

From Mike Blum

SEMPER FI

Ray Dailey

Commandant, Department of Ohio

ANVC Central Div.

419 438 4579

-

### **Board of Trustees, PNC's and Department Commandants –**

**We do not, as a matter of practice, make public comments with regard to statements made by our sister Veterans/Military Service Organizations. However, we have received so many questions regarding this issue from our membership that it seems prudent to provide you with some background and insight into this issue.**

**We will not engage on the politics of the issue as the Marine Corps League shall forever be non-political and non-partisan and we do strongly believe there are politics at play here.**

**As for General Shinseki's performance over the past 6 years and the monumental hurdles the VA has dealt with, LtGen. Olmstead and I agree that history will show that the Department of Veterans Affairs has made greater strides – in time of war – than at any other time in history. Building new facilities, upgrading older facilities, opening new National Cemeteries all over the country and building an outreach network in the hinter-lands to make access to treatment a reality for those who reside so far away from good treatment facilities.**

**We speak with Veterans all the time who talk about the great treatment they receive at VA hospitals, clinics and other facilities. Can you always find a “negative” story? Absolutely. But “great**

treatment” is the rule, not the exception.

Everyone seems to forget that we have been at war for the past 13 years and that a large number of those military men and women who have done anywhere from 1 to 6 tours in Iraq and/or Afghanistan and have now completed their tour in the military, are now registered on the rolls of the VA. Hundreds of thousands of “new” claims. And yet with all the claims from the Vietnam era and Korean War era military men and women added to the hundreds of thousands of new claims, General Shinseki’s Department of Veterans Affairs has reduced the back-log from some 600,000 when he took over (that later ballooned to roughly 900,000) down to somewhere near 320,000.

I speak with General Shinseki several times a year. I have no idea what his politics are and I could not care less. I can say this about the man himself – you will never find a more dedicated, more compassionate person to head, what I believe is the most difficult Department in government today.

Coincidentally, we just received the attached letter saying many of the same things as we’ve said here, from Admiral Clyde Marsh, Alabama Director of Veterans Affairs and President of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs letter of support for General Shinseki as well as the link to the Military Times article, *Shinseki to veterans; VA is here to care for you* <http://www.militarytimes.com/article/20140507/BENEFITS04/305070054/Shinseki-veterans-VA-here-care-you>

[link in table below]

**Semper Fidelis –**

**Mike**

Michael A. Blum  
Executive Director  
Marine Corps League

**P. O. Box 3070**  
**Merrifield, VA 22116-3070**  
**Tel: 703/207/9588**  
**FAX: 703/207/0047**  
**E-Mail: [ExecDir@MCLeague.org](mailto:ExecDir@MCLeague.org)**  
**Website: <http://www.MCLeague.com>**