**Thank Me, for my service?**

I am a Vet but I am not a hero. I do not have a Purple Heart or other decorations for valor. For the most part I enjoyed 45 active, National Guard and Reserve years of duty. I was assigned to medical units in Japan, the Central Pacific Islands, Viet Nam, the Middle East, Pakistan and Bolivia. I did not serve directly in Iraq I. My exposure to the Korean war was minimal. My high school friend Red was KIA and another, Romie, narrowly escaped the unanticipated well-armed, well-led and winter-clothed Chinese army during “The Coldest Winter” in November 1950, 70 years ago this Veterans Day. Romie was directed to escape with other GIs by Catholic *Chaplain Emil Kapaun* who remained with the wounded. Father Kapaun was captured and died in prison.

I was a medic caring for the wounded and ill while training other medics at various levels across those years. It was an interesting and vital life with adventure and satisfaction. I was well paid, including travel expenses, housing allowances and health care for myself and family and currently enjoy a generous pension with health benefits at any military facility and through the VA where I received much of my medical school training.

You and others, including myself, paid for my service and training including *The GI Bill* and VA benefits-with your taxes. I do not consider the military a form of “*socialism*” any more than are Social Security benefits, farm subsidies, and public education as some have recently alleged including Mr. Trump, members of Congress and candidates for office. I supported Medicare in 1965 despite the vigorous opposition by the AMA and was called a Communist by some of my colleagues until they began to receive Medicare reimbursements. I heartily supported the Affordable Care Act and I am appalled that some of my “fellow Americans” intend to deny medical care to a significant percentage of their neighbors.

I vigorously opposed the Viet Nam disaster and all our intrusions into the lives, languages, cultures of foreign governments by our “Best and Brightest.” Their attempts, with more recent heroic veterans, to convert them to “democracy” while using their natural resources has been a military, moral and economic failure of indescribable magnitude.

Finally, I am a member of *veteransforpeace.org.* I respect, honor and salute all veterans alive now and those lying under Carl Sandburg’s “Grass” in so many cemeteries nationally and abroad. “They gave their last full measure of devotion.” They served*. They are the heroes !*

Thomas Chisholm Colonel Medical Corps US Army, retired

Serial Number 27953410 [*medawegaun@gmail.com*](mailto:medawegaun@gmail.com)

3666 E County Line N # 21

White Bear Lake, MN 55110-1845 715 514 8932

**423 words.**