! Go figure.

Sincerely,



Al Compton  
United States Army Retired

Our Company Patch

Me and Richard Tregaskis at Soc Trang

This is the first armed attack helicopter.

We (my Company) invented the "Armed attack helicopter on Oakinawa. Helicopters at that time did not come with any armament. We rigged up the rocket launchers and the old 30 cal air cooled machine guns left over from WW2 and Korea. Our unit was then sent to Nam to test their effectiveness. We proved the idea was correct. These were all A-Model Hueys. Underpowered and overloaded. But what a hell of a ship! Later B-Models we received in Nam came with a highly ~~sophisticated~~ factory gun-rocket system. Our Company name designation changed several times, but remained in Nam for some 10 years. And yes, we were all Combat Troops!

As Rodney Dangerfield often said, "We got no respect!"



601 E Street, NW | Washington, DC 20049  
202-434-2277 | 1-888-OUR-AARP 1-888-687-2277 | TTY: 1-877-434-7598  
www.aarp.org | twitter: @aarp | facebook.com/aarp | youtube.com/aarp

May 27, 2015

Alfred Compton  
8444 Juxa Dr.  
Myrtle Beach, SC 29579

Dear Alfred Compton,

Thank you for contacting AARP, your connection to Real Possibilities for living your best life. I'm happy to help you.

I have forwarded a copy of your message to the AARP staff member best suited to review and respond to your concern. If there is anything I can assist you with in the future, please do not hesitate to contact me. Together, we're all about real possibilities.

Sincerely,

*Constance*

Member Communications  
[member@aarp.org](mailto:member@aarp.org)

Alfred L. Compton  
8444 Juxa Dr.  
Myrtle Beach, SC 29579

July 13, 2015

President AARP  
Jeannine English  
601 E St. NW  
Washington, DC 20049

Dear Ms. English:

I realize you may never see this letter, but after numerous attempts by phone, it has been impossible to get a straight answer out of anyone I have spoken with. Hence, my letter to you. As you are the top "banana", you have a bunch under you! My joke. But some in that bunch seem a little green and may need tossing out.

This concerns my <sup>three</sup> ~~two~~ page letter to you dated May 16, 2015. In it I complained adamantly about your article on page 56 of the April/May issue concerning Vietnam. I also enclosed pictures.

I received a letter dated May 27, 2015 from someone named Constance in Member Communications. Copy enclosed. In it she says if there's anything she can assist me with not to hesitate to contact her. So how does that work? She gives no last name, just a couple of phone numbers at the top of her AARP letter. Neither of which will get you to her or anyone who can find out about her because, they say, she doesn't give a last name. Shouldn't that be foremost on a business letter?

I am sending you copies of my letter and the pictures as I know the originals have long since disappeared, or I would have heard from someone. Shouldn't take two months for an answer.

I would like to see a continuation of that article on Vietnam, reminding people that the conflict began long before 1965, and that American servicemen were dying for that cause.

In your latest issue, June/July, page eleven, "Hanoi Jane" speaks out. A real tear jerker! All that admission of what she did was wrong, but NO apology! Same old Jane. Did she hesitate forty years just to say "it was wrong?" And don't get me started on Lily!

Gotta go now. Take down my Confederate flag before I'm arrested. Now there's a story I'd like to see you write about!

I'm really not a bad guy. Just old and with time to think back about things. And brave enough to voice my opinion! And yes I know, everyone has one!

Sincerely, *Al Compton*

Al Compton. United States Army Retired.

Sorry. No computer or smart



601 E Street, NW | Washington, DC 20049  
202-434-2277 | 1-888-OUR-AARP | 1-888-687-2277 TTY: 1-877-434-7598  
www.aarp.org twitter: @aarp facebook.com/aarp youtube.com/aarp

July 29, 2015

Alfred Compton  
8444 JUXA DR  
MYRTLE BEACH SC 29579

Dear Mr. Compton:

Our CEO, Jo Ann Jenkins, has asked me to thank you for contacting us about the article in the April/May 2015, *AARP The Magazine*, on the Vietnam War. We genuinely appreciate hearing from our readers and welcome your feedback based on your first-hand experience in the war. Your views help us to shape future issues of our publications.

I have shared your letter/enclosures with the office of the Editor-in-Chief. AARP receives many submissions each week and, understandably, our editors cannot personally respond to each one. Please be assured that we review all submitted communications related to the content in AARP publications. If an editor is interested in pursuing your comments further, we will contact you directly.

Mr. Compton, thank you for your service in Korea and Vietnam. We appreciate your 28-year membership and your comments about the article in *AARP The Magazine*. Together, we're all about real possibilities.

Sincerely,

*Hilary Lieber*

Member Communications  
[member@aarp.org](mailto:member@aarp.org)

Alfred L. Compton  
8444 Juxa Drive  
Myrtle Beach, SC 29579

September 15, 2015

Jo Ann Jenkins  
CEO AARP  
601 E St. NW  
Washington, DC 20049

Ms. Jenkins:

This letter, my third, is in reply to Hilary Lieber's letter dated July 29, 2015.

After several letters and phone calls to your office I am still confused as to why I can't get an answer acknowledging a mistake in your April-May edition in which you state the first U.S. Combat Troops to arrive in Vietnam was in March, 1965.

Altho I have sent you pictures and research material you seem determined to ignore them. I'm not asking you to take my word for anything. Just do a little research and you'll find you are mistaken. Isn't this how you get the information on the items you publish?

I belong to several military associations to which I will make known to them your article. Also anyone else who may be interested in it. It is my hope that you will hear from them, the Combat Troops of the U.S. Army, who were fighting for your freedom in Vietnam, long before 1965. Not your freedom you say? Then, at the time, why do you think we were there?

Have you even read my first 2 letters? Or does Ms. Lieber and Constance (no last name given) sort through your mail and decide for you what is worthy or not for you to be bothered with? I wanted answers from you, not a second fiddle!

As I write this, I am trying to think of as many upper echelon offices that would be interested in how a CEO, such as yourself, can manage it's business and is concerned over public response. I'll let you know at the end of my letter.

In Ms. Lieber's last letter of July 29, she says "if an editor is interested in pursuing your comments, we will contact you directly." If this is true, I should have been told after my first letter of May 16, that you had no further interest in what I had to say. Not forward it over and over to someone who is too busy writing a glowing opinion of Jane Fonda. June-July issue.

I always thought AARP meant, American Association of Retired People. Am I wrong? A lot of articles you print have little or no interest to retired persons. Altho I'm strictly speaking for myself. I find many articles that go against my grain! Especially when it has something to do with the military. Of which how many of your personnel have ever served as a "Combat Troop", or were even born during those times? Who does their research? Curly, Larry and Moe?

Mike Tharp and Michael Anft interviewed guys from 1965 to 1975. My unit was there for at least 10 years. Starting in 1962. Couldn't they find any of these guys to talk to? I know we're not all dead yet! I could give them a whole roster of names. And just what is your definition of a "Combat Troop"? I could tell you mine, because I was one! But not counted as such by your article.

I have been a soldier since I swore my allegiance at age 17. When I retired from the Army some 20 years later, I was still a soldier. Today I still am! And as you can see, I never intend to just "fade away"!

Did you know that in the late 1950's Army Special Forces were sent to Nam? 5 U.S. Army helicopter companies were deployed there in 1961? The UTT deployed in 1962? First armed helicopter company in combat? First in the world? Research!

In 1963 my unit, the UTT helicopter company was recognized as Army Aviation Unit of the year? In 1965 my unit was the first Army unit in Vietnam to be awarded a Presidential Unit Citation? That in 1962 General Harkins sent 7000 to 9000 American combat troops to Nam? Research!

And I would appreciate hearing from you after you've done yours!

I will not renew my AARP membership again. And I am hoping many others will do the same until you change your attitude to your public!

*Bl. Compton*

cc:

Andre Napoli. President. The Hartford.

Lindsey Graham. Senator.

Nikki Haley. Governor. South Carolina.

South Carolina House of Representatives.

South Carolina Senate.

Commandant. West Point.

James W. Booth. Colonel. U.S. Army Retired. Commanding Officer. 197th Armed Helicopter Company. (UTT)

Raymond LeCompte. U.S. Army Veteran. Combat Troop.

Fox News

Donald Trump

James Bodkin. National Director/Coordinator. 145th Combat Aviation Battalion Association. Vietnam. U.S. Army Veteran. Combat Veteran.