



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20370

IN REPLY REFER TO

Pers-16-emc
14 Jan 1975

Dear Admiral Zumwalt,

On February 1, 1975 Rear Admiral Bill Thompson, USN will retire following almost thirty years of active duty, culminating as Chief of Navy Information, the first Special Duty only (Public Affairs) flag officer to so serve.

It was felt that possibly Bill's reporting seniors over his twenty year career as a public affairs specialist, might desire to have included in a proposed scrapbook, a short message reminiscent of his tour and best wishes for the future. His biography (copy attached) indicates you were his reporting senior as Chief of Naval Operations from July 1971 to June 1974.

If you would like to take this opportunity, I'm sure Bill would be grateful and the result would be a memorable keepsake. The presentation is planned for the evening of 30 January so a letter or telegram addressed to Bill (but forwarded to me at BuPers) should arrive by the 29th for consolidation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Very respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "R. F. Harney", is written over the typed name.

R. F. HARNEY
Captain, U. S. Navy
Special Assistant for
Liaison and Public Affairs

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

REAR ADMIRAL WILLIAM THOMPSON, UNITED STATES NAVY

Born in Escanaba, Michigan, on September 16, 1922, William Thompson was reared in Green Bay, Wisconsin. He attended Wisconsin State Teachers College, prior to entering the USNR under the V-5 Training Program, in October 1942. As a V-12 student, he attended Wabash College, and was commissioned Ensign, USNR on July 9, 1945 at the University of Notre Dame Midshipman School. He subsequently advanced in rank to Rear Admiral to date from June 1, 1972.

Completing instruction at the Air Navigation School, Clinton, Oklahoma, he was designated Naval Air Observer (Navigator). He then reported to the Pre-Flight School, Ottumwa, Iowa, as a navigator/instructor. After graduate work in the School of Journalism, University of Missouri, he was editor of the Guam Daily News from September 1946 to May 1948.

He was a member of the first class of the Armed Forces Information School, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, then was assigned to the Press Section, Office of Information, Navy Department. In October 1949 he joined USS MIDWAY (CVA-41) with duty in the operations and gunnery departments. Two years later he attended the Combat Information Center Officers School, Glenview, Illinois.

His next assignments were Operations Officer in the USS JOHN G. CRAIG (DD-885), which participated in the Korean war, and later public information officer on the staff of Commander Cruiser-Destroyer Force Pacific Fleet. In July 1955 he reported for instruction in general line, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California. While there he was designated a special duty only officer, in public information.

In January 1956, he joined the staff of Commander First Fleet as its first public information officer. In August 1959 he transferred to the staff of Commander Naval Reserve Training Command, Omaha, Nebraska and in January 1961 reported to the Ninth Naval District Headquarters. He won the "Silver Anvil" Award for best press relations in 1962 and was commended by the Secretary of the Navy for public affairs activities incident to mobilization of the Naval Reserve for the Berlin Crisis in 1961-1962. He next had a year's instruction at the Naval War College and in July 1964 became Special Assistant for Public Affairs to the Secretary of the Navy. While serving three Secretaries of the Navy, he was awarded the Legion of Merit.

He attended the Advance Management Program, Harvard University, from February through mid-May 1970, then reported as Deputy Chief of Information, Navy Department. The first public affairs officer to be selected for flag rank, he was designated Chief of Naval Information, July 1, 1971.

He is married to the former Dorothy Zum Buttel of Sheboygan, Wisconsin. They have three children, Stephanie Jo Graves, Craig Donald and Brian William Thompson.

Rear Admiral Thompson is a graduate of the George Washington University, with a major in Political Science. He is a member of Sigma Chi Fraternity.