

## Vietcong 'Civilians'

To the Editor:

The letter by David Caplovitz and Bogdan Dentich (Dec. 10) makes the familiar assumption that the struggle in Vietnam is a civil war fought along classical nationalistic lines, whereas in fact wars of this nature are no longer possible in a shrunken world whose least part is geopolitically and technologically bound up with every other.

Not even in the United States or the Soviet Union—perhaps I should say especially not in these nations — could such upheavals fail to produce tidal waves throughout the globe.

One cannot accurately speak of "civilians in the Vietcong infrastructure" because the Vietcong does not "employ civilians." It trains recruits for the purpose of waging a terroristic guerrilla war. The Vietcong are an arm of the Communist regime in North Vietnam, which in turn are engaged in aggression made possible and encouraged by Soviet and Chinese arms.

These complex interrelationships on a world chessboard underscore the combatant role of the Vietcong, which can hardly complain of "atrocities" when some of its members are killed in battles that they themselves initiate. Atrocities occur, as at Hue, where defenseless civilians are tortured and murdered in accordance with a policy of cold ferocity.

It is time, therefore, to stop equating casualties suffered by the Vietcong with the savage deaths that it decrees for its victims. There is no parallel whatever between resistance to Vietcong aggressors and slaughtered villagers whose dearest wish was to be left alone.

R. DUNN

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## Senator in Saigon Blames His Own Side on Songmy

SAIGON, South Vietnam, Dec. 18 (UPI)—A South Vietnamese Senator who investigated the alleged massacre at Songmy said today that there was firm evidence that 59 or 60 civilians had been killed and the toll was probably higher. But he said that the South Vietnamese command bore more responsibility than Americans.

"A massacre took place, but it was much more of a Vietnamese mistake," said Senator Ton That Dinh, a former general and now a newspaper publisher. "Of course, the Americans helped. But it shows the lack of coordination between the two commands. The operation was under the command of the South Vietnamese Army Second Division so the Vietnamese have more responsibility."