

APR 01 1994

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE VIETNAM CONFLICT

Box 4529 / Lubbock, Texas 79409-1013 / (806) 742-3742, 742-3744 / Fax: (806) 742-1060

29 March 1994

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

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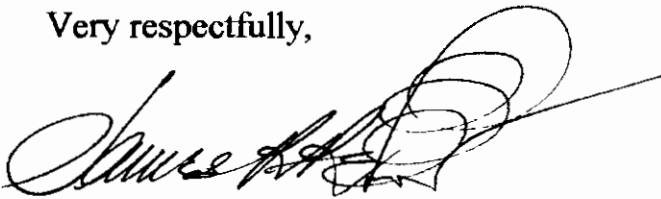
Dear Admiral Zumwalt:

Thank you for your letter of 23 March with the good news about Mr. Bundy. I have today sent him a fairly detailed statement of our situation, a copy of which I enclose. I sent essentially the same information to General Westmoreland.

There have been two promising developments here within the last week. The Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences has approached the Executive Vice President concerning the possibility of a line budget item in the State of Texas budget for the Center. The Executive Vice President is supportive of such a proposal and said he would present the idea to President Lawless. Some state funding would come in very handy.

The Dean has also made available a "floating" tenure-track appointment to the History Department. The general consensus is that this position will be filled by an Asian historian with a focus on Southeast Asia. We will hire a temporary for the next academic year (it is too late to go through a tenure-track hiring process for the fall), and anticipate having the new person on board for the following academic year. If we can find the right person, this will add considerable strength to our program. I have volunteered to be a member of the selection committee, so will play an active role in the process.

Very respectfully,



James R. Reckner

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# TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

## CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE VIETNAM CONFLICT

Box 4529 / Lubbock, Texas 79409-1013 / (806) 742-3742, 742-3744 / Fax: (806) 742-1060

March 29, 1994

Honorable William P. Bundy  
1087 Great Road  
Princeton, New Jersey 08540

Dear Mr. Bundy:

I was delighted to learn from Admiral Zumwalt today that you have agreed to join our endeavor here at Texas Tech. We at the Center appreciate your already heavy commitments, and will place no further burdens upon you. We would like to thank you, too, for the distinct honor of your association with us. Everyone involved with the Center and Archive will do their best to ensure that that honor is well placed.

I would like to take a few moments of your time to provide some background about the progress of our organization since it was established by Texas Tech's Board of Regents at the end of 1989, and to highlight some of the projects currently in progress, and some in the planning stage.

### Center for the Study of the Vietnam Conflict

The Center has two principal functions: to encourage study of all aspects of the American experience in Vietnam, and to assist in the funding of, and guide the growth of, the Archive of the Indochina Conflict at Texas Tech.

**A. Encouraging Study of Vietnam.** Under this head, we have now instituted a regular program of triennial Vietnam symposia, the first of which was last April. It was attended by Admiral Zumwalt, Rear Admiral Tran Van Chon (former VNN CNO), Ambassador Colby, Douglas Pike, George Herring, and a wide range of academics, principally of the conservative persuasion. As our first effort in this field, I think it was very successful, and was well received by everyone who attended. We have already begun planning for the next one in 1996.

#### 1. 1996 Vietnam Symposium

\* Admiral Zumwalt has been seeking approval to have General Vo Nguyen Giap visit the United States; he is hopeful that such a visit could be timed to fit in with our plans.

\* A few papers have already been proposed. The most interesting paper thus far suggested is one examining the Chinese role in North Vietnam,

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1965-1969. The author, a Chinese national, former officer of the PRC Navy and now an academic in the United States, served in a PRC Navy AAA unit shortly after its return from duty in Hanoi. I have now put this individual in contact with Ambassador Bui Diem, and they are beginning to examine the possibility of a joint research project examining Chinese and Russian involvement in Vietnam.

## **2. Undergraduate and Graduate Studies.**

- \* We offer an undergraduate Vietnam course each year. It is always over-subscribed. Therefore, this year we will formally propose a change to
  - a. One very large freshman class on Vietnam (200-400 students) each year to satisfy those students with general interest in Vietnam; and
  - b. A senior undergraduate course, possibly about 20 students, for those interested in serious academic study of Vietnam.
  
- \* We also offer a graduate course on Vietnam, usually every other year. Like the undergraduate courses, this also is always oversubscribed. From this course, and from growing awareness of the existence of the Vietnam Center and Archive and active interest in Vietnam at Texas Tech, we have a growing corps of graduate students working on theses and dissertations on Vietnam.
  - a. Three masters theses are currently in progress. One will complete next month; another during the summer, and a third in the fall. The topics involved are:
    - (1) The Role of the Navy in Rolling Thunder.
    - (2) The Impact of Cultural Differences as Related to the Incidence of Atrocities in Vietnam.
    - (3) The Use of Tactical Air in Vietnam.
  - b. One other masters thesis completed last year dealt with Operation SEALORDS.
  
- \* I anticipate at least four doctoral candidates focussing on Vietnam in the fall semester; two are arriving from different ends of the United States to study here: a Vietnam veteran (Khe Sanh) from Washington State and another student from North Carolina.

**3. Teaching High School Teachers How to Teach Vietnam.** We specifically built this mission into our program because we recognize the need to get a solid, constructive message to high school students. We have not made any progress in this direction yet, but still hold it as one of our goals.

## **B. Encouraging Growth of the Vietnam Archive.**

This is a particularly difficult part of our work. It involves developing a general awareness amongst Vietnam veterans that we would like to preserve their letters and any Vietnam-related documents they might have. [Just a week or two ago we contacted a fellow in New Mexico who says he has an attic full of papers relating to aircraft losses in South Vietnam. He has now promised to donate them.] We continue to work on building awareness through news releases and through establishment of a Friends of the Vietnam Center organization that will seek to involve Vietnam veterans locally and throughout the country. Those who join the Friends will receive a regular newsletter from the Center and will be invited to events the Center organizes, including an annual Friends banquet, to which we will invite as honored speaker some notable person related to the American Vietnam experience. Donations from the Friends, we hope, will provide some operating funds for the Center while encouraging donations of materials for the Archive.

**Major Fund-Raising Drive.** In addition to the modest sums we anticipate from the Friends project, we are also initiating a major fund-raising drive; that will be under the direction of Major General Dudley Faver, USAF (Ret). For this we will employ the resources and expertise of the University's fund-raising organization as well as any other connections we can develop. I will keep you advised on our progress with this important project, and also would be very glad to receive any suggestions you might have along this line (as with any other topic, of course).

**Vietnam Center Advisory Board.** This board, comprised principally of Vietnam veterans from the community, meets regularly to provide guidance for the day-to-day running of the Center and Archive, and to offer assistance for major operations such as the triennial Vietnam symposium. The Board is chaired by Admiral Zumwalt whenever he is here, but is generally run by a former Marine officer, Mr. John Lowey, who is also a former CEO of a big winery in West Texas. Members of the board range from former Army privates to general officers. Many of the board members are now civilian executives; three general officers also serve on the board: Lieutenant General Bernhard Mittermeyer, former Surgeon General of the Army, Major General Dudley Faver, USAF (Ret), and Brigadier General A. R. Brownfield. Although they live elsewhere in Texas, I also keep Lieutenant General Philip Davidson and Lieutenant General Dave R. Palmer apprised of developments with the Center. They both have expressed interest in the Center, and possibly will be able to assist us somewhere along the line.

**Archive of the Vietnam Conflict.** The Archive functions as part of the Special Collections of the University Library. It was established about a month before the Board of Regents authorized the Center. The Director of Libraries is a very strong supporter of the entire Vietnam project at Texas Tech. Although the Archive is a very young organization, we have acquired a number of collections of letters, documents, films and photos, and a fairly extensive collection of documents relating to the My Lai trials. Our developmental goals for the Archive include:

**A. Pike Collection.** Dougl's Pike has offered Texas Tech his entire collection of documents relating to the war in Vietnam. You are, of course, already very familiar with this collection, which amounts to approximately 3,000,000 documents. We are now seeking clearance from the University of California (Berkeley) to transfer it. Texas Tech has allocated \$25,000 to underwrite expenses related to the transfer.

**B. Microfilm Collections.** We have spent about \$20,000 on microfilm collections of Vietnam-related documents. One of our major fund-raising goals will be to complete that collection. We estimate that that will require about \$120,000. These collections are important for our own growing graduate research program; also, we have a set policy that all such collections will be available for interlibrary loan to any one of the thousands of libraries participating in the interlibrary loan program. We therefore will make these collections available to anyone anywhere in the United States who is interested in Vietnam.

**C. Archive Building.** \$8.8 million has been allocated for construction of a "Special Collections" building for the University. That project is now on "fast-track." We expect to move the Vietnam Archive into the new building early in 1996. If construction goes according to schedule, the new Archive will be officially opened during the 1996 symposium. At the same time, a \$3.5 million International Cultural Center has been authorized and funded. When it is completed in mid-1995 it will contain a suite of offices for the Vietnam Center and also the most modern state-of-the-art meeting facilities.

**D. Preserving and Cataloguing.** One of our long-range fund-raising goals will be to endow a Vietnam archivist's position at Texas Tech. We hope to have a full-time archivist working on preserving and cataloguing our collections. In the meantime, I am seeking approval to recruit some retired officers from the local retired officers' association to do volunteer archival work.

**Vietnam Center Director.** Concerning the Director of the Center, I feel certain that you will not remember having had breakfast with Ambassador Diem and me at the Air Force Academy in 1990. I would like only to say that I am a retired Navy officer whose otherwise totally unremarkable career included two tours of duty in Vietnam, as senior advisor to Vietnamese Navy river assault forces 1968-1969, and to Vietnamese Navy PBRs in 1971-1972. I am now a tenured associate professor of history, teaching American military and naval history here, and plan to stay "at the helm" of the Vietnam Center for the remainder of my working years, which I hope will be many. I feel certain, sir, that when you have the opportunity to meet the team that we have organized here you will, as Ambassador Colby said when he was here, feel comfortable about us and our effort. In closing, I would like to apologize for having taken so much of your time, sir. I will in future attempt to keep my correspondence much more brief.

Very respectfully,



James R. Reckner