

COPY

~~TEXT~~ OF A TELEGRAM SENT TO MR. MCGEORGE BUNDY BY THE INTER-UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE FOR A PUBLIC HEARING ON VIETNAM

May 16, 1965

Dear Mr. Bundy:

We regret the fact that you found it impossible to participate in the National Teach-In sponsored by the Inter-University Committee; and we look forward to arranging in the immediate future an alternative confrontation which will allow you to fulfil your commitment to us.

As you know, there ^{is} widespread among the American people a great deal of concern about the present policy of the administration in Viet Nam. So far, this concern has been especially strong on the campuses, though it reaches out far beyond the campus. So far it has unfortunately not been possible for this widespread concern to be publicly focused within the Congress, where it might normally exist, or in any other existing institutions. We of the IUC have focused this concern in a sustained, intellectually responsible way. In a democratic country the intelligent pursuit of any foreign policy depends equally upon sustained and vigorous criticism of administration decisions and upon the administration's careful attention to such criticism.

It was for these reasons that we called upon you to meet us in public confrontation where we could present these criticisms; and we were gratified therefore that you accepted our invitation.

Obviously, therefore, we were and remain disappointed that at the last moment you found it impossible for you or some other administration figure of equal stature to meet in the confrontation you had accepted. Even in our disappointment we were pleased by your statement that you "wholly disagree with those who have argued that it is inappropriate for a government ~~to~~

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official to take part in a discussion of this kind, "^{as} since your statement means that you agree with our understanding of our role.

Since the reason for having such a confrontation in the first place have not changed we are looking forward to arranging such a confrontation in the near future, when your immediate public duties do not prevent you from fulfilling this important long-range public duty.

We therefore invite you to meet on national television with a panel from the Inter-University Committee to discuss the administration's position on Viet Nam and respond to the criticism of administration policy which has been expressed within the academic community.

In this way you will be able to fulfill your commitment to us and through us to the academic community and the American people. We will be able to explain to you, and through you to our government, why we are so concerned about administration policy. Our hope is that as the cogency of our criticism becomes clear, it will lead to reasoned revision of the administration's Viet Nam policy.