

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
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FAX COVER SHEET

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From James R. Reckner

To (703) 528-5795
Admiral Timo R. Zumwalt, Jr.

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TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE VIETNAM CONFLICT

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27 September 1993

Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt
1500 Wilson Blvd, Suite 641
Arlington, Virginia 22209

Dear Admiral:

I am long overdue in updating you with regard to our efforts to acquire the Pike Collection. I understand through the local grapevine (although there has been no official notification) that you have already talked with President Lawless, so you probably know more about the situation than I do.

Our scheduled meeting with the Vice President, Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, Director of Libraries, and other senior staff occurred on 7 September. While everyone was very excited and supportive of the concept of acquiring the Pike Collection, there was considerably less excitement when it came to the idea of paying for a full-time staff to catalogue and maintain it, and make it available to researchers.

Vice President Haragan did say that the University would underwrite the expenses related to actually shipping the collection to Lubbock. But he felt that we would have to raise the funds to support staffing. At present, John Lowey and I have proposed a plan for the University to accept the collection and get it here to Lubbock. We propose that the University fund the staff for about three to five years, during which time we would attempt to raise sufficient funds to endow a permanent archival position.

We have briefed the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences on this scheme; she is supportive. We are scheduled to brief the Vice President for Institutional Development (the head fund-raiser) this Wednesday. Then we will push it up through the chain of command to President Lawless. In all of this I am attempting to keep everyone here briefed and in the picture so that they will remain inclined to support us.

The most important thing, I believe, is to actually get the Pike Collection here. Once it is here at Tech and in need of support, it will be much easier to find funding for it; if it remains in California awaiting funding, it will never get here, I fear.

I talked with Doug Pike last week. He is prepared to package virtually the entire collection for shipment during the break at the beginning of 1994. That will take approximately 200 student work hours. We are well able to find the funding for that, and we are anxious to get on with the project. But we still need a firm commitment from the

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University. Hopefully your telephone conversation with President Lawless will have had a positive impact.

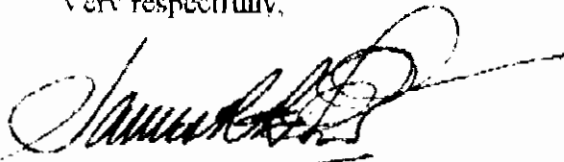
In other developments, I have now sent forward a letter to President Lawless outlining our plan for the National Council. I will forward a copy of that letter by mail. Hopefully, he will react positively to that, and we will be able to begin work on that in the near future.

Ambassador Colby called this week to say that he is shipping a "whole room full" of books to the Vietnam Archive. I am very pleased with that, particularly as it indicates that his interest in our endeavor is continuing. I think he should be one of the prime candidates for the National Council. Of course, the books will be very welcome additions to our collection.

I received a phone call from a Dr. Lloyd Phan, a former VNN enlisted man who still has some connections with Admiral Chon. [He called me before Admiral Chon accepted our invitation to attend the conference in April, to discuss the Admiral's visit.] In the more recent call, Dr. Phan reported that five POWs had been released *alive* from Vietnam within the past sixty days. He gave name, ranks, serial numbers, and data on dates of capture, etc. I, of course, remain very skeptical. I don't know this individual, and I don't really understand his motive for sharing this information with me. In his April call, Dr. Phan told me that he stayed behind in Vietnam fighting against the communists for several years after 1975, and that his brother had been killed blowing up the ammunition depot at Cat Lo in 1991. Lacking any other avenue --I have no particular connections with the Washington establishment-- I sent the information to Representative Larry Combest, who chairs the House Intelligence Committee. He is our own representative from Lubbock, and he is aware of our Center. I have heard nothing in response to date.

That is where we stand right now. John Lowey and I will continue to push for the Pike Collection as much as possible from this end to get the wheels moving. And I thank you for your intervention with President Lawless. There are so many layers of bureaucracy here that I rarely get to see him directly.

Very respectfully,



James R. Reekner