



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20515

CHARLES WILSON  
SECOND DISTRICT  
TEXAS

August 1, 1974

Admiral E. R. Zumwalt, Jr.  
Naval Historical Center  
Building 210, Washington Navy Yard  
Washington, D. C. 20374

Dear Admiral:

The occasional associations with you and Mousa are among the most memorable of my first term in Congress. I hope that now that your responsibilities are less we can have an occasional visit.

I don't recall attending any ceremony as impressive and gracious as your relief at Annapolis. As I overheard an officer saying at the reception, "When you have this kind of class guy, the ceremony is bound to be heavy." It was very suitable.

Jerry is writing a weekly column for some 60 newspapers in our District, and I am enclosing her effort for that day. Tell Mousa that she would have never been referred to as merely "the Admiral's wife", but that Jerry could not remember how to spell her name. There may be a little inaccuracy here and there, but I think you get the feeling.

We have bracketed on opening rounds and will begin firing for effect at the end of the month.

Sincerely,

*Charlie*  
Charles Wilson

CW:dd

# *Jerry Wilson's* **PETTICOAT POLITICS**



When a man retires, it's a private and sad occasion. But when our country's top Admiral retires, it's not only public, but doubly sad because Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, Jr. is only 54 years old. And an individual like few others.

Our Congressman had scribbled on the invitation to the Retirement Ceremony "definitely". So, we headed to Annapolis the Saturday before July 4th, under rainy skies, and wondering if the ceremony would still be held outside.

Arriving a little late and hurrying across the U.S. Naval Academy campus, we noticed the sun peeking through the clouds. And the hundreds of seats in the parade area of Boncroft Hall were full. White was the color of the day.

And my spouse who never walks on the campus without remembering his days there and feeling a little like a lowly plebe, commented that he'd never seen so many Admirals before.

Speeches were made. Then, Secretary of Defense Schlesinger. Then, Vice President Gerald Ford. But the speeches were unlike any at a formal ceremony that I can remember. The genuine and deep feelings of these men for Admiral Zumwalt set the tone that flavored the day. Respect. Admiration. And a very real loss for the United States Navy.

Then it was time for Admiral Zumwalt to respond. In his white suit with sword at his side, he looked like a movie Admiral with his well known bushy eyebrows. He reminisced over his career. He gently teased Vice President Ford who will soon move into the "Admiral's House". He even thanked Mr. Ford for not minding that he testified against this.

Zumwalt appeared on Capitol Hill recently to speak against the use of the "Admiral's House" for the residence of the Vice President of the United States. Built in 1893 for the director of the Naval Observatory, the rambling house has been the home of all Chiefs of Naval Operations for the last 40 years. And with his usual sense of humor said, "Even the roof leaks!"

Now, under sunny skies and before the admiring hundreds, Admiral Zumwalt warned about the state of the U.S. Navy today. And the increase in the effectiveness of the Russian fleet. And then the controversial innovator, who let Navy men grow longer hair and wear moustaches, proceeded to read out loud his own discharge orders.

As I was becoming teary eyed, I couldn't believe that his voice could be so clear. And never falter.

The band played "Ruffles and Flourishes." The cannons boomed a 19 gun salute. Saying "Strike down my flag!" Admiral Zumwalt's own, personal flag was lowered for the last time.

As I glanced around I noticed that I wasn't the only person with a kleenex.

Then, typically, he broke from custom and introduced his family of two daughters and teasingly called the two sons, "the lawyer," and "the Marine." He presented red roses to his Manchurian born and beautiful raven haired wife. Warmly, he said that he had asked the U.S. Navy Band to play "The Impossible Dream" in her honor. Teasingly, he explained that he didn't want Mr. Ford to think that it was meant for him.

The strains of "America" drifted over the thoughtful crowd. "America ... America ... God shed his grace on thee ... From sea to shining sea."

Following tradition, the Zumwalts left. And the reception following was in honor of the new Chief. Each conversation had the same theme -- such a special and moving day because of this special man.

And according to his orders, the following day Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, Jr. -- the youngest Chief of Naval Operations -- became a retired Admiral.

12 August 1974

Dear Charlie,

Thank you for your heartwarming letter of 1 August with Jerry's wonderful column enclosed. Both Mouza and I had hoped to have the Change of Command different and special not only for us, but for all who attended and your comments made us feel that we were successful. We were particularly grateful that both of you shared the day with us.

Mouza and I plan to headquarter in this area for a time, allowing me to wind up the old while charting our future course. I am already committed to a year of lecturing and writing while watching with unabated interest developments in defense and the country as a whole. We have a remarkable resilience in this wonderful nation, so I am hopeful there will be much good both to observe and perhaps to contribute.

Mouza joins me in very best wishes to you and Jerry and we look forward to seeing you soon.

Warm regards,



E. R. ZUMWALT, JR.

The Honorable  
Charles Wilson  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D .C . 20515

Wilson, C.