

Violation of the Oath of Citizenship

June 29, 2009

To: Wichita Mayor and the Wichita City Council

At the "Vietnamese City Hall Meeting" hosted by Mayor Brewer on June 28, 2009, the Citizens of Wichita, Kansas witnessed on two local television channels, KAKE channel 10 and KSN channel 3, the members of the South Vietnamese Military, decked out in the full dress uniforms of the military of a foreign government. The Vietnamese soldiers and sailors wear their uniforms proudly as veterans of the South Vietnamese Armed Forces. These military uniforms are not the regional dress of a culture or a national costume; they are a blatant and powerful representation of a foreign government. In the United States and other nations, only active duty military and retired veterans are permitted to wear the uniform of that nation's Armed Forces. The Vietnamese Community has pressured the City Council and the City of Wichita to include in the Wichita Veterans Memorial Park, a memorial, larger than most of the memorials to United States Armed Forces, to honor the South Vietnamese Soldiers who were serving under the South Vietnamese flag and pledged to the South Vietnamese Government. The Vietnamese in our community took an Oath to become American citizens, the same Oath that all who come to America from a foreign country and who wish to become American citizens must take. It is an Oath of Allegiance to the United States of America. This Oath is very specific about allegiance and faithfulness to foreign governments, past or present.

The Oath of Allegiance:

"I hereby declare, on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen; that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by the law; that I will perform noncombatant service in the Armed Forces of the United States when required by the law; that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law; and that I take this obligation freely without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; so help me God."

Source: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Members of the South Vietnamese Community of Wichita, Kansas ask to be exempt from their Oath because "they lost their country" and because "they fought with American soldiers in Vietnam against communism." Their disrespect for the traditions of the American Military and American Veterans has been the subject of a long disagreement with American Veterans. The Veterans objections to the Vietnamese honoring the Vietnamese Military are founded on the same principles as our Congress embodied in the Oath of Renunciation and Allegiance required for American Citizenship. In seeking to memorialize the soldiers of the army of South Vietnam, a country of which they were "heretofore citizens," the Vietnamese Community has chosen to disregard and violate the Oath they took to become American Citizens.

We, the citizens of Wichita, insist that the City Council uphold the laws of the United States of America, recognizing the wisdom and importance of those laws to all Americans.

City Council Members, you have a duty to the Vietnamese community and to the community-at-large to cease urging first generation citizens into actions which they may not understand are contrary their oath of citizenship and contrary to respect for the traditions of their adoptive country.

Sincerely,

Kansas Veterans Action Committee

Linda Kirby, Dennis Scuffham, John Wilson