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For Immediate Release

Statement on Student March on Washington

BY:

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On the eve of the March on Washington, we look with interest and sympathy on this manifestation of many students' concern about Vietnam. As persons long involved in work on problems of democracy and peace, we hope many more Americans will also concern themselves about this crucial situation in Asia.

We join in the concern about developments in Vietnam, even though we disagree with particular positions expressed by some of the elements in the March.

We are concerned, as they are, to see an end to the killing and destruction in Vietnam. We are concerned also to help create a society in which the Vietnamese will be masters of their own political destiny, free from interference from any outside forces, in which the expression of dissenting opinion may become progressively safer. The latter part of the President's April 7 speech suggested the possibility of a healthy shift of American policy in this direction. We encourage the further development of such a shift, and particularly urge the recognition that all interested parties, including the National Liberation Front, must be included in any effective negotiations.

In the effort to register such concerns with our government and people, we welcome the cooperation of all those groups and individuals who, like ourselves, believe in the need for an independent peace movement, not committed to any form of totalitarianism nor drawing inspiration or direction from the foreign policy of any government.

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NEW YORK POST EDITORIAL

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On the eve of this weekend's "peace march" on Washington, several leaders of the peace movement have taken clear note of attempts to convert the event into a pro-Communist production. In a joint statement, Norman Thomas, A. J. Muste, H. Stuart Hughes, Robert Gillmore, Bayard Rustin and others have pointed out that President Johnson's April 7 speech "suggested the possibility of a healthy shift in American foreign policy" toward the goal of a negotiated settlement. While welcoming the march as a sign of American concern about the Asian crisis and reiterating their plea for "an end to the killing and destruction in Viet Nam," they have pointedly added:

"In an effort to register such concern with our government and people, we welcome the cooperation of all these groups and individuals who, like ourselves, believe in the need for any independent peace movement, not committed to any form of totalitarianism or drawing inspiration from the foreign policy of any government."

Many dedicated, earnest young men and woman are taking part in the march. It is our hope that they will get the meaning of this message from men who have long served in the front-lines of the battle against war. Americans may reasonably differ with some aspects of the President's course. But, especially in the aftermath of Mr. Johnson's call for "unconditional" negotiations, there is no justification for transforming the march into a frenzied one-sided anti-American show. Some of the banners advertised in advance are being carried to the wrong place at the wrong time.