

Colonel Robert Vidrick, US Army (Ret.)

Government



Robert L. Vidrick graduated from Collinwood High School in 1949 and felt that attending Collinwood was the turning point in his life.

Vidrick was now exposed to a world of comradery, and the mixture of individuals from all walks of life, religion and ethnic backgrounds. At Collinwood he learned about views of life as expressed by other individuals and their different values. Since his home life required him to spend more of his extra time on parental assistance, he was not able to pursue the sports world. Vidrick was able to participate in the cheerleader program as his contribution to sports at Collinwood. He did join the dramatics club and enjoyed the field of drama and free expression. He was elected vice president of his class in his senior year.

Vidrick entered John Carroll University in 1949. In 1951 he joined the John Carroll R.O.T.C. program. To help pay for tuition, he played string bass in a combo and worked summers on the New York Central railroad. Vidrick was commissioned a second lieutenant in 1953 and immediately was called to active duty. His small amount of railroad experience prompted the army to assign him as a training officer with the Army Railroad training center at Ft. Eustis, Virginia. In 1955, the Army sent him for additional civilian training with the C&O railroad in Russell, Kentucky. It was there he met his future wife, Amelia, who had just graduated from the University of Kentucky, and was working as a commercial home Economist for the Kentucky Power Company.

After his marriage, Vidrick returned Fort Eustis to train additional personnel in the mechanical side of Railroading. After the birth of their first son, he elected to enter the Regular Army, which required him to spend two years in training with the 9th Infantry Training Division at Fort Carson, Colorado. He became an infantry instructor for the Advance Infantry Training program. Upon completion of his tour he returned to the Transportation Corps and was assigned to St Nazaire, France. Because of his fluency in French, Vidrick was assigned as the Army liaison to the French Army and Navy on the Midwestern ocean side of France. During this time, Vidrick and his family lived on the French economy and both of their children attended French schools since they were 100 miles from an American installation. Vidrick was presented with the French DRT III crest for his work with the French military.

Upon returning to the United States, Vidrick was assigned to the Military District of Washington. His duties included being the Army Transportation coordinator for foreign V.I.P. arrivals into the Washington area, as well as coordinating all Department of Army sponsored transportation requirements in the area. When President Kennedy was assassinated, Vidrick became the transportation coordinator for the funeral and because of this service, he was presented with the Army Commendation Medal.

Vidrick was then assigned as the Transportation Officer of the Pentagon and responsible for military travel and movements of all military services assigned to the pentagon. He was selected to attend the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas and upon completion was assigned to the 1st. Infantry Division in Vietnam. He served as the Division Transportation Officer and was responsible for all convoys and logistical airlift for the division. He also had the responsibility for control of 24 divisional airfields. During this time, he worked under Al Haig who became the Secretary of State in later years. While in Vietnam he

provided assistance to a catholic orphanage in the Dian area with contributions of food and money collected from the divisional troops. Returning to the United States, Vidrick was again assigned to the Pentagon for the purpose of planning the schooling, both military as well as civilian, of transportation officers. He was nominated to take command of the only transportation truck battalion in Thailand. His unit was stationed in 5 different locations in Thailand. There were 1,500 military and 1,000 Thai nationals attached to his command. He organized his Thai nationals into a quasi-military organization and received many personal rewards by their attitude and devotion to duty. Since the Thais place much emphasis on their leaders, he was obligated to attend to their family needs through their celebrations of births, weddings, and/or funerals. His battalion also sponsored a Thai Catholic orphanage and a BuddhistWat.

Upon his return to the United States, Vidrick was given the honor of attending the senior military school namely the Army War College. Upon completion he was appointed the Inspector General of the Military Traffic Management Command, again in Washington. In this position, his requirements were to visit Army locations throughout the world. At this time he was promoted to Colonel. In 1977, Vidrick retired from the army.

Vidrick received the following medals/ service awards:

3 Legions of Merit	1 Army Commendation Medal
5 Bronze Stars	RVN Medal of Honor First Class
2 Meritorious Service Medals	RVN Cross of Gallantry with Palm
3 Air Medals	

Vidrick graduated with a BS from the University of Maryland and a MBA from Shippensburg University. In 1977, he joined Robertshaw Controls in Richmond Virginia as Director of Corporate Transportation. During this time he also spent 17 years as an Adjunct Professor in International Business at the University of Richmond. Vidrick is retired but consults in International Logistics for international companies