



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

July 16, 1998

Mrs. Johanna O'Toole

Dear Johanna:

I thought you ought to see and share with your siblings the attached tribute which expresses so well the feelings that all of us had that shared comradeship with your beloved father in peace and in war.

Sincerely,

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

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Enclosure

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Subject: Obit Notice: Arie Sigmond

Arlington, VA 980713 [By US Mail to Shepherd, Hazard, Coppola,
Weathers]

For Admiral Zumwalt, and CNO's Mini-Staffers:

For those who have not received the sad information:

It is with regret that we have learned from the 11 July, (Saturday's) Washington Post, page C6, about the obituary of another one of our original 1970 Mini-Staffers:

Captain, Arie C. A. Sigmond, US Navy (Retired).

Arie died 6 July at a hospital in Fall River, Mass. He was 69 years old.

Arie was a brave, dedicated, resourceful leader in combat, serving as commander of Riverine Squadron Eleven in Vietnam, for which he was decorated with the Silver Star, later joining the ComNavForV staff. He completed that tour shortly after Admiral Zumwalt was detached to become CNO, and joined us in Washington on the Mini-Staff.

The Admiral, in his biography, On Watch, naming those who served on his initial CNO staff, lauded Arie as "... a riverine expert from my Vietnam Staff, [who] was chief speech writer and a splendid all-purpose man." Indeed, Arie was "all-purpose". Not many "speech writers" would have volunteered for, and been selected by the Admiral to make an urgent, low profile, solo trip to the turbulent African nation of Congo. The urgency occurred in August 1970, when President Nixon and SecState Kissinger wanted Navy to conduct a quick assessment of the deteriorating Congolese situation and determine their immediate requirements.

Speech writer (and riverine warfare veteran), Arie Sigmond, made that rush trip to the Congo and conducted the reconnaissance on a very low key basis, meaning he had very little assistance and no staff. Enroute back to Washington he drafted a feasible plan for Navy to set up a crash program to train some 200 Congolese naval personnel to become boat crewmen, qualified to institute a lake-and-river patrol program in Congo. Arie and Chick Rauch refined the plan, it was accepted by CNO, SecDef, Kissinger and the President, and was soon implemented.

Arie's fast and astute reactions resulted in a rare personal letter of 31 August 1970 to the CNO praising the Navy's rapid and competent response. Our conclusion today: They just don't make "speech writers" like they used to !

Arie went on to a successful career, commanding the destroyer USS Sampson (DDG-10); command of Destroyer Squadron 4; Commodore of the NATO Multinational ASW Task Force, and other significant tours. After retirement in 1981, Arie had a second career with the Vitro Corporation and consulting work.

The Washington Post's obituary reported that Arie and his wife, Mary, were separated. Survivors include five daughters (named in the obituary), three brothers, two sisters, and 11 grandchildren.

Those of us who were privileged to serve with Aire, knew him as a brave warrior, a determined and dedicated naval officer. But he was never too occupied that he did not have time for a cheerful, friendly word, and a willingness to lend a hand with another's problem. Although born in the Netherlands, and came to this country at age 13, he was a great patriot of this, his adopted country, and risked his life many times while proudly wearing his US Navy uniform.

We've lost another good shipmate, and Mini-Staffer. We will miss Arie.

God Bless, to all.
Emmett & Muggs

EoM