

AMERICAN MILITARY UNIVERSITY

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Prof. T. C. Mataxis

Admiral E. R. Zumwalt (ret)
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Dear Admiral Zumwalt :

After last year's conference at the Vietnam Center I wrote an Op-ed which stressed the need to look at the Vietnam War historically . As you can see from my Op-ed I feel we need to look at Vietnam as a part of the "40 Year Cold War" containment strategy. I sent a letter enclosing my Op-ed to 20+ 4 star retirees asking them to raise this subject with the Army Chief of Staff at the 4 Star Retiree Conference in September. He had my Op-ed brought to his attention --and wrote me a letter which agreed "that we must present our story better " (TAB A)

Since then things have moved rapidly . I was called by the Center for Military History for more information. I visited Dr. Clarke, the Army Senior Civilian Historian, in DC. We discussed at some length my concern if we don't present our position that Vietnam ,like Korea, was a part of our nation's bipartisan 40 year Cold War containment policy we leave the liberal view of an "illegal immoral war" as the one which will become history!

He then briefed me on DOD's 1996 International Cold War Conference and the establishment of the DOD "Cold War History Committee". One of the responsibilities of that committee is an exchange of Cold War information among government, international and private (historical) organizations. I have enclosed a Xerox of this portion explaining the responsibilities of this Cold War committee. I believe we need to "get word out" among our military retirees as well as historians on this new initiative. (TAB B)

I was also very encouraged to find out that the 1996 Conference of Army Historians covered "The Early years of the Cold War". I understand that they are tentatively discussing having the "Mid Years" (Vietnam) and "End of the Cold War" covered by their 1998 & 2000 biannual Conferences. So the word is getting out at least among DOD's historians. But unless it is publicized it will only result in expanding the files in the Pentagon.

I 'm also encouraged by Professor Gaddis's historical ten point "Letterman List" in the recent Triangle Institute for Security Studies's News Letter. His question 3-- "discussing future generations assessment of our era" is also most encouraging, since I no longer feel "out on a limb!"(TAB C)


I'm writing to you, General Westmoreland and Dr. Jim Reckner to share this new historical agenda--to cover Vietnam as part "40 year Cold War containment strategy". Now that the Cold War is over and we are bedeviled by new geopolitical problems we can stand

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back and take a look at the forest and how the trees--Korea & Vietnam and other crises of this era blend into an overall historical pattern! Looking back through history one recalls the "30 Year War" and the "100 Year War". I can visualize the "40 Year Cold War" being a defining factor of the history of the Twentieth Century!

If possible I think it would be it would be great if you mentioned this new DOD Cold War Historical Committee and the need to now look at not only the Vietnam War but also the Korean War from a Cold War perspective when you address our Conference.

Warm Regards,


Ted Mataxis
BG (ret) USA

PS I've convinced my son to attend! He served his initial tour in Vietnam with the 101st. Airborne--ending up as a Company Commander. This was followed by 3--6 months extensions--Advisor ARVN Airborne Bn.; Ranger Co. Commander in the Americal Division and on his last extension an Advisor to an ARVN Border Ranger Camp.



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

March 22, 1997

Ed

Brigadier General Ted Mataxis, USA (Ret.)
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Dear Ted:

Thank you for your letter concerning the DOD Cold War Historical Committee and the need to now look also at the Korean War from the Cold War perspective as well as the Vietnam War.

I support your view and will communicate mine.

All best wishes.

Sincerely,

E. R. Zumwalt, Jr.
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