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Dear Mr. President:

If recent reports in the New York Times about Vietnam - especially the two reports in columns 2 and 3 of this morning's issue - are even substantially correct, then all of us Americans may as well bow our heads in shame at the inaptness of our Administration.

For months we have tolerated the disgusting conduct of president Diem, his brother and sister-in-law; we have tolerated their seeming neglect of the war against the Vietcong, while our own men have been exposing themselves to the front line danger; they have used the weapons intended for fighting the Vietcong to attack Buddhists and students - in open defiance of your own expressed sentiments.

And what does your government do about it? In the first column the Times reports that "U.S. considering cut in Saigon aid to force reform". But in the second column it reports that the C.I.A. in Saigon is continuing to pay out \$250,000.00 monthly in support of the Special Forces of Col. Le Quang Tung, the private army of Ngo Dinh Nhu.

This conduct on the part of the C.I.A. is in effect an assurance to that unprincipled conspirator that he need not heed your public statements, that he may abuse and misuse our aid furnished by the United States for resistance to the communists - disregarding American interests with impunity.

How long, Mr. President, must we continue to pour out our treasure in support of reactionary forces? How long will our government permit the C.I.A. to follow policies that are detrimental to our best interests? Was not the Cuban invasion a sufficiently impressive lesson?

I for one am inclined to believe that the risks of complete abandonment of the dictatorships of South Korea and South Vietnam are no greater than our continued support of those regimes, as far as our ideals and good name are concerned.

At any rate, if their existence depends upon our support, we may in good conscience impose conditions of good behavior.

Very truly yours,

  
Abraham Buchman