

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

THE VIETNAM CENTER

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June 9, 1998

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

Dear Admiral:

Thank you for your letters of May 21 and June 1, both of which reached me yesterday.

Concerning the scholarly value of the American Veterans Journal you sent, I will not have the time to read it before the conference, and thus can not render a truly balanced judgment. However, the two papers in chapter one are by outstanding scholars: Joe Dunn and Joe Guilmartin. Dunn served as an enlisted man in the 199th Infantry Brigade around Xuan Loc; Guilmartin is a retired USAF lieutenant colonel who teaches at Ohio State University. I hold the highest opinion of both of them and thus believe their articles will be worthwhile.

I think your decision to speak about "What should be teach our children about the Vietnam War?" will work very well for the conference. I have invited Professor Marilyn Young, an extreme representative of the Left; "unfortunately" she is unable to participate this year.

About the letter to Chancellor Montford, I have given this some thought, and had decided simply to discuss it with you upon your arrival. I will talk with his executive assistant tomorrow, but I think he is already committed to this course of action. However, a letter from you might strengthen him in his resolve.

I am gathering a number of papers for your consideration while you are here, and will hand-deliver them to you. One deals with a situation that developed in Plano, Texas, when locals planned a display of art from Vietnam. The Vietnamese community and local Vietnam vets very strongly opposed the display as "insensitive" to the Vietnamese-Americans, and Congressman Sam Johnson came down strongly in opposition to the art exhibition.

As Congressman Johnson is strongly supporting our effort to gain federal funding for the "Virtual Vietnam Archive," I am somewhat concerned about getting too far out in front with our efforts to connect with the Vietnamese. My heart tells me to push ahead, but there are caution alarms also going off in my mind. I have some of the reporting of the

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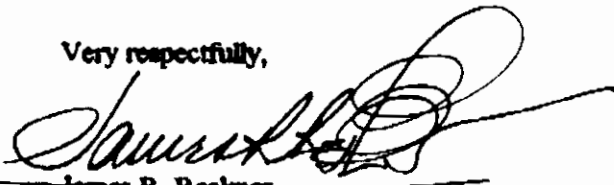
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events in Plano set aside for you and wanted to discuss it with you briefly before pushing on. I have already discussed this with Admiral Tidd, with whom I had lunch yesterday.

The problem with all of this, I think, is gauging just how far out in front of the Vietnam veteran community we can get without alienating that community, the support of which is important to us. We have a great chance to lead, but I think we have to be certain that someone --hopefully everyone-- will follow.

Very respectfully,



James R. Reckner