

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE VIETNAM CONFLICT

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June 4, 1996

Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr.
1000 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 3105
Arlington, VA 22209-3901

Dear Admiral:

Thank you for your letter of 21 May 1996. I am pleased that you will be able to participate in the 1997 meeting, and I will go forward with invitations to Nguyen Cao Ky and Daniel Ellsberg. I will hold off on Neil Sheehan, unless pressure here makes it expedient to invite him. One of our local board members was a correspondent in Washington during the war (for *U.S. News & World Report*, I think), and he is very keen to invite Sheehan. I will play that one by ear.

Once again, I would like to have Hanoi Vietnamese participation, and perhaps that would be possible if Air Marshall Ky was the more-or-less "official" South Vietnamese spokesman at the meeting. After all our efforts to get someone from Vietnam for this year, perhaps it would be more appropriate to approach Ambassador Bang in Washington and see what he can do for us. Perhaps he would agree to come. At any rate, it might be worthwhile to enlist Ambassador-designate Pete Peterson on this one, and see what he can do for us. In his letter to us after the symposium he offered to help us in any way he could.

I have now heard from Don Walker that the videotape of Ambassador Colby's keynote speech was very good quality. I have asked Don to have it edited to just have his introduction of Mr. Colby, and then Mr. Colby's speech. When that is ready, we will send a copy to Mrs. Colby, unless you would prefer us to send it to you to go to her.

Mr. Combest delivered the CIA papers to the Vietnam Archive on Memorial Day. They are quite a remarkable treasure trove of information, and will complement other collections that we already have in the archive. I am much impressed with the fact that as more --and diverse-- collections arrive, increasingly their overall value is greater than the value of the sum of their parts, as they offer steadily increasing opportunities for researchers to directly compare assessments from different areas, such as the CIA assessment of the situation in Vietnam compared to the MACV assessment, or the CIA assessment of the effectiveness of the Air War compared to the USAF assessment.

Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr.

The archive is now planning its move to the new building. That should be accomplished during September. At the same time, I will be establishing the Vietnam Center offices in the new International Cultural Center. It isn't a matter of shifting from one office to another, as we have never had an office for the Center other than the spare bedroom at my house. When we get shifted we will develop new letterhead, have new telephone and fax numbers, and we will have a secretary to answer the phone throughout the work day, so I can be more easily reached.

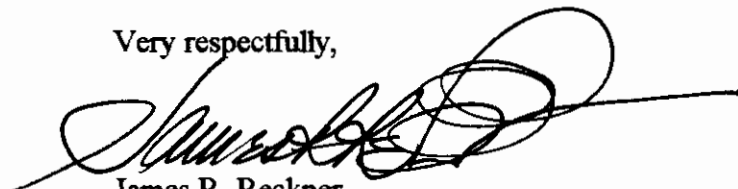
During your visit here, Admiral, you mentioned the possibility of donating your papers relating to your duty as CNO, and asked whether we would be interested in housing them. I can say, without hesitation, that we would be honored to house them at Texas Tech. I think they, along with your Agent Orange papers, which you have already committed to Texas Tech when you are finished with them, will make a tremendous research resource for future students of Vietnam.

One of the projects going forward this summer is the cataloguing and preservation of the records of the National Vietnam Veterans Coalition. One of my doctoral candidates, a major in the Marine Corps Reserve (F4 RIO, which is a specialty in very little demand these days, I suspect), is in charge of this project, and is finding a tremendous amount of interesting material in the collection. This collection, by the way, has quite a bit of material relating to Agent Orange.

Aside from the above, I have been letting the Center run on "automatic" for a few weeks while I struggle to complete a book manuscript about Theodore Roosevelt's navy, which is long overdue at the Naval Historical Center. I am working on chapter seven now: an overview of the officer corps of the period, and am having some difficulty keeping it properly focused, as there is so much to say about them. I anticipate three more chapters, two of which should not be very difficult, as I have already dealt with the topics to some extent elsewhere.

My doctoral student who will be putting the symposium papers on our home page is away on his honeymoon. He has been rather distracted these past few weeks, but I expect him back here and at work next Monday, after which the papers should begin appearing on the home page.

Very respectfully,



James R. Reckner
Director

encl: News clippings relating to CIA papers

Tech Vietnam center to gain CIA files

By ANGELA K. BROWN
Avalanche-Journal

Volumes of declassified CIA documents soon will be part of Texas Tech's Center for the Study of the Vietnam Conflict.

U.S. Rep. Larry Combest, R-Lubbock, will present more than 15,000 pages from CIA files to the center at 11 a.m. Monday.

"My hope is that this presentation on Memorial Day will be appropriate to deepening the understanding of all Americans for the sacrifices made by soldiers," he said in a release.

The records have been available before but never at the same time in such a large amount, Combest spokesman Keith Williams said Thursday from his Washington, D.C., office.

15,000 declassified pages to be awarded

The material will be added to the center's archive, which includes more information on the Vietnam War from other analytical sources, said James R. Reckner, center director.

The presentation to Tech's center will enhance the existing collection and be a rich source of information for researchers examining the CIA and Southeast Asia, he added.

"It provides one place where researchers, scholars and journalists can go in and study

any aspect of Vietnam in one spot, instead of having to write the government for the information or visit a lot of different places," Williams said.

As chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, Combest was able to acquire the records quickly, although anyone could have requested the information, he said.

The material takes up five large boxes and has a 205-page inventory list. It includes several hundred reports of live sightings of prisoners of war, mostly from the war years but some in the 1980s, Williams said.

Other records include CIA assessments of the effectiveness of the air war against North Vietnam, the North Vietnamese political situation and Soviet intentions regarding America's involvement in Vietnam.

Tuesday, May 28, 1996

Combest presents CIA files to Tech's Vietnam archives

U.S. Rep. Larry Combest, R-Lubbock, on Monday presented 15,000 pages of CIA files to Texas Tech's Center for the Study of the Vietnam Conflict.

In the 5 cubic feet of materials are reports of live prisoners-of-war sightings and other records that have been declassified by the federal government. Information assessing the effectiveness of the air war, the North Vietnamese political situ-

ation and the Soviet intentions has been edited out.

James Reckner, archive director, said these materials "significantly enhance the overall value" of the archive. Also included in the documents are several hundred reports of war prisoner sightings, principally from the war years. Combest, chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, has worked to reduce the volume of classified information.



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

June 12, 1996

James R. Reckner, Ph.D.
Center for the Study of the Vietnam Conflict
Texas Tech University
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Dear Jim:

Thank you for your letter of June 4. In that regard, I have the following comments:

1. Please do not let me be a bar to an invitation to Neil Sheehan if you would like to have him. I don't think it is appropriate for me in any way to perturb academic back and forth.

2. I would be glad to sign a letter to Ambassador-designate Pete Peterson if you would give me a draft. We sought to meet with him recently and were told that until the Senate confirms him, he is restricted by strict rules not to act like an ambassador so I would hold the letter until he is confirmed.

3. I would appreciate the chance to send the copy of the Colby keynote speech to Mrs. Colby which would be a good opportunity then for me to raise the issue of any remaining files.

4. With regard to my intention to provide my files, I attach a copy of the letter written to the Navy to show you that I am moving on it.

Also many thanks for pushing along the Foreign Trade University concept. I think it has possibilities for your work as well as being an important possible step to broaden Texas Tech.

Keep up the great work.

Sincerely,

E. R. Zumwalt, Jr.
Admiral, USN (Ret.)

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