

THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

ESTABLISHED BY CONGRESS MAY 17, 1910

J. CARTER BROWN, Chairman

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EXHIBIT A-1

708 JACKSON PLACE, N.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 2
202-566-1066

March 9, 1982

Dear Mr. Secretary:

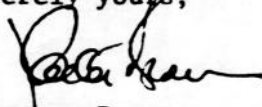
We have your letter of February 25, seeking the reaction of the Commission of Fine Arts to the concept of the addition on the site of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial of two elements, a staff with the American flag, and a piece of sculpture depicting a serviceman.

As a design review body, we have difficulty in rendering a judgment without a specific design to review. However, we believe it is possible to find a solution for adding those elements in such a way as to obtain the approval of the Commission of Fine Arts as required by Public Law 26-297.

The Commission has not yet had submitted to it the interpretive element that will welcome the visitor and guide those who are seeking the location of a specific name. Especially for those whose lives have been affected most by the Vietnam experience, this area will in effect serve as an entry point for visitors to the memorial. The development of this might well provide a fruitful area to examine in relation to the new elements.

The Commission reaffirms its approval for the design as approved to date. As you point out in your letter, the basic design of the memorial is unchanged. For this reason, no further approval by the Commission of Fine Arts is required as a precondition to action by the Department of the Interior. The Commission looks forward to reviewing ways in which additional elements could be designed and positioned so as not to abrogate the integrity and magnificence of the existing design concept, which it will be impossible fully to appreciate until that concept has been realized at its full and very impressive scale.

Sincerely yours,


J. Carter Brown
Chairman

The Honorable
James C. Watt
Secretary
Department of the Interior
18th & C Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20240