

Thompson

Sender:

Date: Thu, 9 Sep 1999 18:20:16 EDT

Subject: FYI

To:

The Honorable Bernard D. Rostker  
Under Secretary of the Army  
102 Army Pentagon (Rm 3E732)  
Washington, DC 20310-0102

Dear Secretary Rostker:

You have been apprised by others of my possible interest in the position of Executive Director, Committee for the Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War. This letter is my official request to be considered for that position.

I am stimulated by the potential and prospects offered by the Korean War 50th anniversary commemorative effort to help ensure that Korean War veterans know that the United States Government and its citizens are grateful for their services and sacrifices during that conflict. Also, this appreciation extends to veterans of all the United Nations countries, plus South Korea, that thwarted the conquest of South Korea. The Korean War was the first invocation of the Truman Doctrine, the containment of communist aggression, and even though the war ended in a stalemate, it was a successful effort.

I am motivated to seek this position because:

(1) I am a Korean War veteran, having served in a destroyer, USS JOHN R. CRAIG (DD-885), in Korean waters and peripherally in the aircraft carrier USS MIDWAY which was dispatched immediately (June 25, 1950) from Norfolk, VA to the eastern Mediterranean to be available in the event the Soviet Union used that occasion—the United States' concentration in the Western Pacific and Korea—to move down through the Balkan States to overrun Greece and Turkey.

(2) I have had extensive experience staging successful special events on local and national levels.

(3) I have had extensive experience working with veterans and veterans' organizations while serving as Chief of Navy Information (1970-75) and as President and CEO of the US Navy Memorial Foundation (1978-93).

(4) I have had extensive experience working with local, national and international news media representatives, including authors, writers, TV and motion picture producers and internationally recognized photographers.

(5) I have a strong desire to dispel the unfortunate label of Forgotten War that has been attached to the Korean War. There may be some justification for that ignominious title but not in the context that there were 459,000 casualties, 88,000 killed, including 23,300 US servicemen and their sacrifices formed the cornerstone for the policy of containment of communist worldwide expansion and ultimately led to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

(6) I worked closely with the World War II commission, headed by Lieutenant General Claude A. Kicklighter and folded our Navy Memorial Foundation WWII commemorative projects into the commission's program. It was a pleasure to be associated with General Kicklighter and his outstanding staff.

I would be pleased to be a part of the Korean War Commission and am available at your convenience to discuss it with you.

Sincerely,

William Thompson