

DEC 9 1980

CDR & Mrs. Lee Eyer
US Defense Attache Office
American Embassy
APO New York 09697
1 December 1980

Admiral E. R. Zumwalt Jr. USN (RET.)
1500 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22209

Dear Admiral:

Linda and I received your note and the inscribed copy of On Watch with a great deal of pleasure. Thank you for your very kind sentiments.

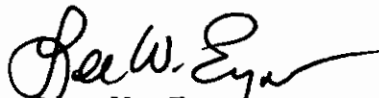
Several interesting developments have taken place since your visit to Saudi Arabia. Iraq/Iran started the day before you left, but since then AWACS have come to Saudi Arabia, the Chairman of the Joint Chief's, General Jones, visited twice, the F-15 question remains undecided and now Syria and Jordan. Saudi Arabia continues to be an exciting place to work and of continuing interest to the United States, and its development of a viable foreign policy re the Middle East. The Saudi's are looking with concern and hope to the new administration. The concern stems, I believe, from the fact that until the cabinet is announced and the inauguration takes place, the new administration remains largely an unknown. As you may well know, the Arabs do not put much stock in campaign promises. The outgoing administration certainly gave them no reason to change their minds. Their hope is that under President Reagan there may be an avenue opened through the Arab/Israel dispute that will allow the continuation and even improvement of the "special" U.S./Saudi relationship, (a relationship they desperately want) and permit them to carry out with dignity, their role as keeper of the Holy Places of Islam, (including Jerusalem), and proceed to build Arabia with petro dollars unencumbered by a fear of the Russian Bear.

Our personal outlook, Linda's and mine, has been impacted by two occurrences. The Captains Board that finally reported out passed me over. A new and unsettling experience for us. The new administration means we will be getting a new Ambassador. The passover leaves me inclined to look elsewhere for opportunities to continue to serve our country in the Middle East


and the thought of a new Ambassador makes me a bit uneasy. I hope we get a political appointee who can maintain the excellent rapport with the Saudis which Ambassador West has developed. Considering Ambassador West was able to accomplish this feat with no foreign policy of substance to represent, makes him that much greater in my eyes. I am sure the appointment of the new ambassador to Saudi Arabia will be given the proper consideration by our new Commander in Chief, however, I can share the Saudi's "concern" until that appointment is made.

Admiral, it was our pleasure to meet you and be of assistance during your visit. Congratulations on your efforts in getting the new administration into office. I feel the American people have spoken loudly and clearly. The message I heard was that we are tired of being the world's, especially the third worlds, football and that we want an administration that is firm, has direction, and a military force that can back the administration to the hilt. We look forward to your next visit to "the Kingdom."

Very Respectfully,


Lee W. Eyer

P.S. WITH REGARD TO THE ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT WHICH THE SAUDI'S WANT FOR THE F-15, I HOPE THAT YOU MAY BE ABLE TO SUPPORT OUR EFFORTS TO OBTAIN APPROVAL FOR THE SAUDI REQUEST. IT SEEMS TO BE SO LITTLE TO ASK AND YET HAS BECOME A MAJOR FACTOR IN FUTURE SAUDI/U.S. RELATIONS. PRESIDENT REGAN COULD MAKE A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH IN U.S./ARAB RELATIONS BY PUTTING AWAY THIS FACTOR WHICH THE SAUDI'S HAVE ALLOWED TO BECOME THE "MAJOR TEST" OF TRUE U.S. FEELINGS TOWARD SAUDI ARABIA. IT IS NOW A MATTER OF GREAT CONCERN TO THEM BECAUSE THEY CAN'T KEEP FACE WITH THEIR ARAB BROTHERS AND LET IT PASS. AMB WEST RENAIRED FROM THE U.S. TODAY AND INDICATED HE HAD STRONGLY SUPPORTED THIS VIEW WHILE HE WAS IN WASHINGTON.

Very Respectfully,




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

5 January 1981

CDR Lee Eyer
U. S. Defense Attache Office
American Embassy
APO New York 09697

Dear Lee:

Thank you for your letter of 1 December. I have passed the spirit of your thoughts along to the transition staff. I hope they will be useful. I will also try to reinforce your suggestions in the Pentagon.

I was distressed to learn of the Navy's poor judgment in not selecting you for Captain. When the time comes for you to make a final decision as to whether or not you are going to leave the Navy, please send me a copy of your resume and let me see what I can do to help.

All best wishes to you and Linda.

Sincerely,

E. R. Zumwalt, Jr.
1500 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22209
703/841-8960