



THE CHIEF OF NAVAL PERSONNEL

4 October 1977

Dear Senator Tower,

Thank you for your recent letter concerning the future of the Navy Band Corpus Christi.

As a result of the mandated 10% reduction of military bands by Congress, we initiated a detailed cost/benefit analysis of all Navy bands. A copy of this has been provided to your staff. In that analysis, it was quite clear that we could no longer support the Corpus Christi Band. Its measures of effectiveness, along with others, fell well below the cutoff level.

To offset the obvious disadvantages of not having a band in the South Texas area, I will encourage Commanders of Navy Band New Orleans and Navy Band Memphis to contribute maximum services in support of our Texas recruiting effort as well as for significant military honors and ceremonies. Additionally, current plans include keeping the splinter-group "SONORA DEL MAR" (a very popular Spanish-American oriented group from Navy Band Corpus Christi) intact and transferring them to the Navy Band at San Diego where we will have them make periodic recruiting tours through South Texas. This appears to be the best economic compromise to ensuring the equitable distribution of bands to which you referred. In this connection, I expect that Navy Band availability will approximate one-quarter previous appearances.

We share your concern and are not particularly happy about this turn of events. Budget realities, however, reaffirm the position we have taken outlined above.

Sincerely,

JAMES D. WATKINS  
Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy

The Honorable John Tower  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510