

STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
NEW PALTZ, NEW YORK

DIVISION OF GENERAL EDUCATION

P. O. Box 593
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Dear Wesley:

I want to renew contact with you, after too long a time, with respect to the Vietnam situation. Perhaps you can revive my spirits. At the moment I am becoming increasingly suspicious and distrustful of the current rage for "teach-ins," which sometimes appear to descend into fundamental dishonesty.

My own feeling is that whatever we do in Vietnam, and however we do it, it is going to be very painful, expensive, risky, and dangerous. That is why I so much mistrust the cheap-and-easy solutions -- the cut-and-run school as much as the win-the-war school. And that is why I am irritated by disorderly attempts to stampede the President.

I believe that educated men ought to be concerned with their government; but I think it is very unseemly when distinguished men, such as pediatricians and theologians, permit their names to be used merely as names, in areas where they have no special competence.

I suspect that the Vietnam situation may well be beyond our capacity to manage successfully -- that is, without prohibitive risks; but I DO NOT believe that we should hasten to get out of there. We have a valid interest in that area, and we are not defeated. I support the President in his most generous offer for a negotiated settlement, and I also support his insistence that negotiation is not going to be surrender.

You are doubtless familiar with an "Inter-University Committee" headquartered at Ann Arbor. They are sponsoring a "national teach-in" next month. The whole tone of it seems biased and partisan, although I do not believe that people like Hans Morgenthau and Quincy Wright would associate themselves ^{with anything} improper. I remain deeply suspicious, since these so-called "teach-ins" sometimes plainly make no effort to teach or learn, but merely to set up a disruptive tactic in the guise of academic respectability.

I am reluctant to participate in any of these things; but at the same time I feel that I know enough about Vietnam to have something to say -- at least as much as Dr. Spock. Write and cheer me up, would you?

We are only 75 miles from New York, so I hope to be less isolated than I was in Texas. Particularly, I hope to see you from time to time. Best regards to Jane and all the young Fishels.

Sincerely,



William B. Durr,
Assoc. Prof., Polit. Sci.