

House Bill 2257

Greetings and thank you for this opportunity to speak reference the Armed services Occupation Medal license plate. House Bill No. 2257

I have come before you today to request that an Armed Services Occupation Medal license plate be made available to those of us who have served in occupied territory.

As you may know the Vietnam veterans now have a plate bearing their Medal for the Vietnam conflict. Having served in Berlin in an occupying force capacity it would be an honor and privilege to have the Occupation Medal displayed on license plates. I am sure the Purple Heart recipients, Iraq vets, Vietnam vets and numerous other vets proudly display their license plates.

In Berlin we were the “Defenders of Freedom” surrounded by a wall 110 miles behind the Iron Curtain. We stood fast at the wall staring down communism and oppression as we were the “Hot Spot” for World War III. I was in awe with Berlin as

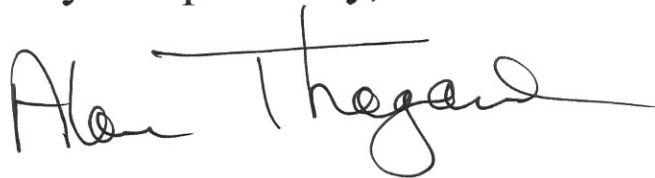
I stood on the bridge the prisoner exchange took place for Gary Francis Powers. I had been to the Christmas Bazaar where the recent terrorist ran over those shopping next to the Keiser Wilhelm Church. Although many of the “Occupation Vets” have not seen combat we have suffered vicariously . From being spat upon in the Atlanta Airport to being called “Baby Killers”. The Vietnam vets did not get the reception our returning vets now receive. Vietnam vets are now finally receiving the accolades far over due. We vets of occupied territories who suffer vicariously, I am sure, would be proud to have a license plate to call their own and to bring attention to the Armed Services of Occupying forces.

But I digress, I would like to give a little history of the Occupation Medal.

Although authorized in 1946, it was not until 1947 that the first Army of Occupation Medals were distributed. The first medal was presented to General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower, who had been the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force Commander during World War II.

In closing I would like to thank the panel for listening to my plea for this license plate. What ever your decision it is an honor and privilege to have been here today .

Very Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan Thagard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Alan Thagard
SFC, US Army Retired

