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March 13, 1998

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The Honorable Craig Thomas
United States Senator from
Wyoming
109 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Craig:

You may have already received a copy, but in case you didn't I enclose herewith A Joint Resolution of the Wyoming Legislature with respect to the Bells of Belangiga. This Resolution, sponsored by Representative Jeff Wasserburger of Campbell County, received almost unanimous support from both houses of the Wyoming Legislature.

A couple of weeks ago I had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Raul Rabe, Ambassador from the Philippines to America. I also had the opportunity to participate in a ceremony sponsored by Bishop Hart of the Catholic Diocese of Wyoming wherein he presented to Ambassador Rabe a statue of the Madonna. Bishop Hart pointed out that the Bells of Belangiga were not a trophy of war but a religious symbol to the people of the Philippines.

As I have studied this matter, I come to the conclusion that the position of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion is wrong on this issue. As a member of those organizations and as a combat veteran of World War II, I think I have a right to express that opinion. If we adopted the same philosophy with respect to Germany and Japan and have no forgiveness of military acts between our nations, we would indeed be asking for more trouble. The Germans have forgiven us for killing 300,000 people in the Dresden bomb raid of 1945. I was on that mission. To hang on to some undefined military principle after 100 years doesn't make any sense to me or most people of Wyoming.

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I realize that you have taken a position on this issue, but I hope that you will change that position so that we can improve the friendship with the Philippines, which was once a protectorate of the United States, and help them celebrate their 100th birthday as a free nation.

With best personal regards, I am

Sincerely,



Stan Hathaway

SKH/dmg
Enclosure

cc: His Excellency Joseph Hart
The Honorable Jeff Wasserburger
Mr. Jim Helzer