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*Letters to the Editor of The Times* 18 DEC 69

gent management, could show amazing results. It would help to stabilize rail fares, but if inflation is not halted they must go up in price along with everything else. Tax subsidies will never pay the bill.

GOODHUE LIVINGSTON  
New York, Dec. 2, 1969

### For Songmy Probe

To the Editor:

The Declaration which attended the birth of this nation was prompted by "a decent respect to the opinions of mankind." Unless we have grown callously indifferent to the erosion of the ethical foundations upon which our Republic was reared, the same "decent respect to the opinions of mankind" should now prompt all of us to react publicly to the insistent allegations that American soldiers deliberately murdered scores (and some say hundreds) of women, children, and old men in the village of Songmy.

We must not keep silent now. Along with Senators Goodell, Percy, Young and others we must demand that public investigations disclose the full details of the alleged massacre and the circumstances surrounding it. Failing to do so may make all of us political accessories to mass murder as the German people became politically co-responsible for war crimes committed by their soldiers.

If the reports from Songmy prove well founded, the fact that criminal guilt has been incurred by only a few (just as was the case in Nazi Germany), does not remove from the rest of us the political responsibility for this enormity. To the extent we refuse to discharge our political responsibility, we—severally—become morally guilty.

Unless we give voice to our conscience, such still publicly

unexplored mysteries as the Green Beret case and the mass killings in Songmy—if proved to have been deliberate murder—will traduce our honor as a civilized nation just as surely as earlier war crimes dishonored the German people.

Thus, for the sake of our good name, but far more importantly for the sake of our own desperately imperiled humanity, ordinary citizens must now speak out clearly and loudly, so that it will be heard by our Government and our armed forces and all around the globe,

We, therefore, warmly approve of Congressional plans for an inquiry, and urge everyone, whether he welcomes or deplors our presence in Vietnam, to tell his representatives in the House and the Senate, and the President, that he expects nothing less than the unsparing public disclosure of the Songmy tragedy and of the mode of our military conduct in Vietnam. [Editorial Dec. 10.]

KURT P. TAUBER  
Williamstown, Mass.

Nov. 26, 1969

*The letter was also signed by 34 other members of the faculty of Williams College.*

### Vietcong Massacres

To the Editor:

The Songmy massacre has been enlarged by the TV and news media, far and away out of all proportion of its actual importance. What are the suspected casualty figures, 150? 250? 350?

Why doesn't The Times carry on editorially about the Hue atrocity? There, very definitely, 3,000 victims were slaughtered graveside and their bodies toppled into trenches by the Vietcong. What about world opinion here? What do we hear from the English? The Swedes? Nothing but a vast stony silence.

Has ever a war been fought where no atrocities were committed? Wartime psychology is abnormal psychology. You do not expect soldiers to throw violets. Bullets and killing are the order of the day especially when the Vietcong has ordered and instructed every child, every old man and woman, how to throw a lethal, working hand grenade to eradicate the "foreign devils." All this will be revealed in the coming court-martial, and civilian investigations into the Songmy incident.

JOHN NERNOFF JR.  
New York, Dec. 10, 1969