

JUL 06 1993

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

30 June 1993

Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr.
1500 Wilson Blvd.
Arlington, Virginia

*1 copy in
2 Wilsons
3 in file*

Dear Admiral Zumwalt:

Just a short note to update you with our progress.

1. Pike Collection. I travelled on 16 June to Oakland to inspect the collections with Dr. David Murrah, the University's Director of Special Collections. A copy of my report of that trip, which includes an appreciation of the importance of the collection is attached.

I think the most important aspect of Doug Pike's offer is that it is compelling the higher administration of the University to make some fundamental decisions about the priority they attach to the Vietnam project. To accept the Pike donation the University must also agreed to find the room to house it and appoint permanent staff to service it. In other words, they must make a long-term financial commitment which has thus far been lacking.

I am optimistic that the University will make that decision. The executive vice president is "very excited" about the project, and the dean of the college of arts & sciences is equally supportive, as is the director of the university library system. I feel certain we will finally have a well-defined placed in the university's scheme of things.

2. The 1996 Conference. We have already begun preliminary planning for the 1996 conference. First and foremost, we hope you will put the dates (18-20 April) on your calendar and come back to visit with us and play an active role once again. By then we should have some solid achievements to our record.

*calendar
yes*

SRV Participation. We started far too late last time trying to arrange for academic representation from the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. We will begin this summer working on the next conference. Doug Pike has promised to find funding for any Vietnamese academics who might agree to travel to the U.S. for the conference. Apparently his source of funding will be wealthy Vietnamese living in California who are anxious to maintain contacts with the SRV through such "socially acceptable" means as supporting recognized academic endeavours, with a view toward using those contacts for commercial advantage after the United States establishes formal relations with the SRV.

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Theme of Conference. We haven't had any formal discussions about this, but my idea is that I would like to provide a forum in which (in addition to the usual academic papers) academics, particularly graduate students and young PhDs, will have the opportunity to meet and interact with civilian and military officials who played significant roles in the Vietnam conflict, either in Vietnam or at home. And, of course, I am anxious for that interaction to occur in the friendly sort of atmosphere which prevailed at our recent conference.

3. Board of Directors. At our board meeting with you we discussed the possibility of recruiting a number of nationally known figures to serve on our board. The names you mentioned included Walt Rostow, James Schlesinger, Melvin Laird, General Westmoreland, and a few others.

We have not gone forward with that proposal yet. I have asked John Lowey to develop a "mission statement" for anyone to be recruited for this board, and have asked for an appointment with President Lawless to outline the program to him. I will not be certain how he will wish to proceed with this until I speak with him, but the way I plan to suggest is that he might write the original letters inviting such participation, and then we will forward those letters through you. In this, as with everything relating to the project, I have been anxious to use the "chain of command" to include as many people as possible in the processes of the project. The more the University leadership feel involved, the more committed they will become to our goals.

4. Visit of General Vo Nguyen Giap. During my recent trip to Oakland, Doug Pike mentioned that an effort has been underway to have General Giap visit the United States for a meeting with General Westmoreland. Pike has suggested that should such a visit eventuate, he might be able to have Lubbock added to the general's agenda. Such a visit, with a possible panel discussion with you and one or two general officers would be a most remarkable event. I have in mind Lieutenant General Philip B. Davidson, who has written two excellent Vietnam histories, *Vietnam at War* and *Secrets of the Vietnam War*. General Davidson is a lifelong friend of Brigadier General Brownfield, and lives near Fort Hood, Texas, so is rather conveniently located for coming to Lubbock. I will immediately notify you should the possibility of such a visit become likely.

Very respectfully,



James R. Reckner



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REPORT OF VISIT TO INDOCHINA ARCHIVE, BERKELEY

James R. Reckner

The following observations are submitted concerning the visit of Dr. David Murrah and Dr. James Reckner to the Indochina Archive at the University of California (Berkeley) on Thursday, June 17, 1993.

Dr. Murrah and I were met by Professor Douglas Pike, the Director of the Indochina Archive and the anticipated donor of the collection to Texas Tech University. During the visit, Pike gave a detailed outline of the organization of the collection and an extensive tour of the physical layout of the Indochina Archive, which is currently housed in spacious facilities in a former typewriter factory approximately two miles from the Berkeley campus.

Dr. Murrah will provide a detailed summary of his estimate of the extent of the collection and probable space and personnel requirements for housing and maintaining the collection. I will limit my comments to the value of acquisition of the collection for Texas Tech and the Center for the Study of the Vietnam Conflict.

Of what value would the Pike Collection be to Texas Tech? It seems to me that acquisition of this extensive and widely known collection would serve a number of purposes:

1. Research Materials for Growing Graduate Research Program. Acquisition of the collection, which has been described as "the nearest thing the country has to a central depository of research materials" on the Vietnam War, would provide a remarkably rich research resource for graduate students currently studying Vietnam-related topics at Texas Tech University. At this point, we have one doctoral candidate currently committed to a Vietnam dissertation; a second is transferring from Texas A & M University to begin his program in the Fall. A third individual has indicated his desire to begin a Vietnam-related doctoral program here in the Fall of 1995. In addition to the above, we currently have two masters students preparing theses on Vietnam topics, and a graduate Vietnam course to be offered this Fall has already filled beyond capacity with 18 students. Although I have no substantive information to support the assertion, Professor Pike claims that our Vietnam graduate studies program is the most active one in the United States today.

2. Support for Undergraduate Studies. In addition to graduate studies, the History Department regularly offers undergraduate courses in the History of the Vietnam War. These courses, which are consistently oversubscribed, require formal term papers using primary source materials. The addition of the Pike Collection would significantly enlarge the scope of paper topics which might be attempted by undergraduate students; further, the presence of a first-rate research facility on campus doubtless would encourage some of these students to continue on to graduate studies in Vietnam-related fields.

3. The Pike Collection as a Catalyst for Growth. On the larger scale, the acquisition of this premier collection would do much to establish Texas Tech University as one of the principal research institutions dealing with Vietnam. It would attract serious researchers to Texas Tech, and, equally importantly, would attract further contributions of papers to the Vietnam Archive. The Pike Collection as the centerpiece of the Vietnam Archive at Texas Tech University, I am certain, would serve as a magnet drawing other collections of Vietnam-related materials to the Archive. Success breeds further success; the acquisition of the Pike Collection would represent a major step forward in developing the Vietnam Archive, would establish the image on the national level of Texas Tech University as a principal (possibly the principal) research center, and would encourage other holders of Vietnam-related documents to donate them to Texas Tech's Vietnam Archive.

4. Future Development of the Pike Collection. While the existing collection is arranged topically and chronologically within each topic, there remains considerable opportunity to improve accessibility of the material contained therein. No catalog of the materials currently exists. Although the development of such a computer-based catalog would be a major undertaking, it would be of inestimable value to future researchers. Further, such a catalog would greatly enhance the utility of the extensive microfilm publication developed from the Pike Collection while at the same time identifying material which is not included in that microfilm publication.

There are other elements of the Pike Collection which will require further processing in order to make the materials accessible. Some 40 boxes of unorganized newspaper clippings need to be reviewed and relevant clippings preserved and catalogued. A run of the Vietnam years of the *New York Times* currently stored in boxes might be clipped and filed, thereby preserving and focusing *New York Times* coverage of all aspects of the war for the convenience of the researcher.

Other newspapers, incomplete series, include *Nhan Dan*, North Vietnam's principal paper, and *Quan Doi Nhan Dan*, the official organ of the North Vietnamese Army. These and a number of South Vietnamese newspapers as well as interrogations of Viet Cong defectors and other documents are in Vietnamese. While they present no particular difficulties for the non-Vietnamese speaking archivist, their effective exploitation will require an historian with significant Vietnamese language skills. If this collection is acquired, and bearing in mind the Archive's intention to acquire Cornell University's Echols Collection in microfilm [which includes a significant number of Vietnamese-language monographs] when funds become available, it would be very useful to contemplate hiring an Asian historian with Vietnamese language skills and a focus on Indochina whenever Professor Key Ray Chong decides to retire.

5. Conclusion. Acquisition of the Pike Collection offers an unparalleled opportunity for Texas Tech University to establish a credible national-level research profile in an area of continuing national interest. As the recent Vietnam conference has indicated, an active, well-organized program in this field will attract academics of the first order as well as nationally recognized personalities to our program. That such a program will also attract continuing acquisitions from the Vietnam Archive is borne out by the offers of Ambassador William E. Colby and Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt to donate their papers to the Vietnam Archive.

Although the donor offers the collection *gratis*, its acquisition will not be without cost to the University. Shipping the materials to Lubbock presents but the first cost; adequate space must be found, or, ideally, developed in conjunction with plans for adequate housing for the Southwest Collection. And provision of adequate staff to develop and service the collection will be an essential ongoing expense. All of these topics fall within the purview of Dr. Murrah's report.

The University's response to the offer of the Pike Collection requires a major decision concerning the future of the Vietnam program at Texas Tech University. If the University chooses to acquire this collection, it will be necessary to make a financial commitment to the program which has thus far been lacking. The program, in my view, offers Texas Tech a unique opportunity to establish its credentials in an important niche of academic research. While this cannot be done without expense, the expenses related to it are relatively modest, and will be far outweighed by the long-term benefits to the university.

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June 25, 1993

Memo to Vietnam: Paris + 20 Conference Participants

1. **Thanks!** I would like to begin by thanking everyone who participated in our recent conference and thus contributed to its success. My special thanks to the active participants; without your work and contribution there could not have been a conference.

2. **We have set the date for our next conference: 18 - 20 April 1996.** Please mark that date on your schedule for long-term planning. We have not yet settled upon a theme for the conference. I would like to arrange a format which would bring more participants -- civilian and military officials -- into contact with academics currently working in the field. I realize that this probably reflects my own personal bias for military history; therefore, I request your input on this subject. All proposals from you will be put before the Vietnam Center Advisory Board before any decision is made.

Dissenting Voices. I would like to see the next conference provide some scope for dissenting voices; however, I am equally anxious to avoid "in-your-face" ideological confrontation. Therefore, I turn to you more experienced Vietnam scholars to suggest ways in which the range of interpretations might be aired while still retaining the friendly atmosphere we enjoyed so much during our recent conference. Please give me your suggestions.

SRV Participation. We began too late in planning SRV participation in our last conference. However, we will start early this time, and hopefully we will see some academic input from them in 1996. If the United States recognizes the Socialist Republic of Vietnam within the next year or so, that will make such participation infinitely less complicated.

3. **Conference Critique.** We are beginners at the business of hosting conferences. While we have noted a few shortcomings from the recent conference, we would very much like to hear from you if you have any suggestions about things that might be improved in our planning for the 1996 conference. We will consider every suggestion.

4. **Other Conference Feedback.** Our Center is in a continuing fund-raising process. Obviously, therefore, positive feedback about the Center's program, the conference, and any individual benefits gained by participation in the conference would be very helpful for us. Please let us know.

5. **Conference Papers.** We still have not received copies of all of the papers presented at the conference. For those of you who have not yet sent copies, I urge you to do so at the earliest possible date. As soon as we receive all of the papers we will provide soft-bound photocopies of all papers to all active participants --a central paper exchange--at the Center's expense. We also will produce a very limited number of copies for other conference participants at cost. Once all of the papers are received, we will seek a publisher for formal publication. So, please get your paper in if you haven't already done so.

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6. Mailing List. By now you all will have received copies of the addresses of conference participants. The addresses, for the most part, were those you provided on the registration form for the conference; if there is any error, or if you would like a different personal listing, please let us know. We would like to develop this list into a more comprehensive listing of people interested in Vietnam, so that we might advise others sharing our interest of our future activities. Therefore, we encourage you to contribute names and addresses of anyone you think should be on the list. As always, we will share the expanded list with everyone who contributes to its expansion.

7. New Contributions. Since the conference, we have been pleased to receive notification from Ambassador William Colby that he is donating the papers he gathered for publication of his book, *Lost Victory*, to the Vietnam Archive at Texas Tech. We anticipate that those papers will begin to arrive in the next few months.

Admiral Zumwalt has also volunteered to donate all of his papers relating to Agent Orange. Those will not become available for a few more years, though, until the Admiral has completed his expert witness testimony in a number of cases.

8. Keep in Touch! All of us at Texas Tech were pleased to have the opportunity to get to know you all during your visit here in April. Let's keep the friendship alive over the next couple of years, in the hope that we can all meet again in Lubbock in 1996.



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

July 8, 1993

Dr. James R. Reckner
Texas Tech University
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Box 4529
Lubbock, TX 79409-1013

Dear Jim:

Many thanks for your update of 30 June. We have marked 18-20 April in the 1996 calendar (god willing).

I will be glad to forward any letters which President Lawless decides to sign.

With regard to the 1996 conference, what do you think about the idea of trying to get attendance from the senior Communist Vietnamese general in charge of the Delta Campaign and the senior general in Hanoi responsible for seaborne infiltration of supplies. These two would be the direct enemies with whom I had to deal. It would be great to have a panel discussion among the three of us.

All best wishes.

Sincerely,

E. R. Zumwalt, Jr.

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