

FAX From: Arnold Schechter, MD, MPH

SUNY Health Science Center, Clinical Campus at Binghamton

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88 Aldrich Avenue

DATE: May 30, 1994

FAX: (607)770-8623

Binghamton, NY 13903

TO: Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr

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Dear Admiral Zumwalt:

I am enclosing in the next 3 pages a fax to me from a good friend and long time associate, Peter Eng of the Associated Press in Bangkok, and my reply. He has done an excellent job of getting press lunches for me and also separate coverage by reporters in Bankok. I have suggested either a press conference for you and me or a press luncheon instead, with availability of us to press in Bangkok and also in Vietnam as well as back in the USA when we return. There is now AP coverage in Vietnam, not only from Bangkok, but Peter is quite skilled and knows the Agent Orange situation much better than most foreign correspondents. His home is in New York, but he has been in Bankok for a long time now.

I hope you feel my communication with Peter is on target, covers what we want covered and does not cover what we may not wish covered.

// Is the date of the trip final? If so, I need to purchase my airline tickets now.

// Also, I have been surprised the the veterans groups I work with, eg the American Legion, has no money at all available for help for me for the trip. If you are able to help me with all or a portion of the cost of this trip, a very important trip, but an extra trip, I would greatly appreciate it. I usually budget \$3,500 for total expenses.

With best wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours,

Arnold

Arnold Schechter

file

fax to Binghamton, NY (607) 770-8623



Associated Press

Peter J. Eng
NEWS EDITOR

May 28, 1994

Dear Arnold,

Thank you for your fax, and sorry for the delay in replying but I wanted to wait until I got some answer on the press conference. (there isn't yet) I have asked the Foreign Correspondents Club here to arrange a date and time for Zumwalt when he returns from Vietnam. I will let you know as soon as that is arranged.

Of course, in Vietnam itself we plan to give this good coverage. I have already sent word to our office in Hanoi.

In the meantime, I would like to write a story saying that the trip is on. I recall you had been trying to arrange this for quite a few years. Could you please tell me where and when I can reach Zumwalt for a short telephone interview over the next few days? If for any reason he does not want to be interviewed, I would appreciate more details about the trip if you could provide them.

Thanks very much,

Peter Eng

FAX From: Arnold Schecter, MD, MPH

SUNY Health Science Center, Clinical Campus at Binghamton

PHONE: (607)770-8521

88 Aldrich Avenue

DATE: May 30, 1994

TO: Peter Eng

Associated Press

Bangkok

**FAX: (607)770-8623
Binghamton, NY 13903**

Dear Peter:

Thank you for your prompt reply and your usual kind interest in the work. As the trip stands now, Admiral Zumwalt and I will enter Hanoi Friday Sept 9, 1994 and leave Ho Chi Minh City Sept 16, 1994. Admiral Zumwalt is making final arrangements now. He and I both will need to purchase tickets and be certain that this is good for Dr. Le Cao Dai (and also hopefully Dr. Nguyen Ngoc thi Phuong). We believe this is the final date, but tickets have not yet all been purchased. Admiral Zumwalt hopes also to bring his wife and his remaining son with him. He may bring one or two others to help with interpretation and to explore future business ventures-but this latter should be considered confidential-off the record-unless he releases it to you himself. Press conference might be the night of Friday, Sept 16 or during the day Saturday, Sept 17. Admiral Zumwalt plans to leave for the USA early AM on Sept 18. We have not scheduled a hotel yet in Bangkok, but would want to be able to meet with the press. For weekends, is cab travel in Bangkok ok or is it as terrible as during the week? The Dusit Thani (sp?) was a bit expensive. The Imperial had reasonable government and NGO rates, and the hotel next to the airport was convenient and acceptable, but something of a long cab drive to the middle of Bangkok.

This will be the first return visit to Vietnam of Admiral Zumwalt, former chief of naval forces. He (and I) will be investigating the potential of Agent Orange health research in Vietnam as it might help American veterans (and our former allies in the south of Vietnam, where Agent Orange was sprayed). We will be meeting Vietnamese Agent Orange researchers and government officials. We will be reporting back to the Agent Orange Coordinating Council (which he chairs) of major veterans' groups, such as the American Legion, The Veterans of Foreign Wars, VVA etc. He has the complete list. We also plan to submit our report to members of Congress and the Senate and the Administration.

Admiral Zumwalt ordered (Naval) spraying of Agent Orange in Vietnam during wartime, and insists he would still do so today, even knowing how toxic the herbicide and its dioxin contaminant is. He feels it saved American lives, even though he believes that it lead to the cancer and death of his son and namesake, Elmo R. Zumwalt, III, then in the Navy in Vietnam, and the brain damage of his grandson, presumably from his father's exposure. Admiral Zumwalt delayed his return to Vietnam until diplomatic conditions between our two countries had improved, which happened this year with the lifting by President Clinton of the embargo against Vietnam and the beginning of diplomatic relations. Admiral Zumwalt has been very active in veterans groups with respect to Agent Orange health effects and compensation.

My own role is that of a physician-scientist who is a Vietnam era veteran of the US Army Medical Corp, serving 1967-69. I have also done dioxin research, as a Professor of Preventive Medicine at my SUNY medical school branch campus in Binghamton since 1981, with the Binghamton State Office

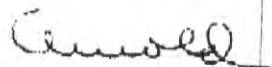
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Building dioxin contaminated building. I have worked in Vietnam since 1984, yearly at least, and coordinated the Massachusetts and also the Michigan Vietnam Veteran Agent Orange and Dioxin Pilot studies. I also serve as a medical and scientific advisor to the American Legion. I have published over 100 articles in scientific journals on dioxins and am editor of a book, "Dioxins and Health" to be published this year by Plenum Press, NYC. I have also served as consultant to the World Health Organization, US EPA, Agency for Toxic Diseases and Substance Registry of the PHS.

Other trips by US scientists to study Vietnam as a place to learn more about dioxin health effects are expected soon. Vietnam offers ideal conditions to learn more about the health consequences of dioxins, since there are large populations with long exposure to dioxins from Agent Orange and industry in parts of the south, and large populations in the north with little if any dioxin exposure, who serve as reference or control population. The dioxin levels in men, women and children in the south of Vietnam also vary, depending on exposure, but there is a clear difference in dioxin exposure between northerners and southerners. The Institute of Medicine (IOM) of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) in its recent review of the scientific literature suggested Vietnam might offer a unique opportunity to study health effects of Agent Orange and also of dioxins. The IOM recognized some cancers and cancer deaths as being causally linked to dioxin exposure. The 1994 EPA dioxin health reassessment also noted that recent research also finds immune deficiency and reproductive effects can be caused by smaller amounts of dioxins than cause cancers. Recent literature also points out that dioxins and related chemicals cause nervous system damage, endocrine disruption, and growth disorders.

Admiral Zumwalt travels extensively, but can be reached through his office at 703-527-5380, fax 703-528-5795 (Arlington, Virginia). Please do tell him you and I have worked together for many years and I asked you to help us with publicizing this trip. We really do want maximum coverage in order to convince Congress that (US medical school and university) Vietnam based Agent Orange research (funded by the US government to the same extent as MIA POW funding, eg about \$50,000,000 per year) should move us forward markedly in understanding Agent Orange and dioxins' health consequences.

Warmest regards,



Arnold Schecter

phones above plus
home: 607-772-6067