

Letters to the Editor of The Times

President Backed

To the Editor:

Many thousands of Americans, both soldiers and civilians, are caught in a highly dangerous situation in Vietnam. This is especially so in the light of our previously announced intent to withdraw.

Considerations of the potentials of their risky situation must come first. This requires action by one commander in chief, not 101.

This is no time to hold the 1972 election, or even the fall election for 1970. Nor is this the time, nor do we have the atmosphere now, for responsible debate over the fine lines of authority between Congress and the President, or between the Senate and the House. Successful extraction of our Americans from over there, out of a potentially explosive situation, is the first order.

Our President's plans for doing so have been previously announced, clearly stated. I approve of his announced current actions for carrying them out. I commend him for not telegraphing his moves ahead to the enemy.

Orderly, well calculated and well defended withdrawal is the preferable choice. Retreat in haste is a risky business, which could result in a terrible slaughter of our own countrymen. The history of military withdrawals is replete with examples.

What we need here at home right now, rather than hysterics, is good common sense, based on sober thought, for the sake of our men over there at least, if not for ourselves. That is our real and first responsibility at this time.

DONALD E. CLARK
Rohnert Park, Calif., May 3, 1970

Guards' Training

To the Editor:

As a member of the 107th Infantry National Guard Unit of New York State, I would like to point out certain facts concerning the useless killings of the four students at Kent State University.

All National Guard units throughout the country are trained for riot control in a standardized manner. The objective is always to clear out unruly mobs with the minimum amount of force.

The bayonet is an obvious deterrent in moving crowds. Gas is also used to separate large groups and clear specific areas. The only time that the M-1 rifle is used is when there is an immediate threat to the life of the individual soldier. Never are we told by the officers to fire into crowds as a tactic.

Critics point out that the students threw rocks, and that there was sniper fire from the buildings. In the first place, the buildings should have been secured by the troops and patrols set up on the rooftops. Part of our training deals with

the reality of being pelted with objects by the crowd.

This by no means should justify firing back with bullets. The statistics show that only one soldier was injured—felled by heat stroke.

What becomes appalling is the constant self-righteous attitudes by President Nixon, Vice President Agnew and others who are quickly satisfied with easy answers. It is easy to personalize the issues. It is easy to label all student dissenters as "bums." But it is not easy to accept the reality of our times.

I am ashamed to be a member of the National Guard.

Specialist/4 ANGELO RAMON
New York, May 5, 1970