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Edmund S. Muskie Papers

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Press Release - Senator Edmund S. Muskie Telegram to Dan Collins

Edmund S. Muskie

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SENATOR EDMUND MUSKIE HAS SENT THE FOLLOWING TELEGRAM TO MR. DAN COLLINS, CHAIRMAN OF THE NEW YORK STATE NEW DEMOCRATIC COALITION, ON THE OCCASION OF ITS ANNUAL STATE CONVENTION HELD AT WASHINGTON IRVING HIGH SCHOOL, 17TH STREET AND IRVING PLACE, IN NEW YORK CITY:

"I REGRET THAT I AM NOT ABLE TO BE IN NEW YORK THIS WEEK-END TO ATTEND THE NEW YORK STATE NEW DEMOCRATIC COALITION CONVENTION. IN THE MONTHS AHEAD, WE MUST ADDRESS OURSELVES TO PROBLEMS WHICH AFFLICT OUR COUNTRY AND INTERFERE WITH OUR CAPACITY TO ACHIEVE THE PROMISE OF AMERICA. AMONG THE MOST URGENT IS THE INDOCHINA WAR, WHICH MUST BE ENDED.

"THIS WEEK'S EVENTS IN INDOCHINA REQUIRE OUR PARTICULAR ATTENTION AND CONCERN.

"I WOULD OPPOSE A DECISION TO UNLEASH AND SUPPORT A SOUTH VIETNAMESE ATTACK INTO LAOS. IT WOULD BE ANOTHER FALSE STEP IN INDOCHINA; ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S SHORT-SIGHTED POLICIES THERE.

"WHILE THE ADMINISTRATION TALKS OF WITHDRAWING OUR TROOPS IN VIETNAM, ITS ACTIONS EXPAND THE WAR IN INDOCHINA. AS OUR FORCES ARE WEAKENED BY WITHDRAWALS, MILITARY ACTION IS INCREASED. IN THE LONG RUN, THAT POLICY MAKES A TRAGIC CONFRONTATION MORE LIKELY. WHAT MILITARY MEASURES WILL THE ADMINISTRATION TAKE WHEN MOST OF OUR GROUND COMBAT FORCES HAVE BEEN WITHDRAWN?

"IN THE LONG RUN, THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY DOES NOT PROTECT OUR TROOPS; IT ENDANGERS THEM. THE ONLY WAY TO BRING THIS TRAGEDY TO AN END IS THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS. THE ONLY WAY TO SET THE STAGE FOR A NEGOTIATED AGREEMENT FOR THE SAFETY OF OUR TROOPS AND THE RELEASE OF OUR PRISONERS-OF-WAR IS BY AN ANNOUNCED TIMETABLE FOR TOTAL WITHDRAWAL. UNTIL THE ADMINISTRATION TAKES THAT STEP, THE EXCUSE FOR ESCALATION WILL REMAIN.

"I HOPE THAT THE NEW DEMOCRATIC COALITION WILL CONTINUE TO BE A CONSTRUCTIVE AND CREATIVE FORCE WITHIN THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY ON THIS AND OTHER ISSUES.

"I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH IT IN THE DAYS AHEAD."
