

Seawolf Association
C/o Bill Mulcahy: President

Dear Mr. Mulcahy:

May this letter serve the purpose of announcing the resignation of my membership in the Seawolf Association.

As a member who for personal reasons has not attended reunions, I have felt great gratification in observing the progress of the Seawolf Association, from its inception in 1987, under the leadership of Tom Thalman and Tom Olby. Your Challenge Coin program trying to locate families of all the Seawolf crewmembers that lost their lives while serving in Vietnam, Combat Aircrew Wing awards and persistence in locating former members and TAPS, all serve noble causes and deserve enormous praise.

However, Wolfgrams that have been published over the last few years have contained articles that I found to be historically inaccurate, untruthful and unworthy of being submitted for print. I find it to be extremely difficult to associate myself with such journalistic enterprise.

Specifically, in the January 1997 issue, which contained the transcript of Admiral Timothy Ziemer's address to the Seawolves, I noticed a phrase that seemed to be manifestly incorrect. Speaking for all of us, Admiral Ziemer stated, "We all lived by the maxim 'that even in death we would not abandon each other.' No one asked if we were Black or White, or Muslim or Christian—if we were rich or poor-----."

Being concerned for the inferences from this statement and what your readership might think, i.e., that there were Muslims and not Jews serving with our forces, that perhaps Jews were not worthy of not being abandoned, I checked the records. I discovered that there were more than 100,000 Jews that served in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War, with 289 lives being sacrificed and two Medal of Honor recipients. The only Muslim I ever heard about in the late 1960's was the recently converted Muhammed Ali, who refused to serve in the armed forces and was convicted of violating the Selective Service Act. Checking further, I received a 1997 report from the Bureau of Naval Personnel noting that there were 888 Jewish and 717 Muslim active duty enlisted personnel presently serving.

Sensing a manifestation of Anti-Semitism, I wrote to Admiral Ziemer, Seawolf President Dennis Caldwell and spoke to Chaplain Jim Walker expressing my concern and asking that the statement be corrected to reflect the truth. I heard back from Admiral Ziemer and

Chaplain Walker (copies of letters enclosed) but received nothing from Mr. Caldwell. Nothing was ever printed in the Wolfgram to present the truth. I was quite disturbed by Mr. Caldwell's arrogance in his failure to act, which further fueled my concerns of Anti-Semitism existing at the highest levels of the Seawolf Association. I ultimately decided to take a wait and see attitude.

Then, in your April 1997 issue Mr. Caldwell allows the printing of Con Jaburg's article Psy-Ops, Seal/Seawolf Style. "And then the fun began" with a tied up blindfolded VC prisoner being shoved out of the helicopter at an altitude of 2 feet, in order to frighten, terrorize and humiliate. We all know that we did things in country that seemed entirely appropriate at the time but were not in the best traditions of the naval service, went against our training as naval officers and might have violated articles of the Geneva Convention. But it is nothing to be proud of today and certainly not worthy of being printed in the Wolfgram. Again I ask, what are the inferences to be drawn by our general readership about our conduct during the war? Was the mistreatment of an enemy prisoner a proud expression of our warrior ethic?

More recently was printed the inaccurate article about Jane Fonda, which required a grand mea culpa by Seawolf president Bill Mulcahy. Haven't we heard enough of this woman? Personally, I thought she had died as did her career during the last 30 years.

Your Winter 2000 issue contained an article by Gordon Peterson "Honored for 'Stellar Naval Leadership' about the retirement ceremony of Admiral Ziemer. Again, the Anti Semitic statement about ...Black or White, Muslim or Christian. Either Admiral Ziemer was untruthful to me or it was an incorrect reprint of his 1996 speech. I truly wonder how many times Admiral Ziemer has given this speech and how many of his listeners think they learned something about who served in our armed forces during the Vietnam War.

Your most recent issue has certainly convinced me about my feelings as to where the Wolfgram has evolved. I don't understand the relevance of "Preacher Humor" with its stereotypical Jewish humor. Not only is it not funny, it's meaningless. Is this the kind of humor that's being heard in ready-rooms, mess halls, wardrooms, line shacks?

As an agenda item for your business meeting you might consider forming an editorial board with the goal of printing materials in the Wolfgram that are "true", relevant, not insulting, and by the spirit of Article II, Sec. G. of your bylaws: "with the aim of promoting the general welfare and enjoyment of the members of this Association and of their families." And I believe the Wolfgram can be a little folksy without being denigrating.

There are many provocative topics of interest for you to consider for publication, based on our experiences as aviators and crewmen in Vietnam which might serve our nation and our members. Did the recent NATO air war in Kosovo give you the cold sweats? As an association we could have spoken with moral authority criticizing NATO commanders tasking pilots to identify enemy targets while flying at 500 knots and 15,000 feet. We could have shown outrage at Clinton's fear of taking casualties so much so that the

Apache helicopters were effectively kept out of service. Were we that much more expendable in Vietnam? I personally attempt whenever possible to caution our leaders about the consequences of America's air wars both on civilians being shot at "collaterally" and on our own men and women being asked to do the firing. This, you all must admit, is an area of experience that many of you might find too painful to ever discuss. I enclose a letter I received in response from Jay Johnson last year. I thought that even if my recommendation to him might have saved just one life, my Vietnam experience might gain some value.

In closing, I recommend that your Wolfgram editor formulate a motto, to be printed on the first page, not as the New York Times has it as "All The News That's Fit to Print", but maybe something like "All The News We're Proud To Print". Then, maybe you will take the time to strive to reposition and reestablish yourselves as the fine representative organization that you once were.

cc. Administration Officers, Special Events Coordinators, et al.

Sincerely yours,

Peter D. Shay