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April 14, 1948

Honorable Howard A. Coffin
Member of Congress
13th Michigan District
Old House Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear Howard:

I am in receipt of your letter of April 12th, advising me that you will be the speaker for the Polar Bear Association Memorial Services on Monday, May 31st. I deeply appreciate your accepting our invitation, and I shall be glad to do anything I can to assist you. If you do not have transportation to and from the cemetery, please advise me and I shall be glad to arrange for it.

I think you are altogether too modest about your ability to speak on this occasion because I know your ability as a speaker, and your recent experience in Congress should furnish you with plenty of ammunition.

Since the members of our organization are the only ones who have engaged in a war with Russia, although undeclared, we were probably the first organized anti-communist group in the United States.

The organizations composing our expeditionary force to Archangel consisted of units of the United States, Canadian, British and French armies. The American forces consisted of the 339th Infantry, the 337th Medical Unit, the 337th Ambulance Corps and the 1st Battalion of the 110th Engineers. The American forces were about five thousand strong, and at one time our front lines extended over 450 miles, so that you can see we were rather sparsely situated. Much of the winter fighting was done in deep snow and bitter cold. It reached 50 degrees below zero Fahrenheit on many occasions. More of our men were killed and wounded in battle after Armistice Day, November 11, 1918, than were killed before. We landed at and near Archangel on September 4, 1918, and left at various times about the middle of June, 1919.

We expect to have a tentative program prepared within the next few days and as soon as it is ready I shall send you a copy.

Our boys and guests will naturally be interested in any comments you care to make on the present trends of communism in the United States and Europe, and the efforts being made to combat it. If there is any further information you desire or help I can give, please feel free to call upon me at any time.

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Honorable Howard A. Coffin

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April 11, 1948

With kindest personal regards and best wishes, and sincere thanks for accepting, I am

Very truly yours

POLAR BEAR ASSOCIATION

By

Chairman, Distinguished Guests
Committee
1066 Federal Building
Detroit 26, Michigan

WIM:P

P.S. The Polar Bear Association is an international organization, composed of all the honorably discharged members of any of the armies participating in that expedition. We usually have several Canadians present, and have had others. The Polar Bear Post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars is a separate organization, but service in North Russia is a requisite to membership. I am enclosing herewith copy of a letter that was sent to Senators and Representatives in 1921, and also copy of a resolution adopted by the Polar Bear Post at that time.

W.I.M.