

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE VIETNAM CONFLICT

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

8 March 1993

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

Dear Admiral:

Just a short note to enclose a copy of a letter I sent just a few days ago to Admiral Chon. When last we met you encouraged me to invite the admiral; unfortunately, until now I have been uncertain about finances for his visit. I am now fairly certain that we will be able to pay all of our bills for the conference, so am moving forward with your recommendation.

I am hopeful that this invitation does not reach him too late for him to fit it into his schedule. I would have liked to tender the invitation much earlier than this, but financial constraints have made it impossible. In the end, I must ensure that our fledgling organization does not spend more than it actually has.

I will, of course, immediately notify you of his response.

All other preparations for the conference seem to be going ahead satisfactorily. I believe I mentioned in my last letter that Mr. William Colby has agreed to participate in the "celebrity panel" on Saturday morning, along with Douglas Pike and George C. Herring. I talked with Ambassador Diem last Friday; he is still anxious to attend, but is awaiting clarification of some other activities before making a firm commitment.

Very respectfully,



James R. Reckner

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5 March 1993

Rear Admiral Tran Van Chon
1032 Kitchener Circle
San Jose, CA 95121

Dear Admiral Chon:

You will not remember me. I served with the Naval Advisory Group in Vietnam, as senior advisor to River Assault Group 26 (Lieutenant Commander Nguyen Van May) in 1968 and 1969 and to River Patrol Group 52 (Lieutenant Ong Van Dao) in 1971 and 1972. I personally have a particularly vivid memory of you from those days, particularly during the turnover of the first sixty PBRs to TF 212 late in 1969. That ceremony, you might recall, took place in an exceedingly heavy downpour.

For the last two or three years we have been working to establish a Vietnam Archive and Center for the Study of the Vietnam Conflict at Texas Tech University, where I currently serve as a professor of military history.

Our organization is now in the final planning stages for a conference geared to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the signing of the Paris Peace Accords. Among the speakers not listed in the enclosed program, which was printed some time ago, are former CIA Director William Colby, Mr. Douglas Pike of the Indochina Archive at the University of California at Berkeley, and tentatively, former Ambassador Bui Diem.

Admiral Zumwalt functions as Chairman of the Center's Advisory Board, and it is with his approval that I approach you to invite you to the conference in the hope that you might both choose to attend, and also to take an active role. I believe the academic community and the American public in general would benefit from an account of your experiences in Vietnam since 1975, should you choose to share those experiences with us. And personally, it would be a great honor to meet you again.

Should you choose to join us, the Center for the Study of the Vietnam Conflict will provide air transportation via Southwest Airlines and underwrite all other expenses related to your visit.

Very respectfully,

James R. Reckner
Director

VIETNAM CENTER ADVISORY BOARD
COPY TO: Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr.
Chairman

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