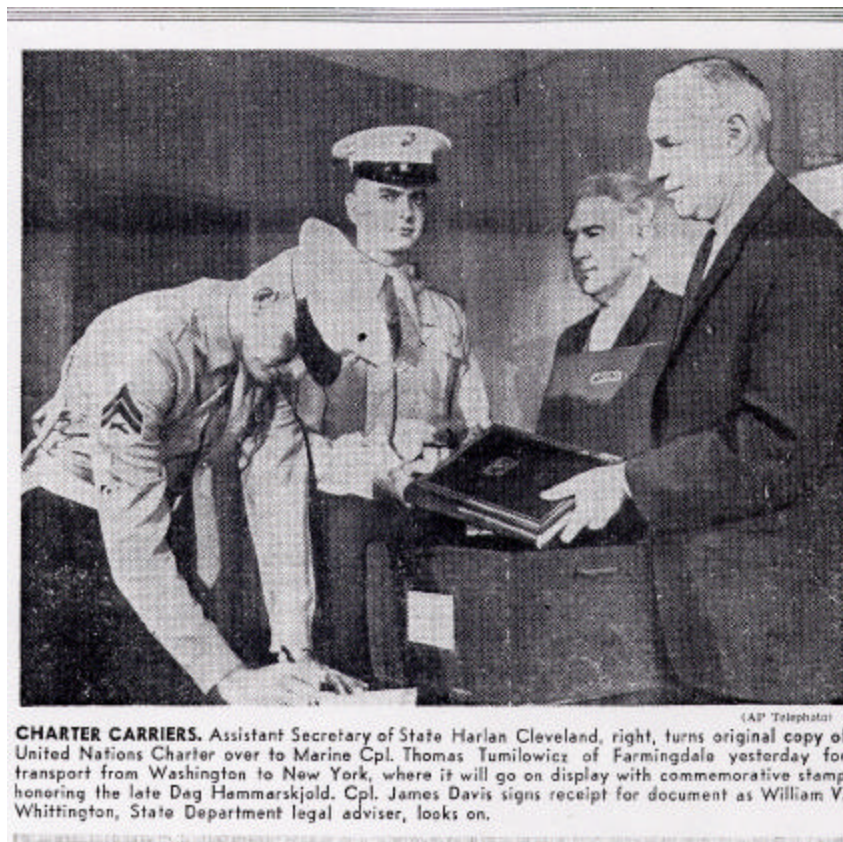


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An Unusual Detail



The above photo appeared on the back cover of Newsday on October 23, 1962, which coincided with the beginning of the Cuban Missile crisis. With me is Dick Davis, who, as I'm sure you are aware, retired as a Major General in July of 1995 and passed away August of this year.

Our unusual detail was to receive the original United Nations Charter from the State Department, and deliver it to the UN. We shared a private compartment with a gentleman from the State Department, and when we arrived at Penn Station there were about 20 reporters, photographers and TV cameras rolling. We had no idea what was going on that late afternoon. All of us limoed over to the Mission on the east side, delivered the Charter and Dick and I were on our own to return to DC at our leisure.

Davis had never been to New York before and being from Long Island, New York I knew my way around town. We decided to take in a few sites. Since we were directly across the street from the UN building we started there. The General Assembly was in

session, so we occupied a few seats about midway down in the audience, put on the ear phones and listened in. That was the first we heard about the Cuban crisis. We were armed with loaded .45's and as we sat there I nudged Dick as I became aware of uniformed guards approaching us from different directions. We were asked to accompany them to the rear of the assembly where we were told that no side arms were permitted on UN grounds and were asked to surrender our weapons. Dick and I looked at each other, silently counted the number of security guards, figured we could hold them off, but then advised them we would leave. With our weapons.

We cut across town and went to the Empire State Building, took in a few sites on Broadway and then went to Penn Station for the return trip to Washington, DC. I called the barracks and told them what our ETA was and requested transportation to return to the Naval Gun Factory, Bldg. 58, where we were billeted. Bldg. 58 later became the Marine Corps Museum. We arrived at Penn Station in DC about 2300. No one was there from the motor pool and after waiting about 30 minutes we called again.

About a "brief" one hour wait and three cups of coffee later, a staff car arrived and off we went. The driver filled us in on the latest scuttlebutt and as we drove down 8th Street we noticed some troops patrolling the main barracks and the Commandant's residence. There were also .30 cal machine guns deployed on roofs and other key positions. We were dropped off at Bldg. 58 and found the whole company gone. At that time CGC was attached to the 22nd, of the 2nd MarDiv, and Dick and I were to join them a few days later for preparation of the invasion of Cuba. Some of the men were sent to Camp David as reinforcements.

Believe me, it was an eerie feeling being the only two in the whole barracks. Davis was married at the time and had housing at Anacosta Naval Station across the river but stayed at the barracks that night after calling Barbara, his wife. The following morning we called the main post for orders, got filled in and were put on a detail to load everyone's foot lockers that were stacked up by Bldg. 58 onto 6by's. Dick and I made Corporal together and after a brief discussion on who was senior man, we turned to and filled the trucks with about 170 foot lockers. My back hurts thinking about it.

Things cooled off in the ensuing days, and a few weeks later we were detached again to the State Department. We returned to New York to retrieve the UN Charter, at which time the picture was taken with the US Ambassador to the UN, Adlai Stevenson.

You may have seen the movie "Thirteen Days," made a year or two ago about President Kennedy and the Cuban Crisis. They attempted to get Ben Affleck and Russell Crowe to portray Davis and me, but the parts were too small.

It's been fun reminiscing and thinking back on that episode in our country's history and it makes one think about the events over the past four decades. God Bless our Troops always.

Semper Fi,
Tom Tumilowicz