

'Waste Them'

The terrifying jungles of Vietnam shield from view many atrocities on both sides of the unseen battle lines. But certain disdainful phrases rise above the smoke of "free-fire zones" to reveal the brutalizing meaning of the war.

Then somebody said, "What do we do with them?"

A G.I. answered, "Waste them."

Suddenly there was a burst of automatic fire from many guns. Only a small child survived. Somebody then carefully shot him, too.

In the May issue of Harper's Magazine, a report appears on "My Lai 4" from a forthcoming book by Seymour M. Hersh on the massacre and its aftermath. It is a horror story, part of which already has emerged in the Pentagon report and in the daily press. Those implicated are standing trial by court-martial.

Regardless of the outcome of a trial that must be fair and based on the evidence, the language of war stands condemned. *Waste them.* The phrase itself is an atrocity. It tells why the war must come to an end.

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