

JUN 20 1965

AN OPEN LETTER TO PRESIDENT JOHNSON FROM THE SOCIAL WORK COMMUNITY

Mr. President:

The increasing bloodshed and the frightful consequences overshadowing sustained escalation of the war compel all Americans to evaluate our policies carefully in the light of the evidence available, and to communicate these judgements to you.

- 1. On the basis of reports of American correspondents, the data presented in the State Department's White Paper, and other governmental statements, we are convinced that the war is essentially a civil war waged by the people of South Vietnam against the regimes in Saigon.*
- 2. From successive governmental coups, the continuing political instability, and the absence of popular backing for official military operations, we are convinced that the people of South Vietnam do not support the regimes in Saigon we have chosen to support.*
- 3. From consideration of the Geneva accord provisions for free elections, we are convinced that our military presence and reluctance to permit those elections violate the rights of the South Vietnamese people to self-determination.*

In light of the above, our country's commitment to democracy, "a decent regard to the opinions of mankind," the reality of the internal problems which beset South Vietnam, we believe that:

- 4. The bombing of North Vietnam only expands the theatre of bloodshed;*
- 5. There are constructive, difficult, but necessary alternatives for democracy's survival;*
- 6. The conference table must include representatives of the National Liberation Front (Viet Cong) if settlement is to be lasting.*

For these reasons we join our voices to those of the growing numbers of teachers, clergymen, writers, scientists, artists, doctors, congressmen, journalists and others who say **STOP THE BOMBING AND INITIATE NEGOTIATIONS NOW!** We urge you, Mr. President, with all the courage it takes to do right, to heed these voices.

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