



E. R. ZUMWALT, JR.
ADMIRAL, U. S. NAVY (RET.)

February 13, 1995

Mr. Ben A. Franklin
Editor
The Washington Spectator
P. O. Box 90
Garrett Park, MD 20896

Dear Ben:

I attach herewith the proposed article.

Sincerely,

E. R. Zumwalt, Jr.
Admiral, USN (Ret.)

1500 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 641
Arlington, VA 22209

Tel: (703) 527-5380
Fax: (703) 528-5795

Enclosure



E. R. ZUMWALT, JR.
ADMIRAL, U. S. NAVY (RET.)

February 13, 1995

Don Fitz
720 Harvard
St Louis, MO 63130

Dear Don:

I attach herewith the proposed article.

Sincerely,

E. R. Zumwalt, Jr.
Admiral, USN (Ret.)

1500 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 641
Arlington, VA 22209

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Enclosure

Binding Up the Wounds

by Admiral E. R. Zumwalt, Jr. USN, (Ret.)

I returned to Vietnam in September 1994. But the root cause leading to that visit goes back more than 26 years.

In September 1968 I took command of U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam. The Vietcong were flooding supplies into Vietnam--shipped into Sihanoukville, Cambodia, and trucked across Cambodia to the border of Vietnam, thence by sampan into Vietnam's delta. New Vietcong cadres were infiltrating the delta from Cambodia. U.S. Army casualties in the delta were going up and pacification of the lush agricultural area was retrogressing.

To stop the flow of soldiers and logistics, I moved most of the 1,000 small craft out of the coastal and major river patrols to create a boat blockade of Cambodia using the narrow rivers and canals along that country's borders with Vietnam.

Casualties to our naval men rose to six percent a month.

We rapidly defoliated with Agent Orange the lush vegetation along these waterways, which had permitted the Vietcong to ambush our boats from the water's edge. Casualties dropped to less than one percent a month. The blockade stayed in place. The delta was

rapidly cleared of Vietcong and the population liberated until long after the fall of Saigon.

Years later we were to learn that among the thousands of naval men who were saved by Agent Orange, hundreds would suffer diseases or have children with birth defects. My personal involvement began after the death of a son from both Hodgkin's disease and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. He had commanded one of the swift boats operating in Agent Orange sprayed areas. The publicity associated with that event led Secretary of Veteran's Affairs, Edward Derwinski, to ask me in 1989 to do a study of the Agent Orange issue.

After seven months, in 1990, I submitted a report which described the badly flawed procedures of the VA's Committee on Environmental Health Hazards which had never recommended a single disease as compensable as found in Vietnam veterans. I pointed out that it had been U.S. Government policy decreed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to avoid finding a correlation between Agent Orange and health effects, that, as a result, Government studies had been manipulated to achieve that policy as had early studies by dioxin-producing chemical companies.

This report, a similar report by an Agent Orange Scientific Task Force set up outside government, and a devastating report by the Committee on Government Operations of the House of Representatives led to the disestablishment of the Committee on

Environmental Health Hazards and the assignment to the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) of responsibility for giving scientific advice on Agent Orange to the Secretary of Veterans' Affairs.

To his great credit, at this time, President Bush took Secretary Derwinski's recommendation to overrule OMB and to provide compensation for Vietnam veterans suffering from three diseases.

In July 1993, an Institute of Medicine panel set up by the National Academy of Sciences, with highly competent scientists, made recommendations which have led President Clinton to approve compensation for seven more diseases.

This same panel recommended that joint research should be carried out with Vietnam scientists in Vietnam with regard to those diseases for which scientific data was inadequate to conclude that it was as likely as not that they were caused by exposure to Agent Orange.

There are villages in southern Vietnam whose inhabitants were sprayed by Agent Orange and have continued to live in these polluted areas for over a quarter of a century. And there are villages in northern Vietnam with populations which make an ideal comparison group because they are identical in ethnic composition, degrees of industrialization, and all other factors except that they were never exposed to Agent Orange.

Anecdotal evidence and cost-limited studies point to significant increases in diseases and birth defects in the South as compared to the North. But more definitively, more expensive studies are required to prove these conclusions scientifically.

Thus my trip to Vietnam was for the purpose of putting me in a position, as Chairman of the Agent Orange Coordinating Council, to assure myself and then the U.S. Congress that Vietnam's officials would cooperate with U.S. scientists in doing the definitive scientific studies called for by the National Academy of Sciences' panel.

My visit was hosted by Professors Hoang dinh Cau and Le cao Dai, the two scientists of the 10-80 Committee (so called because it was set up in the tenth month of 1980 to study Agent Orange effects). Through their auspices, we met with their superiors, Tran dinh Hoan, Minister of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs; the President of Vietnam, General Le duc Anh; the Commander-in-Chief of North Vietnamese forces during the war, General Giap (who defeated the French in Dien Bien Phu in 1953 in the earlier phase of the communist conquest of Vietnam); and General Tran van Tra, Commander of the Vietcong Forces in the South during the U.S. phase of the Vietnam War. All of these officials with whom my son, Lt Col James Zumwalt, USMC Reserve, and I met were gracious in dealing with the events of the past and all pledged total support for joint U.S./Vietnam research of Agent Orange.

The Agent Orange Coordinating Council and its member veterans' organizations are in the process now of requesting that the Senate and House Veterans' Affairs Committees hold early hearings to deal with the NAS recommendations by appropriating monies to permit definitive Agent Orange research in Vietnam.

We can only hope that the long battle on the part of veterans to gain U.S. Government support for obtaining adequate scientific evidence to settle the remaining areas of controversy will enter a new phase of total federal support for this objective.

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|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|--|---|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| PHONE MESSAGE | TO | ADM ZUMWALT | DATE | 1-23 | TIME | 1100 | AM |
| | FROM | Don Fitz 720 Harvard | AREA CODE | ST L MO 63130 | | | |
| | OF | St Louis | EXT. | 314-644-8973 | | | |
| | M E S S A G E | Essay on Vietnam - by Don Fitz - sent by end of mo. | | | | | |
| | | | | | | SIGNED | |
| PHONED <input type="checkbox"/> | | CALL BACK <input type="checkbox"/> | RETURNED CALL <input type="checkbox"/> | WANTS TO SEE YOU <input type="checkbox"/> | WILL CALL AGAIN <input type="checkbox"/> | WAS IN <input type="checkbox"/> | URGENT <input type="checkbox"/> |

Tue 1 Feb

January 14, 1995

Dear Adm. Zumwalt,

That's great! I'm pleased indeed--and our readers will be, too--that you can do a piece on Vietnam for us. And March 30, or a tad earlier, is good.

My only P.S. is that your good-news letter mentions "a 700-word article." That will be okay if that length fits your mind at the time. I only point out that we could use your contemplation at a 1,700-word length.

Either way will be fine.

Yrs,

 Ben A. Franklin



E. R. ZUMWALT, JR.
ADMIRAL, U. S. NAVY (RET.)

January 11, 1995

Mr. Ben A. Franklin
Editor
The Washington Spectator
P. O. Box 90
Garrett Park, MD 20896

Dear Ben:

Thank you for your letter of January 6. I hope to be able to produce a 700-word article for you by the deadline of March 30.

All best wishes.

Sincerely,

E. R. Zumwalt, Jr.
E. R. Zumwalt, Jr.
Admiral, USN (Ret.)

1500 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 641
Arlington, VA 22209

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Fax: (703) 528-5795

The Washington Spectator

JAN 09 1995

Ben A. Franklin

Editor
(301) 933-3070

January 6, 1995

Dear Admiral Zumwalt,

The other day when I remarked to my friend and occasional legman, Fred Maxwell, that April 30 would be the 20th anniversary of the end in Vietnam, he inspired me to think of asking you to consider writing a retrospective for *The Washington Spectator*. I think it's a great idea and I hope you will. Our 70,000 readers, or most of them, are of a generation which knows you well.

Our subscribers--many of them loyal readers for decades--are predominantly at non-metropolitan addresses in 50 states and 15 foreign countries. They are smart, curious, anxious Americans but for the most part are not regular readers of leading newspapers or *The New Republic*. They say their local newspapers and, of course, their TV news, give them little or nothing. They devour each issue of *The Washington Spectator* as it arrives--and then they write, and write, and write. I get 400 letters a month.

The Washington Spectator is a 20-year-old bi-monthly with an audience of truly avid readers, even when they disagree. They are wonderfully grateful for a patient, different view of what goes on here and elsewhere. We are not part of "the alternative press" in any sense of being tied to any fixed focus, cause or interest.

My agreement with the Public Concern Foundation, the politically neutered non-profit that serves only to keep our subscription rate at \$10 a year, makes me totally and solely an independent editor. In my two years as editor, we've had guest pieces by two former colleagues of mine at the New York Times and, from Bosnia, by a correspondent of ITN, the British TV network. The Public Concern Foundation pays \$500 for outside pieces--not a competitive freelance rate but a reflection of threadbare effort. Otherwise, I grind it out. I enclose a few issues for your perusal in judging whether you can join us.

In this case I would hope for your copy by about March 30. I have a tentative offer of a short, 700-word Vietnam anniversary sidebar by another Times friend, Gloria Emerson, who is on the nominal and totally silent *Spectator* "editorial advisory board". I mention that now so that you will not be surprised should you decide that you can do about 1,700-1,800 words by then.

Please give me a call when you've reached a decision on this, and we can talk further. I'll be very pleased if you can do this but, if not, I thank you for thinking about it.

Yrs,

Ben A. Franklin

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The Washington Spectator

MAR 23 1995

Ben A. Franklin
Editor (301) 933-3070 - phone and FAX

March 22, 1995

Dear Adm. Zumwalt,

As commander of U.S. Forces, *Spectator*, the OMB has denied me funds for staff. So finally -- 10 days before the deadline -- I've begun putting the Vietnam issue together. Gloria is writing about Americans who have gone back to Vietnam to open schools and hospitals. It looks good.

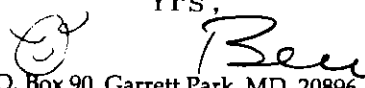
To fit in some overall recall and comment on the April 29 anniversary of the fall of Saigon, I need to shorten you contributors slightly -- and will do so gracefully. I'd be grateful if you would scan the enclosed copyreader atrocities. If they are OK, a phone call from your office will be fine. Or, if you think I have bent anything out of shape, scribble on these sheets and send them back. (My FAX number shows above.)

I have lined through some changes. Substitutions are underlined. The two thematic questions I have are in italics--(1) on page 1 a query on the pre-defoliant U.S. Navy casualty rate, and (2) at the end do we need to say something more about the Agent Orange casualties among Vietnamese civilians, and are they getting any treatment now? I don't know, but I doubt it.

I mentioned it early on, but let me say again that one of the striking discoveries I have made in my two years of inherited editorship of this 20-year-old tract is profoundly gratifying. Based on the bales of mail I get from readers, it is that there are so many deeply concerned citizens out there among the hoi polloi-- *Reel Amuricans* who are intelligent, curious, furious, argumentative and caring, but who don't have the political background and instant recall of the cosmopolitans who read The New York Times, Harper's, etc. I've discovered that what works in four pages is a primer that's a brimer--patient explanation without patronizing.

Again, thanks for your effort in this. I may have to use some new form of Agent Orange to defoliate the incoming mail. If it's interesting, I'll try to send you a summary later on.

Yrs,

Ben, for connection herewith 

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CIRCULATION & MEMBERSHIP: P.O. Box 20065, New York, NY 10011



E. R. ZUMWALT, JR.
ADMIRAL, U. S. NAVY (RET.)

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

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Admiral U.S. Navy (Ret.)
1500 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22209

TEL: (703) 527-5380
FAX: (703) 528-5795

DATE: March 27, 1995

TO: Ben Franklin

The Washington Spectator

FAX NUMBER: 301-933-3070

FROM: Admiral Zumwalt

TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING THIS COVER SHEET: 6
(Please call if all pages are not received.)

AN ORIGINAL HAS _____ HAS NOT X BEEN SENT TO YOU.

NOTE:

*Ben,
el fay corrections herewith*

ZUMWRK

Binding Up the Wounds

by Admiral E. R. Zumwalt, Jr. USN, (Ret.)

I returned to Vietnam in September 1994. What ~~But the root cause leading to~~ of led to that visit goes back more than 26 years.

In September 1968 I took command of U.S. Naval Forces in Vietnam. The Vietcong were flooding supplies into Vietnam from the north. They were shipped into Sihanoukville, Cambodia, and trucked across Cambodia to the border of Vietnam, and thence ~~in~~ moved by sampan to Vietnam's delta. New Vietcong ~~cadres~~ ^Q cadres were infiltrating the delta. ~~from Cambodia.~~ U.S. Army casualties in the delta were going up and pacification of the lush agricultural area was retrogressing. X

To stop the flow of Vietcong soldiers and logistics equipment, I moved most of the our 1,000 small craft ~~out of the~~ from coastal and ~~major~~ river patrols to create a boat blockade of Cambodia using on the narrow rivers and canals along that country's borders with Vietnam.

The lush vegetation along these waterways ~~which had~~ permitted the Vietcong to ambush our boats from the water's edge. Casualties to our naval men rose to 6 percent a month. [of the forces exposed? ~~or~~ ~~rose by 9 percent a month?~~] When we began defoliating ^{BU} the riverside jungle with Agent Orange, casualties dropped to less than 1 Y
X

percent a month. The blockade stayed in place and the delta was rapidly cleared of Vietcong. ~~and the population was liberated. until long after the fall of Saigon.~~

Years later we were ~~to~~ learned that among the thousands of naval men ~~who were~~ saved by Agent [↑]Orange, hundreds ~~would~~ suffered diseases or ~~have~~ had children with birth defects. My personal involvement began after the death of a son from both Hodgkin's disease and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. He had commanded one of the Swift boats operating in Agent Orange-sprayed areas. The publicity associated with that ~~event~~ led ~~former~~ ^{then} Secretary of Veteran's Affairs Edward Derwinski to ask me in 1989 to do a study of the health effects of Agent Orange. ~~issue.~~

After seven months, ~~in 1990,~~ I submitted a report in 1990 which described the badly flawed procedures of the VA's Veterans Administration's Committee on Environmental Health Hazards. It ~~which had never recommended~~ found a single disease among Vietnam veterans to be as compensable as found in Vietnam veterans a service connected disability, worthy of veterans' benefits.

I pointed out that ~~it~~ the denial of benefits had been driven by a cost-saving U.S. Government policy, decreed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to avoid finding a correlation between Agent Orange and health effects. As a result, ^{I concluded that} Government studies of Agent Orange had been manipulated to ~~achieve that policy-save money.~~ So had early studies by dioxin-producing chemical

companies.

~~This~~ My study, report, a similar ~~report~~ survey by an Agent Orange Scientific Task Force set up outside the government, and a devastating report by the Committee on Government Operations of the House of Representatives led to the disestablishment of the ~~Committee on Environmental Health Hazards~~ original VA panel and the assignment ~~to the National Academy of Sciences (NAS)~~ of responsibility for giving scientific advice on Agent Orange to the ~~Secretary of Veterans' Affairs.~~ National Academy of Sciences.

To his great credit, ~~at this time,~~ President Bush took Secretary Derwinski's recommendation ~~to~~ and overruled the OMB. This ~~and to~~ provided gave compensation ~~for~~ to Vietnam veterans suffering from three Agent Orange-related diseases.

In July 1993, ~~an Institute of Medicine panel set up by the the~~ National Academy of Sciences, ~~with highly competent scientists,~~ made recommendations which ~~have~~ led President Clinton to approve compensation for seven ~~more~~ other related diseases. This same panel recommended that joint research ~~should~~ be carried out with Vietnamese scientists in Vietnam. ~~with regard to those diseases for which scientific data was inadequate to conclude that it was as likely as not that they were caused by exposure to Agent Orange.~~

There are villages in southern Vietnam whose inhabitants were sprayed by Agent Orange and who have continued to live in these polluted areas for over a quarter of a century. And there are similar

villages in northern Vietnam with populations ~~which~~ that make an ideal comparison group. ~~because~~ They are identical in ethnic composition, degrees of industrialization, and all other factors--except that they were never exposed to Agent Orange.

Anecdotal evidence and cost-limited studies point to significant increases in diseases and birth defects in the south as compared to the north. But more ~~definitively expensive~~ extensive studies are required to ~~prove these~~ reach scientific conclusions. ~~scientifically.~~

~~Thus~~ My trip to Vietnam was ~~for the purpose of putting to put~~ me in a position, as Chairman of the Agent Orange Coordinating Council, to assure myself and ~~then~~ the U.S. Congress that Vietnam's ~~officials~~ would cooperate with U.S. scientists in ~~doing~~ the definitive scientific studies. ~~called for by the National Academy of Sciences' panel.~~

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~~of the Vietnam War. All of these officials with whom my son, Lt Col James Zumwalt, USMC Reserve, and~~ All of the officials I met there were gracious in dealing with the events of the past and all pledged total support for joint U.S./Vietnam research ~~of~~ on Agent Orange.

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We can only hope that the long battle on the part of our veterans ~~[and the affected Vietnamese villagers ??]~~ to gain U.S. Government support for ~~obtaining adequate~~ gathering the scientific evidence needed to settle the remaining areas of controversy will finally have ~~enter a~~ new phase of total federal support. ~~for this objective.~~

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