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## Prisoner-of-War Issue in Vietnam

To the Editor:

President Nixon's denunciation of Hanoi's refusals to give news of U.S. prisoners would sound much more impressive:

If only "our side" had not mercilessly slaughtered hundreds of prisoners at Mylai and other sites in South Vietnam,

If only "our side" had not allowed its Green Berets to kill Vietcong prisoners when convenient,

If only "we" had not prevented the 1956 democratic elections guaranteed by the Geneva accords,

If only "we" had not refused to help Ho Chi Minh free his country from the French yoke after he helped us fight Japanese aggression.

When will the unfortunate relatives of missing G.I.'s finally wake up and place the blame for their losses squarely where it belongs—on the White House and the Pentagon?

JOHN E. CHAPPELL Jr.  
Ogden, Utah, Dec. 26, 1970

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To the Editor:

Mrs. Cora Weiss, no less than the Administration she castigates (Op-Ed article Dec. 8), can be highly selective about the "real facts" concerning the P.O.W.'s. For example:

She seems to prefer the relatively superficial fact that "on Nov. 11 four new names were added" to its profounder corollary, the fact that

word about the fate of these four men has been deliberately withheld—"managed for political purposes" is the appropriate phrase—for months and years. She does not seem to object to this.

She omits comment about the unknown fate of over 800 Americans missing and presumed held by the N.L.F. in South Vietnam.

She does not suggest that the Committee of Liaison which she so vaunts as "the only available reliable channel for the exchange of mail" has done anything to urge Hanoi to normalize the whole P.O.W. issue, i.e. to list those held, permit impartial international inspection of the camps, regularize postal access, and exchange the sick and wounded. While I understand that friends of Hanoi who advance such suggestions risk losing their entree, I submit that a full rather than a merely pragmatic humanitarianism would seem to require such an effort.

In short, I find it difficult to accept what Mrs. Weiss seems able to believe quite firmly—that all of the fault in this matter lies with the United States and none with its adversary. If she believes that only the other side ever tells the truth she is naive indeed.

[The Rev.] EDWARD I. SWANSON  
Civilian Coordinator, Office of the  
Bishop for the Armed Forces  
The Episcopal Church Center  
New York, Dec. 17, 1970

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