July 20, 1986

TO: Linda Sauer – Wyoming Eagle

Julie Clay

Joe Elkins

Re: Korean War Memorial

Hello:

I hope you don't mind me writing to all three of you in the same letter, but I have essentially the same thing to say.

The struggle to get this memorial built has been one which I will never forget. The heroes of this struggle have not been famous people, for not one single "name" has appeared to champion the cause. It has been Tony Zdanavage, a man who is fighting his own physical battle this very minute. It has been Bill Temple, who has dedicated his life to prove that recognition can be had for those who fell in Korea. It has been Chayon Kim, a Korean-American woman who has proven that America can be the land of the free, and that one person can make a difference.

I have been personally promised that the passage of S-1223 would be possible this year. Yet the "generic" bill authorizing land rests silently in Senator Wallops' committee. I was told by Patty Kennedy on both May 13th and 14th, 1986, in her office on Capitol Hill, that the "generic" bill would be introduced the next week. Action speaks louder than words.

Bill Temple and I personally spoke to staff aides in Washington, D.C. on May 14, 1986, all of whom were familiar with the legislation. Aides for Senators Bingamen, Hatfield, Melcher, Weicher, Murkowski, Hecht, and Domenici spoke to us and basically stated that the "generic" bill would be a rubber stamp, that no objections were being raised, that they all agreed in the propriety of a Korean War Memorial, and that everything was "go".

We spoke with an aide to Senator Denton, who felt that Senate S-1223 would have no real problems with passage, IF THE "GENERIC" BILL WAS PASSED.

Last summer, we were told: August
Last fall, we were told: By Christmas
Last winter, we were told: By March
Last spring, we were told: By Memorial Day
Last May, we were told: By July 4
Now we are told: Too busy.
If certain members of the Congress do not feel that a Korean War Memorial is necessary or even deserved, then they ought to make these opinions known immediately. At least we would know where we stand.

Talk is cheap. Too many people have worked too hard on this effort.

I have confidence that these efforts will not be in vain, but the critical time frame before Congress departs for the elections leaves little time.

As I told you all, I have written Senator Wallop 4 times, but have yet to receive a reply. This has happened to many others who have written him. Only lip service. And empty promises.

The Wallop situation closely parallels the Clint Eastwood situation. Both these men have been inundated with negative letters and calls, and both instinctively have pulled back into a fighting position. The fact that these positions might harm others seems not to register. Both are under attack. Both refuse to compromise or help solve the problem. Both have no concept what it all means.

I think Tony Zdanavage made the point that, just in terms of mental health costs, the passage of the memorial bill would reap untold benefits in the hearts and minds of the veterans still living. And, I might add, to the families of those veterans, both living and dead. I can just recently see a change in how my own father relates to me as a result of my efforts. I never thought I would live to see him just sit down and talk.

The key issue is, do the powers controlling this legislation really intend it to pass? Do we have a chance or are we caught up in a game we cannot win? Is this going to end soon, or will it be necessary to introduce legislation in the next Congress for passage in the next decade, if ever?

Wyoming is where this issue will be settled, one way or another. Nothing good ever seems to come easy.

Sincerely,

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